Accommodation and Compliance Series

Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees with Quadriplegia

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ODEP
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Employment Policy

Funded by a contract with the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

Preface

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Updated 01/24/2019.

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 Quadriplegia

People use wheelchairs for a variety of reasons, the most common reason being paralysis from spinal cord injuries. There are several hundred thousand individuals living with a spinal cord injury or spinal dysfunction. Most of these individuals are male. Also, people with arthritis, multiple sclerosis, back conditions, cancer, and other impairments may use wheelchairs to assist with mobility.

Quadriplegia 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 Quadriplegia

People with limitations from quadriplegia 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 who are aging 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

Decreased Stamina/Fatigue

- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Elevating Wheelchairs
- Ergonomic Assessments
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Job Restructuring
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Task Rotation
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Overall Body Weakness/Strength

- Aide/Assistant/Attendant

- Elevating Wheelchairs
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Foldable / Transport Wheelchairs
- Independent Living Aids
- Large-Rated Wheelchairs
- Modified Break Schedule
- Power Assist for Manual Wheelchairs
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Personal Safety and Fall Alert Devices
- Personal Transportation and Mobility Products
- Stand-up Wheelchairs
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Toileting Aids
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Pain

- Alternative Input Devices
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Alternative Mice
- Automatic Door Openers
- Flexible Schedule
- Gooseneck and Other Telephone Holders
- Modified Break Schedule
- Service Animal
- Speech Recognition Software
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Toileting/Grooming Issue

- Accessible Toilets and Toilet Seats
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Flexible Schedule
- Grab Bars - Toilet Hinged Arm Support
- Grooming and Dressing Aids
- Independent Living Aids
- Modified Break Schedule
- Swing Away Grab Bars
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Toileting Aids
- Transfer Aids
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Walking

- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- All-Terrain Scooters
- All-Terrain Wheelchairs
- Foldable / Transport Wheelchairs
- Large-Rated Scooters
- Large-Rated Wheelchairs
- Personal Transportation and Mobility Products
- Reclining Wheelchairs
- Scooters for Small Stature
- Scooters
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Walkers for Tall Individuals
- Wheelchairs
- Wheelchairs for Small Stature
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Work-Related Functions

Commute

- Flexible Schedule
- Ridesharing/Carpooling
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Transportation Assistance

Off Site Access

- Accessible Vehicles
- All-Terrain Wheelchairs
- Flexible Schedule
- Personal Transportation and Mobility Products
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Transportation Assistance

Work Site Access

- Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Accessible Toilets and Toilet Seats
- Alternative Locks
- Building Accessibility Products
- Door Knob Grips and Handles
- Flexible Schedule
- Portable Ramps
- Ramps
- Scooters
- Service Animal
- Support Animal
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Wheelchair Lifts
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Work Station Access

- Adjustable and Ergonomic School Desks and Equipment

- Adjustable Desk Top Workstations for Office Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Work Platforms

Situations and Solutions:

A psychiatrist with quadriplegia was relocated to another office building.
The office building was an older building and was not wheelchair accessible. To accommodate this employee, the employer made renovations which included installing an entrance ramp and modifying the restroom. This enabled the employee to continue working as a successful psychiatrist.

A speech therapist with quadriplegia could not access the workstation that was typically provided.
The employer accommodated the employee with an adjustable workstation that could elevate to permit their wheelchair to fit under the workstation.

A marketing professional with quadriplegia was required to travel to multiple conferences a year.
She had a hard time navigating airports and traveling to the conference center once at her destination. As an accommodation, the employer coordinated her travel arrangements with the airport whom then provide mobility assistance. The employer also hired a work-related travel aid to assist the employee once at the final destination.

A local government employee with quadriplegia requested to be allowed to have her personal attendant come into the workplace to help her eat lunch and take care of personal needs on her breaks.
Because it was obvious that the employee had a disability and needed the requested accommodation, the employer provided the accommodation without requesting any documentation.

An applicant with quadriplegia interviewed for a grant writing position.
The employer asked the applicant how they would perform tasks on the computer. The applicant explained they successfully used an eye controlled device which permitted them to input data with their eye movement. The applicant was offered the position and became a valued employee.

A person who was a quadriplegic was hired as a project manager.
Once on the job they realized they were unable to operate the office phone. As an accommodation, the employer provided a smart phone the employee could mount to their wheelchair and utilize voice commands.

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
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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
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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.

MedlinePlus
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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.

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The Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC) summarizes research, identifies health information needs, and develops information resources to support the Model Systems programs in meeting the needs of individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI), spinal cord injury (SCI), and burn injury.

The Model Systems are funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) to conduct innovative and high-quality research, provide patient care, and offer other services to improve the health and overall quality of life for individuals with TBI, SCI, and burn injury.

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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.

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