



Service Providers' Guide to Communicating with Students about Workplace Accommodations

Accommodations are reasonable adjustments made at any stage of the employment journey that allow a person with a disability to apply for jobs, interview, and fully perform the duties of a position. Accommodations level the playing field and help persons with disabilities reach the same outcomes as their peers by using a modified process.

Reasonable Accommodations

Most accommodations are simple to implement and relatively inexpensive (or free!) Here are some common examples for students to consider:

Accommodation Form	Accommodation Examples
restructuring work or daily tasks	larger tasks divided into smaller ones
acquiring or modifying equipment, providing software or devices needed to do the job	computer screen magnifier, voice input or speech recognition aids, ergonomic chair
changing work locations or improving the facility	quiet workspace, working from home, improved lighting, accessible door opener
creating flexible or modified work schedules	flexible hours, frequent breaks, self-paced workload



Tips for Students Requesting Accommodations

Requesting accommodations is a conversation! Obtaining accommodations begins with the student communicating their needs and sharing what the employer needs to know about their disability. There is no formula, but the student may consider the following tips:

- Explain the need (try to do this in writing); the disability does not need to be disclosed directly.
- Provide information that is directly relevant to specific needs, restrictions or limitations. This can include medical information, but only the information that is directly related to the request for accommodation.
- Participate in discussions with the employer about possible accommodation solutions.
- Try different possible forms of accommodation even if they are not perfect.





Legal Rights

Students may encounter employers who do not have experience hiring individuals with disabilities or implementing accommodations, but who are aware of the student's legal right to receive necessary accommodations. The Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Canada Human Rights Act both legislate that employers cannot discriminate against persons with disabilities, and must provide reasonable accommodations.

Here are the basics:

- Legally, an employee does not need to disclose the disability unless it affects their ability to do the job or puts them or their co-workers at risk. If they choose to disclose and request accommodations, they have the right to confidentiality and respectful treatment of the information about the disability.
- The employer cannot treat the employee less favourably than they would an employee without a disability.
- The employer must grant reasonable accommodation requests in a timely manner and cover all related costs.
- The employer must provide accommodations up to the point of undue hardship, meaning it would be too expensive for the financial survival of the organization or it would violate health and safety requirements.



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Students may refer to Carleton University's [Accessible Career Transitions](#) (ACT) Program for 1:1 support.

References

Carleton University, Accessible Career Transitions Program. "[Accommodation](#)." Accessed June 17, 2023, carleton.ca/career/job-search-support/students-with-disabilities/accomodations/

Government of Canada. "[Duty to Accommodate: A General Process For Managers](#)." Modified February 17, 2023, canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/working-government-canada-duty-accommodate-right-non-discrimination/duty-accommodate-general-process-managers.html

Ontario Human Rights Commission. "[Duty to accommodate](#)." Accessed June 17, 2023, ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-based-mental-health-disabilities-and-addictions/13-duty-accommodate

University of Guelph, Co-operative Education & Career Services "[Academic Accommodations Translated into Employment Settings](#)," Accommodations. Updated February 2019, recruitguelph.ca/cecs/students-alumni/students-disabilities/accommodations

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Related DCOI Resources

Employers' Guide to Workplace Accommodations.

Students' Guide to Workplace Accommodations.

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