



Courtesy of Meridian Benefits Consulting

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What types of accommodations do I have to make for employees with disabilities?

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A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that enables a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions. Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to ensure that a qualified individual with a disability has the same rights and privileges in employment as employees without disabilities. Some types of reasonable accommodation include:

- Alternative working schedules
- Reassignment to a different position
- Provision of interpreters
- Physical accessibility and usability
- Alteration of equipment and/or provision of different equipment
- Restructuring of job duties
- Modified examinations, training sessions or policies

Leave from work beyond FMLA leave entitlement may be considered a reasonable accommodation.

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), reasonable accommodations are to be determined by an “interactive process.” The interactive process should consist of an open dialogue between the employer and the qualified individual about what types of reasonable accommodation(s) can be made to ensure that the applicant or employee can perform the essential functions of the position. Employers should document the interactive process to demonstrate good faith efforts in providing reasonable accommodation(s) to any qualified individuals, should claims of discrimination arise.

Reasonable accommodations must be provided to candidates and employees, unless the accommodation would cause the employer “undue hardship,” as defined under the ADA.

Employers are prohibited from retaliating against a candidate or employee who has requested reasonable accommodations.