

# Requesting and Negotiating a Reasonable Accommodation

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Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities. However, it is the employee's responsibility to let the employer know that an accommodation is needed. JAN often gets questions from employees who need an accommodation, but are not sure how to approach their employers. The following are suggestions about how to request and negotiate an accommodation in the workplace:

## **1. Decide how you are going to make your request.**

You can make your initial request in a face-to-face meeting, by email, by fax, or in a formal letter to your employer. There are no official forms for making a request under the ADA. However, some employers develop their own forms and may ask you to complete them after you make your initial request. Even if your employer does not ask you to put your request in writing, some employees find it useful to have a written record of their request so they choose to write a formal request letter. For those employees, JAN put together a sample accommodation request letter, which can be found at <http://askjan.org/media/accommrequestltr.html>.

## **2. Decide who you are going to ask.**

You can initially let anyone in management know that you need an accommodation. If there is a specific person in charge of accommodations, your request may be forwarded to that person. If you make a written request and you think it might be useful, you can give a copy of your request to more than one person. For example, if you need a schedule change as an accommodation and company policy requires you to go to Human Resources for any schedule changes, you may have to address your accommodation request to Human Resources. However, you may have a good relationship with your immediate supervisor and may want to let him/her know that you are making the request.

## **3. Explain why you need an accommodation and give your accommodation ideas.**

When you make your request, you need to let your employer know that you need an accommodation because of a medical condition. Otherwise, your employer may not know that you are requesting an accommodation under the ADA. Also, if you know what accommodations you need, you should let the employer know. However, be prepared to consider other options if needed.

## **4. Follow-up as needed.**

If you do not receive a response to your request in a reasonable amount of time, you should check with your employer and find out what the delay is. If your employer denies your request, you should try to find out why. You may need to clarify your request, provide additional information, or consider other accommodation options.

## **5. Monitor the accommodation.**

Once an accommodation is in place, it is your responsibility to let the employer know if accommodation does not work or if something changes and you need a new accommodation.

- For additional information about how to request or negotiate a reasonable accommodation, visit <http://askjan.org/EeGuide>.