



DC Office of Disability Rights

Americans with Disabilities Act

Title I Employment Fact Sheet

No employer shall discriminate against any **qualified person** with a disability in regard to any aspect of employment.

A qualified person satisfies the requisite skills, experience, education and other job-related requirements of the position; and can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations.

A reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to the job, the work environment or the way work is customarily done which permits a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to perform the essential functions.

The employee usually initiates the reasonable accommodation process by inquiring from the supervisor, the HR or ADA Coordinator at the agency. The inquiry does not have to be in writing, be formal, or use any special language, and it does not have to be requested at the beginning of employment. If the supervisor is contacted first, the ADA Coordinator should be brought in early in the process. The employer and employee must engage in an interactive dialogue during the process, and the determination should be made on a case-by-case basis.

The **types of reasonable accommodations** are: 1) A “**no-tech**” accommodation costs little or no money...just time, support and creativity (additional preparation time for individual); 2) A “**low-tech**” accommodation is any accommodation that is technologically simple or unsophisticated, and readily available in most offices (a door handle as opposed to a door knob to accommodate an individual with limited mobility); and 3) A “**high-tech**” accommodation is any accommodation that uses advanced or sophisticated devices (screen reading software).

Reasonable accommodations may include: a) job restructuring; b) time off (not indefinite leave, nor if it imposes undue hardship on the ER); c) change in schedule; d) equipment(tape recorder, scanner, voice software) e) change of workplace policy (allow food at workstation, allow service animal); e) adjusting methods of supervision (communicating assignments in different ways, providing additional training, more guidance); f) working at home; g) provision of a job coach.

Reasonable accommodations do not involve: a) medication monitoring; b) lowering production standard; c) provision of personal use items (hearing aids, wheelchairs); d) a change of supervisor.

The Employer cannot force the Employee to accept an accommodation.

For more information on Reasonable Accommodation and the process, please refer to: "The D.C. Government Manual for Accommodating Employees with Disabilities" located on ODR's website, www.odr.dc.gov, or contact the ODR at 202-724-5055