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## **UNDERSTANDING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS**

For applicants or individuals with disabilities who need a reasonable accommodation in the workplace, it is important to identify different options.

### **What is a reasonable accommodation?**

In most circumstances, a reasonable accommodation is a modification to the workplace that allows an individual with a disability to perform the duties of his or her job. A reasonable accommodation includes a modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions of the position.

### **How do I identify the right reasonable accommodation for me?**

- a. Talk to your health care provider: Your healthcare provider is familiar with your medical condition and may be able to suggest some workplace modifications.
- b. Talk to your employer: The interactive process, which includes identifying a reasonable accommodation, should not be an adversarial process. Talk to your employer about the duties of the position and how they might be modified.
- c. Brainstorm: Be creative in thinking about accommodation options. Brainstorm openly to identify creative suggestions. You can draw from different experiences and prior solutions to brainstorm ideas.
- d. Think about solutions unconstrained: Try to think of solutions without any constraints, meaning without considering financial, technological, temporal, or geographic limitations. Then, explore how those solutions might be modified to the specific circumstances.
  - i. For example, you can start by thinking of the best accommodations in the abstract. Once you have identified possible accommodations, try reevaluating the various options with consideration of the cost, ability to implement the accommodation based on technological, temporal, or geographic limitations, and viability of the accommodation in the current

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position. Using this process, the parties often develop solutions not previously considered.

- e. Think about the other party's interests: By understanding the other party's underlying interests, options can be considered on a continuum.

### **What are some reasonable accommodation options that I can consider?**

There are infinite possibilities for reasonable accommodation options. The tools listed above are designed to be of assistance in identifying an effective reasonable accommodation. It is important to identify the reasonable accommodation that is effective in allowing the essential functions of the position to be performed. Below are some examples of common reasonable accommodations:

- a. Modification of workplace policies.
- b. Modification of workplace equipment or location.
- c. Changing the method, frequency, or types of communications.
- d. Providing a break or rest area and allowing flexibility in using the break or rest area.
- e. Reducing workplace distractions.
- f. Working from home.
- g. Job restructuring.
- h. Altering how and when an essential or marginal function is performed.
- i. Unpaid leave.
- j. Reassignment to a vacant position.

### **Conclusion**

If a reasonable accommodation is needed in the workplace, it is important to consider different options and work with the employer to identify an effective accommodation. This guide is not intended to provide a comprehensive list of all the factors or legal issues relating to reasonable accommodations. If you need assistance in requesting a reasonable accommodation or have been denied a reasonable accommodation, you should contact an attorney experienced in handling claims arising under the ADA and ADAAA.

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