



Requesting a Reasonable Accommodation

A Right Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (as applied by the Congressional Accountability Act)

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A **disability** is any physical or mental health condition that substantially limits a major life activity (e.g., seeing, walking, sleeping, lifting, breathing, concentrating, emotional regulation).

What is a **reasonable accommodation**?

An accommodation is an adjustment or modification made to the job, the workplace, and/or the usual manner or circumstances of performing the job that allows an applicant or employee with a disability to successfully apply for the job, perform the duties of the job, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment. Employees must be granted accommodations if a disability affects the employee's ability to perform essential job functions, the accommodation will enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the job, and the accommodations won't cause an undue hardship to the employer.

What do I need to tell my employer?

You can simply tell your employer that you need an adjustment or change at work due to a health condition. Be prepared to provide your employer with enough information to show you have a disability. You are not required to provide your entire medical or mental health history to obtain an accommodation. You only need to provide information that is pertinent to the accommodation request.

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What happens next?

After you make the request, the employer may ask that you and/or your health care provider complete certain forms or follow other procedures. Any procedures you are asked to follow cannot be used to prevent a timely accommodation from being provided or addressed (you can receive interim accommodations while the processes with your employer and health care provider proceed).

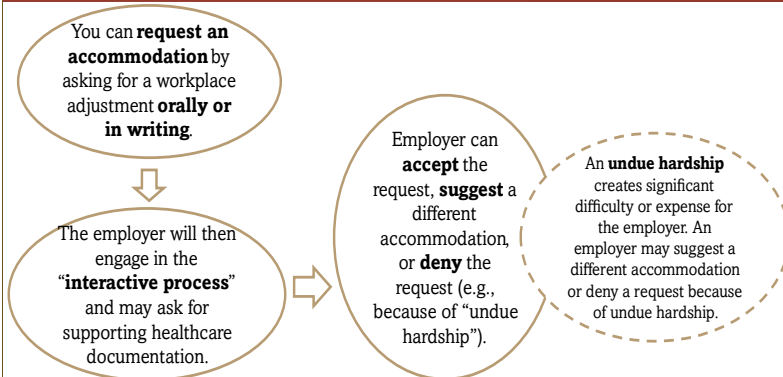
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How do I request a reasonable accommodation?

Typically, just ask; and you can ask at any time. There is no special process or specific wording required. Nor do you have to put your request in writing (though a written request is best practice). By making the request, you start the interactive process with the employer.

The Reasonable Accommodations Interactive Process



EXAMPLES INCLUDE

- Providing written materials in accessible formats (e.g., large print or Braille).
- Adjusting or modifying policies and procedures.
- Adjusting or modifying work schedules.
- Allowing for remote work/telework.
- Changing the work environment in ways that improve accessibility.
- Providing specialized furniture or assistive equipment.
- Modifying equipment and devices.
- Providing readers or sign-language interpreters.

Your accommodation may be different from what you request and from those provided to others.

The accommodation depends upon the nature of the disability and the type of job. If there are alternatives, your employer can choose the type of accommodation that will be made available. However, the accommodation must allow an employee or applicant with a disability to be successful.

You may explore your options if your employer denies your accommodation request.

If your employer denies your reasonable accommodation request, you are not without options. For example, you can ask for clarification or propose alternatives. Your employer is required to engage in an interactive process with you.

If you need accommodations assistance, contact the Office of Employee Advocacy: 202.225.8800



