

ASKING FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

NAME THE BARRIER • EXPLAIN THE NEED • REQUEST A PRACTICAL CHANGE

An accommodation changes how a task, environment, communication, or schedule works so a person with a disability can access participation.

START WITH THE BARRIER

- 'Standing for long periods increases my symptoms.'
- 'I cannot reliably hear spoken instructions in this setting.'
- 'This document is not accessible to my screen reader.'
- Be specific about what prevents access.

DESCRIBE THE FUNCTIONAL NEED

- Focus on what you need to participate: sitting, captions, interpreter, alternate format, schedule change, quiet space, remote access, assistive technology, or modified process.
- You may not need to disclose every medical detail.

MAKE A CONCRETE REQUEST

- 'I am requesting a chair at the workstation.'
- 'Please provide the material in an accessible electronic format.'
- 'I need written instructions in addition to verbal directions.'

USE THE PROCESS

- Workplaces, schools, healthcare settings, and public services may have different accommodation procedures.
- Ask who handles requests and what documentation is required.
- Keep copies of requests and responses when useful.

IF THE FIRST IDEA DOES NOT WORK

- An accommodation can be adjusted.
- Explain what barrier remains and propose another option.
- The goal is effective access, not proving that one particular solution is the only possible answer.

KNOW WHERE TO GET INFORMATION

- The ADA covers disability discrimination in multiple areas of public life; employment rules have specific requirements.
- Healthcare programs covered by Section 1557 must provide effective communication and appropriate auxiliary aids/services when necessary.
- Seek qualified legal or advocacy guidance for individual rights questions.

An accommodation is a tool for access. Asking for one is not asking for special worth or lowered dignity.