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Job Accommodations for Persons With Disabilities-A Pocket Guide

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ACTION

- Involve the employee with a disability in decisions on accommodations.
- Ask job applicants with disabilities about accommodations that would assist in their placement.
- Identify jobs or tasks where accommodations would be minimal.
- Hold pre-employment discussions with supervisors and co-workers.
- Handle any on-the-job problems immediately.
- Examine the perception that your work site is inherently inaccessible, unsafe, or otherwise inappropriate for job accommodation. Seek the advice of the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, x4300, or Employee Relations staff, x6700.

HELPFUL HINTS

If you are not accustomed to communicating with a person with a disability, and have any hesitation or concerns, here are a few tips:

- Focus on the person, not the disability.
- Treat the employee with a disability as you would treat any employee. People want to be treated fairly and equally.
- Don't stand in the way of an opportunity for an employee simply because of a disability. If he or she is qualified and eligible for promotion, discuss the pros and cons of the job, then let the employee decide if it should be pursued.
- Don't make assumptions about the capability of an employee with a disability. Many have to be innovative and creative in order to overcome the obstacles they encounter every day. Tell the employee what needs to be done. If the employee needs help, he or she will tell you.
- Make physical changes to the facilities as necessary. If the employee uses a wheelchair, make sure meeting rooms are accessible. If he or she is visually impaired, obtain required publications in braille or on audio tape. People have different disabilities, so be sensitive to the one the employee has.
- Don't patronize employees with disabilities. They usually get enough of that outside of work.
- Don't talk about disability, medical, or accessibility issues every time you have a casual conversation with the employee. He or she is just as interested as you are in theater, baseball, politics, opera, or the weather.

LBL RESOURCES

For further information regarding accommodations, assistive devices, and services for employees or applicants with disabilities, call or visit any of the following offices:

Employment Office, x4226
Bldg. 90, Room 1024

Employee Relations Office, x6700
Bldg. 90, Room 1121

Office of Equal Opportunity, x6585
B90A

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, x4300
Bldg. 26

For Reference

Not to be taken from this room



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JOB ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



a pocket guide



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INTRODUCTION

Accommodating persons with *disabilities* on the job is not a mysterious process. It is, however, a new task for many supervisors and, as such, can create apprehension.

First, what is “job accommodation”? Simply, it is adapting the job site or the job function to fit qualified persons with disabilities. It need not be elaborate, expensive, nor burdensome. Supervisors should think in terms of reasonable and common-sense ways of making the job site and job function work for the *qualified person*.

Many experienced supervisors find benefits from job accommodation: redesigned job tasks frequently are safer and more efficient for persons with or without disabilities; modifications to buildings, such as easily operated doors, benefit both employees with or without disabilities; the already-qualified worker with a disability becomes more valuable and productive.

Job accommodation takes many forms. It may be only one change, or it may be a series of changes and adaptations. It depends on the shop, laboratory, or office setting and, most importantly, on the individual with a disability.

WHO IS DISABLED? WHO IS QUALIFIED?

According to the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a person with a disability is 1) anyone with a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities, 2) anyone with a history of such an impairment, or 3) anyone regarded as having such an impairment.

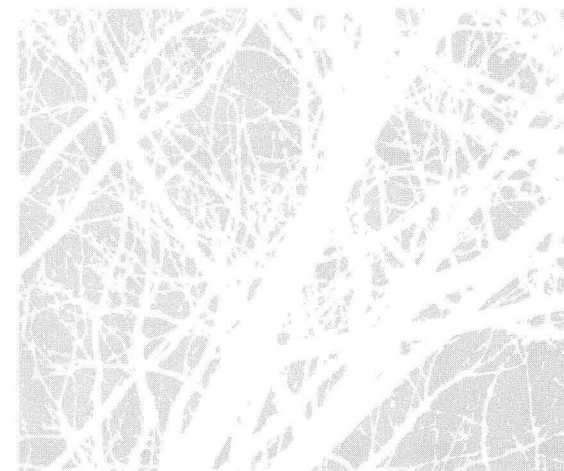
Visible impairments such as blindness, paraplegia, or cerebral palsy usually fall into the first category. People with these conditions traditionally have been considered “the disabled.”

The law recognizes, however, that people with nonvisible conditions—hidden disabilities, can also be denied employment, regardless of their ability to work. Therefore, people with cancer in remission, a history of epilepsy, mental illness, diabetes, back problems, HIV-related diseases, heart disease, alcoholism, or drug abuse are included in the second category of the definition.

The third category includes people who are perceived as disabled because of a limp or a facial disfigurement, for example, although they have no actual physical or mental limitations.

Sections 503 & 504 of the Act, which address employment under Federal contractors, grants, and programs, protect only “*qualified* disabled individuals.” The term “qualified” denotes a person with a disability who is capable of performing the essential tasks of a job with reasonable accommodation to his or her disability and who is able to function in the job environment.

Medical standards established by Federal contractors must not discriminate against qualified employees with a disability by



systematically excluding them from jobs because they are disabled. Mental and physical requirements must be applied on a job-by-job basis and must be consistent with business necessity and work safety.

COMMON JOB ACCOMMODATIONS

- Adjusting the work space: i.e., lowering workbenches
- Adjusting the work area: i.e., moving a job to a ground-floor location, or providing a private office.
- Retraining or placing the disabled employee in jobs that require no other accommodation.
- Providing special assistance: i.e., warning lights and TDD equipment for hearing-impaired employees, or providing talking calculators, reading machines, and enlarged printed material for visually impaired employees.
- Redesigning elements of the job to fit the disabled worker.

WHAT'S IN PLACE AT LBL?

FOR MOBILITY-IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

- Wheelchair Ramps at Buildings 2, 3, 16 Addition, 26, 29, 31, 44A & B Trailers, 46, 46A, 48, 50 Complex, 51N, 54, 55, 62, 65, 66, 69, 70, 70A, 72, 74, 75B, 77, 77A, 83, 90 and Trailer Complex, 934, and 936 (Hink's)
- Public Telephones at Accessible Level at Many Locations
- Elevator Panels at Accessible Level
- Lifts on Shuttle Buses
- Lift at Cafeteria
- Water Fountains at Accessible Level at Many Locations

FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

- Raised Letters on Elevator Panels in Buildings 50 and 90
- Specially Equipped Telephone Console in Building 46A

FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

- TDD Equipment
- Interpreting Services (Call Office of Equal Opportunity, x6585)
- Telephone Amplifiers (Call Telephone Services, x6234)
- Individual Amplifiers in Building 50 Auditorium (located in the projection booth)
- California Relay Service (Described in Pacific Bell Telephone Directory)



FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH HIDDEN DISABILITIES

- Orthopedic Chairs for medically documented conditions
- Close-in Parking for medically documented conditions (Call Medical Services, x6266)
- Flextime
- Modified Work Schedules