



Guide to Reasonable Accommodations



What Reasonable Accommodations are under Equality Acts 1998 - 2015

Under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015, employers are obliged to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities:

- (i) to have access to employment.
- (ii) to participate or advance in employment; or
- (iii) to undergo training.

Reasonable accommodations help alleviate a substantial disadvantage for a person with a disability. This can be an adjustment to how a job is done or to the work environment. Reasonable accommodations should be provided for potential and existing employees, including those who acquire a disability.

The demand should be “reasonable” and not impose a “disproportionate burden” on the employer. All changes and costs should be realistic for the business to bear, depending on several objective factors, namely:

- The nature and cost of the accommodation requested;
- The overall financial resources of the employer and the number of employees;
- The impact of the accommodation on the operation of the business.

How to welcome Reasonable Accommodation requests

There is no obligation on an employee to share that they have a disability. However, as an employer it is important to create an inclusive environment where employees feel confident to share their disability and request a reasonable accommodation. An employer should welcome reasonable accommodation requests at every stage of the employee life cycle. You can do this by creating a Reasonable Accommodation Statement.



Sample Reasonable Accommodation Statement

Xxxxx is an inclusive employer and is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for potential and existing employees with a disability. Should you wish to request a reasonable accommodation please email XXXX@company.com or call XXXXXX.

When to state your commitment to providing Reasonable Accommodation

An employer should welcome reasonable accommodation requests at every stage of the employee life cycle.

These stages include:

Recruitment and Selection process

Employers should ensure that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to apply and be considered for employment throughout the life cycle of employment. Ensure your reasonable accommodation statement is visible and communicated at all stages of the process.

→ Job specification → Job Advertisement → Application Form
 → Testing e.g. psychometric testing → Shortlisting/Interview

Onboarding

Ensure new employees receive information about requesting reasonable accommodations, as part of their on-boarding pack or process.

Internal Communications and Training

Include your reasonable accommodation statement in all communications e.g. for team outings, social events, or learning and development programmes.

Events

→ On the event advertisement → During registration

You should include a reasonable accommodation statement in advance for both in-person and online activities.

Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

Research shows that most accommodations are often inexpensive and uncomplicated to put in place.

The accommodations that are often requested include:

Assistive Technology:

- Set up assistive listening devices like an amplified telephone handset for a worker to enable use of a telephone.
- Screen Reading Software that will read out loud information on the computer screen, such as JAWS, Read & Write etc.



Adaptation to the work environment:

- Adjustable-height desks.
- Quieter spaces.
- Colour coding files.
- Visual aids to accompany tasks or processes.
- Accessible facilities.



Flexible working hours/tasks:

- Later start and finish times.
- Time off for medical appointments, breaks to allow individuals to take medication.
- Adjustment to work tasks such as communications e.g. email instead of telephone calls where possible.



Induction and Training:

- Notes and handouts given out in advance.
- Allow audio recorders at training sessions.
- Sign Language Interpreter.
- More time to complete induction.



To learn more about Reasonable Accommodations, visit <https://employersforchange.ie/Reasonable-Accommodation>

How to Implement Reasonable Accommodations in the workplace

Assess the barriers that might exist for the individual. Do not make assumptions. Discuss the potential barriers with the individual using the job specification.

Identify the workplace accommodation needs by:

- Consulting with the person and exploring possible accommodations such as assistive technology or alternative ways of doing tasks.
- Discussing with the person whether colleagues need to be informed about accommodations.
- Consulting with an occupation therapist, rehabilitation professional, access officer and/or health and safety officer where appropriate.
- Consulting with specialist organisations about specific supports e.g. Chime, NCBI, WALK, AsIAm.*

Implement the most reasonable and effective accommodation that is also the most appropriate for the employer and the employee. It is important to respect the confidentiality of information shared and to store information appropriately.

Review and Follow-up

regarding the accommodations with the individual employee to ensure their effectiveness and of any required changes.

* For a list of supports visit <https://employersforchange.ie/Employer-Specific-Information-General>

Consider implementing the Reasonable Accommodation Passport

The Reasonable Accommodation Passport is a written, confidential record of accommodations or workplace adjustments that have been agreed between the employee and their employer to ensure they are put in place and kept up to date.





Visit employersforchange.ie to download the template.



Sources:

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