

DISCLOSING DISABILITIES TO EMPLOYERS



Employers are legally required to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees who have disclosed their disabilities.

REASONS TO DISCLOSE

- To ask for job accommodations
Example: Terry is recovering from cancer and has difficulty interviewing in the afternoon due to fatigue associated with treatment. If no morning slots are available, she may disclose and request an earlier slot to better represent her abilities.
- To receive employment benefits
Example: Odegard has difficulty hearing in large group trainings. He asks for the accommodation of taking part in the trainings virtually while remaining in his office.
- To explain unusual circumstance
Example: Savery has temperature sensitivities due to multiple sclerosis (MS). They may need to explain why it would be helpful to work from home while the office AC is being repaired.

HOW & WHEN TO DISCLOSE

Weigh the pros and cons of disclosure at each point of the job search, recruitment and hiring process. Disclose on a "need-to-know" basis. Provide further details about your disability, as it applies to your accommodations request, to the authority able to facilitate your request.

PRIOR TO OFFER

Employers may not require disclosure prior to offering, but an applicant may need to disclose if accommodation is needed to complete any part of the application process.

AFTER OFFER IS RECEIVED

Employers are allowed to conduct a post-offer medical inquiry or exam as long as they conduct it equally among all offered candidates. They may ask follow-up questions.

FIVE TIPS FOR REQUESTING REASONABLE ACCOMODATION

Your Employer Can't Read Minds

Your needs may be obvious to you but not to your employer. Be clear when describing your needs and how they can help.

Ask for Exactly What You Want

Consider putting your request in writing and be specific! Vague descriptions may result in accommodation that is not helpful.

Be Patient With Your Explanation

Explain how accommodation will help you do your job. If your employer doesn't understand at first, try explaining again.

Be Open to Alternatives

If your employer suggests an alternative accommodation, give it a chance before reissuing your request.

Be Patient But Insistent

After your initial request, give your employer time to implement, but don't let them downplay your needs. The law is on your side.

THE C&IC'S COMMITMENT

The UW Career & Internship Center values the diversity of our student body. We believe our work in addressing systemic inequities facing students from traditionally marginalized backgrounds starts with access to meaningful employment and internship opportunities. Our staff actively helps employers identify employment barriers facing marginalized student populations and mitigate these barriers in their hiring, onboarding, retention, and organizational culture.