

# JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

## Accommodation and Compliance Series

# Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

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## Preface

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is funded by a contract with the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor. JAN makes documents available with the understanding that the information be used solely for educational purposes. The information is not intended to be legal or medical advice. If legal or medical advice is needed, appropriate legal or medical services should be contacted.

JAN does not endorse or recommend any products or services mentioned in this publication. Although every effort is made to update resources, JAN encourages contacting product manufacturers/vendors and service providers directly to ensure that they meet the intended purposes. This guarantees that the most up-to-date information is obtained.

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## **JAN'S Accommodation and Compliance Series**

### **Introduction**

JAN's Accommodation and Compliance Series is designed to help employers determine effective accommodations and comply with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Each publication in the series addresses a specific medical condition and provides information about the condition, ADA information, accommodation ideas, and resources for additional information.

The Accommodation and Compliance Series is a starting point in the accommodation process and may not address every situation. Accommodations should be made on a case by case basis, considering each employee's individual limitations and accommodation needs. Employers are encouraged to contact JAN to discuss specific situations in more detail.

For information on assistive technology and other accommodation ideas, visit JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) at <https://askjan.org/soar>.

### **Information about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**

Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) is a common, yet preventable condition that results from prenatal alcohol exposure. The impairments that are part of fetal alcohol syndrome are irreversible and can include serious physical, mental, and behavioral problems with possible life-long implications. The severity of the impairments varies, with some individuals experiencing them to a far greater degree than others. As many as 40,000 babies are born with some type of alcohol-related impairment each year in the United States.

FAS is not a single birth defect; it is a cluster of related problems, the most severe of a group of consequences of prenatal alcohol exposure. Collectively, the range of disorders is known as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). Signs of FAS may include distinctive facial features; heart, kidney, and bone defects; slow physical growth before and after birth; vision and/or hearing difficulties; small head circumference and brain size; poor coordination; sleep problems; intellectual impairments' delayed development' and learning disorders. Behavioral issues associated with FAS include short attention span; hyperactivity; extreme nervousness and anxiety; and poor impulse control, reasoning, and judgment skills.

JAN's [Effective Accommodation Practices \(EAP\) Series: Executive Functioning Deficits](#) is a publication detailing accommodations for individuals with limitations related to executive functioning. These ideas may be helpful in determining accommodations.

## **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and the Americans with Disabilities Act**

The ADA does not contain a list of medical conditions that constitute disabilities. Instead, the ADA has a general definition of disability that each person must meet. A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having an impairment. For more information about how to determine whether a person has a disability under the ADA, see [How to Determine Whether a Person Has a Disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act \(ADAAA\)](#).

### **Accommodating Employees with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**

People with FAS may develop some of the limitations discussed below, but seldom develop all of them. Also, the degree of limitation will vary among individuals. Be aware that not all people with FAS will need accommodations to perform their jobs and many others may only need a few accommodations. The following is only a sample of the possibilities available. Numerous other accommodation solutions may exist.

#### **Questions to Consider:**

1. What limitations is the employee experiencing?
2. How do these limitations affect the employee and the employee's job performance?
3. What specific job tasks are problematic as a result of these limitations?
4. What accommodations are available to reduce or eliminate these problems? Are all possible resources being used to determine possible accommodations?
5. Has the employee been consulted regarding possible accommodations?
6. Once accommodations are in place, would it be useful to meet with the employee to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodations and to determine whether additional accommodations are needed?
7. Do supervisory personnel and employees need training?

#### **Accommodation Ideas:**

##### **Limitations**

##### Executive Functioning Deficits

- Apps for Concentration
- Checklists

- Color Coded System
- Cubicle Doors, Shields, and Shades
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Form Generating Software
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Noise Canceling Headsets
- Recorded Directives, Messages, Materials
- Sound Absorption and Sound Proof Panels
- Speech Recognition Software
- Timers and Watches
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

#### Handling/Fingering

- Industrial
  - Anti-vibration Gloves
  - Anti-vibration Tool Wraps
  - Compact Material Handling
  - Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
  - Ergonomic Equipment
  - Extra Grip Gloves
  - Grip Aids
  - Vacuum Pickup Tools
- Office Equipment
  - Alternative Input Devices
  - Alternative Keyboards
  - Alternative Mice
  - Articulating Keyboard Trays

- Book Holders
- Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Expanded Keyboards
- Forearm Supports
- Grip Aids
- Miniature Keyboards
- On-Screen Keyboards
- One-Handed Keyboards
- Page Turners
- Scribe/Notetaker
- Speech Recognition Software
- Typing / Keyboarding Aids
- Writing Aids
- Other
  - Aide/Assistant/Attendant
  - Money Handling Products
  - Periodic Rest Breaks

### Learning

- Additional Training Time / Training Refreshers
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- On-site Mentoring
- Support Person
- Training Modifications
- Uninterrupted Work Time
- Written Instructions

### Managing Time

- Applications (apps)
- Apps for Organization/ Time Management
- Checklists
- Color Coded System
- Electronic Organizers
- Marginal Functions
- PDAs, Notetakers, and Laptops
- Reminders
- Task Separation
- Timers and Watches
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

#### Mathematics

- Construction Calculators
- Counting/Measuring Aids
- Fractional, Decimal, Statistical, or Scientific Calculators
- Large Display Calculators or Adding Machines
- Large Display Thermometers
- Mathematics Software
- Talking Calculators
- Talking Scales
- Talking Tape Measures
- Talking Thermometers
- Talking Watches

#### Memory Loss

- Additional Training Time / Training Refreshers
- Apps for Memory
- Electronic Organizers
- Memory Software
- Recorded Directives, Messages, Materials

- Reminders
- Support Person
- Verbal Cues
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

#### Organizing/Planning/Prioritizing

- Applications (apps)
- Apps for Organization/ Time Management
- Color-coded Manuals, Outlines, and Maps
- Electronic Organizers
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring
- On-site Mentoring
- Organization Software
- Professional Organizers
- Reminders
- Supervisory Methods
- Task Identification
- Task Separation
- Timers and Watches
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

#### Reading

- Color Contrast Overlays
- Color-coded Manuals, Outlines, and Maps
- Modified Written Materials
- On-Screen "Ruler" / Strip
- Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Systems - Scan
- Portable or Handheld Readers

- Qualified Reader
- Reading / Highlighting Products
- Reading Pen
- Screen Magnification and Screen Reading Combined
- Screen Magnification Software
- Screen Reading Software and Training
- Text Reader
- Word Processing Software

#### Stress Intolerance

- Apps for Anxiety and Stress
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person

#### Writing/Spelling

- Electronic Dictionaries
- Form Generating Software
- Line Guides
- PDAs, Notetakers, and Laptops
- Proofreading/ Copyediting Assistance
- Reference Books
- Screen Reading Software and Training
- Speech Recognition Software
- Verbal Responses

- Word Prediction/Completion and Macro Software
- Word Processing Software
- Writing Aids
- Writing/Editing Software
- Written Forms and Prompts

## **Work-Related Functions**

### Policies

- Additional Training Time / Training Refreshers
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Flexible Schedule
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Policy Modification
- Reassignment
- Service Animal
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely

### Stress

- Apps for Anxiety and Stress
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Monitor Mirrors
- On-site Mentoring
- Service Animal

- Simulated Skylights and Windows
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Uninterrupted Work Time

## **Situations and Solutions:**

### **A grocery store bagger named Wanda had fetal alcohol syndrome.**

She wanted to hug everyone who came into the store, as well as her coworkers. Some customers were open to it, but many were not. The employer hired a job coach to help Wanda understand the inappropriateness of hugging customers and coworkers alike. The coach worked successfully with her, and was able to fade out her direct involvement, but remained available to support Wanda as needed.

### **Luis is an automotive repair technician with fetal alcohol syndrome who is highly distractible and inattentive to his tasks.**

As an accommodation, he was provided with a mechanic's stool with color-coded shelves. Luis' supervisor helped him "load" the stool with regularly used tools. He was also given a daily checklist.

### **James is production worker with motor difficulties as a result of fetal alcohol syndrome.**

He found it nearly impossible to stuff plastic bags with the required craft materials for each kit he assembled. His employer provided a small wooden box with a clip to hold the bag upright so James could assemble the complete kits more effectively.

### **Isaiah is a janitorial employee with fetal alcohol syndrome who had difficulty organizing his supplies and knowing what to do differently in various areas.**

To accommodate him, the employer color-coded the rooms and the lists of needed supplies for each of the different areas. Isaiah was also provided with a color-coded flip chart for the varied tasks.

### **Trinity, a new employee with fetal alcohol syndrome passed her probationary period with flying colors.**

She started to experience the gradual withdrawal of the job coach who had been instrumental in her success. The supervisor began to see a few issues resurface. The employer recruited a co-worker that had formed a positive relationship with Trinity to function as a natural support to her after the job coach was gone, providing the same type of support.

### **A country club employee named Sean had fetal alcohol syndrome and was having difficulty getting motivated in the mornings to begin his work tasks.**

Extended training on how to do the tasks, along with a task list in picture form were not successful motivators. The employer noticed that a friendship had developed between Sean and a pro shop employee. The pro shop employee described the relationship as a grandfatherly one. He began to mentor Sean by doing periodic "checks" on him during the mornings. The response was very positive, and Sean worked successfully, seemingly eager to please his new friend.

### **Darius, an individual with fetal alcohol syndrome, works in a noisy warehouse environment and has difficulty understanding verbal communication from his**

**supervisor.**

Unsure of exactly what the issue was, JAN suggested she consider the environment and what is going on around Darius first to determine if the background noises and voices were a distraction to him. Other ideas to enhance communication included speaking slowly and pausing while talking to allow more time for the information to be processed, speaking directly to and making eye contact with Darius to make sure that she had his attention. Speaking in clear short sentences, avoiding words or terms that are complicated, technical, and difficult to understand may also be effective.

## **Products**

There are numerous products that can be used to accommodate people with limitations. JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource at <https://askjan.org/soar> is designed to let users explore various accommodation options. Many product vendor lists are accessible through this system; however, JAN provides these lists and many more that are not available on the Web site upon request. Contact JAN directly if you have specific accommodation situations, are looking for products, need vendor information, or are seeking a referral.

## Resources

### **Job Accommodation Network**

West Virginia University  
PO Box 6080  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6080  
Toll Free: (800) 526-7234  
TTY: (304) 293-7186  
Fax: (304) 293-5407  
[jan@askjan.org](mailto:jan@askjan.org)  
<http://AskJAN.org>

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a free consulting service that provides information about job accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the employability of people with disabilities.

### **Office of Disability Employment Policy**

200 Constitution Avenue,  
NW, Room S-1303  
Washington, DC 20210  
Toll Free: (866) 633-7365  
[odep@dol.gov](mailto:odep@dol.gov)  
<http://dol.gov/odep>

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Labor. ODEP provides national leadership to increase employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities while striving to eliminate barriers to employment.

### **American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

501 3rd Street, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20001  
Toll Free: (800) 424-3688  
Direct: (202) 387-1968  
Fax: (202) 387-2193  
<http://www.aaid.org>

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) has been providing worldwide leadership in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities. We're a powerful community of leaders with a strong voice and important mission.

### **American Pregnancy Association**

425 Greenway Drive  
Suite 440  
Irving, TX 75038  
Toll Free: (800) 672-2296  
[info@americanpregnancy.org](mailto:info@americanpregnancy.org)  
<http://americanpregnancy.org/>

The American Pregnancy Association is a national health organization committed to promoting reproductive and pregnancy wellness through education, support, advocacy, and community awareness.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

1600 Clifton Rd  
Atlanta, GA 30333  
Toll Free: (800) 232-4636  
<http://www.cdc.gov>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are dedicated to protecting the health and safety of people - at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships.

### **Families Moving Forward Program**

2001 Eighth Avenue  
Suite 400  
Seattle, WA 98121  
Direct: (206) 987-7581  
[familiesmovingforward@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:familiesmovingforward@seattlechildrens.org)  
<http://depts.washington.edu/fmffasd/>

The Families Moving Forward (FMF) Program helps children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD), their families, and the professionals who care for them. It is a positive parenting program designed for children from ages 3 to 13 (approximately).

### **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Center for Excellence**

2101 Gaither Road  
Suite 500  
Rockville, MD 20850  
Toll Free: (866) 786-7327  
[fasdcenter1@ngc.com](mailto:fasdcenter1@ngc.com)  
<http://www.fascenter.samhsa.gov/>

The mission of the FASD Center for Excellence is to facilitate the development and improvement of behavioral health prevention and treatment systems in the United States by providing national leadership and facilitating collaboration and information sharing in the field.

### **Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center (GARD)**

P.O. Box 8126  
Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8126  
Toll Free: (888) 205-2311  
Fax: (301) 251-4911  
<https://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/>

The Genetic and Rare Diseases (GARD) Information Center is a program of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) and funded by two parts of the National Institutes of Health (NIH): NCATS and the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI). GARD provides the public with access to current, reliable, and easy to understand information about rare or genetic diseases in English or Spanish.

**March of Dimes Foundation**

1275 Mamaroneck Avenue

White Plains , NY 10605

<http://www.marchofdimes.org/>

The mission of the March of Dimes is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

**Mayo Clinic**

13400 E. Shea Blvd.

Scottsdale, AZ 85259

Direct: (480) 301-8000

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/>

The Mayo Clinic's mission to inspire hope and contribute to health and well-being by providing the best care to every patient through integrated clinical practice, education and research.

**MedlinePlus**

8600 Rockville Pike

Bethesda, MD 20894

[custserv@nlm.nih.gov](mailto:custserv@nlm.nih.gov)

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>

MedlinePlus is the National Institutes of Health's Web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, the world's largest medical library, it brings you information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues in language you can understand. MedlinePlus offers reliable, up-to-date health information, anytime, anywhere, for free.

Created by the U.S. National Library of Medicine

**National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities**

1825 K Street, NW,  
Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20006  
Direct: (202) 506-5813  
Fax: (202) 506-5846  
[info@nacdd.org](mailto:info@nacdd.org)  
<http://www.nacdd.org/home/>

NACDD is the national association for the 56 State and Territorial Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils) which receive federal funding to support programs that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion for all Americans with developmental disabilities.

**National Center for Biotechnology Information**

8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20894  
[pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](mailto:pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

MISSION: IMS brings together an international community of health care professionals, researchers, educators, and others to improve care and transform delivery of treatment to those suffering from soft tissue pain through the promotion and exchange of globally recognized research, education, and innovation in patient care.

**National Organization for Rare Disorders**

55 Kenosia Avenue  
Danbury, CT 06813-1968  
Toll Free: (800) 999-6673  
Direct: (203) 744-0100  
Fax: (203) 263-9938  
<http://www.rarediseases.org>

NORD is a unique federation of voluntary health organizations dedicated to helping people with rare "orphan" diseases and assisting the organizations that serve them. NORD is committed to the identification, treatment, and cure of rare disorders through programs of education, advocacy, research, and service.

### **National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**

1200 Eton Court, NW  
Third Floor  
Washington, DC 20007  
Toll Free: (800) 666-6327  
Direct: (202) 785-4585  
Fax: (202) 466-6456  
information @nofas.org  
<http://www.nofas.org/>

The National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) is the leading voice and resource of the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) community. Founded in 1990, NOFAS is the only international, non-profit organization committed solely to FASD primary prevention, advocacy and support.

### **Pediatric Brain Foundation**

2144 E. Republic Rd.  
Building B, Suite 202  
Springfield, MO 65804  
Direct: (417) 887-4242  
[info@pediatricbrainfoundation.org](mailto:info@pediatricbrainfoundation.org)  
<http://www.pediatricbrainfoundation.org/>

Pediatric Brain Foundation's Mission is Three-fold:

- Expedite scientific research to find treatments and cures for the more than 14 million children living with some form of neurological disorder
- Provide families and health care professionals with up-to-date information and resources on the latest discoveries in pediatric neurology
- Educate the public and public officials on the critical importance of funding pediatric neurological research

**The Arc**

1825 K Street, NW,  
Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20006  
Toll Free: (800) 433-5255  
Direct: (202) 534-3700  
Fax: (202) 534-3731  
[info@thearc.org](mailto:info@thearc.org)  
<http://thearc.org>

The Arc is the largest national community-based organization advocating for and serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We encompass all ages and more than 100 different diagnoses including autism, Down syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, and various other developmental disabilities.

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