



Accommodation and Compliance Series

Workplace Accommodation Toolkit

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JAN is a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's
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Introduction

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Workplace Accommodation Toolkit helps employers navigate the accommodation process under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act. This Toolkit will use the term "ADA" throughout to refer to the reasonable accommodation requirements, as the rules are the same under both laws.

The ADA is a federal civil rights law that prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities and requires covered entities to provide reasonable accommodations. Even employers who are not covered may find the Toolkit's practical guidance on the accommodation process helpful and applicable to their workplace. Whether you're a small business owner, human resources professional, reasonable accommodation coordinator, supervisor, front-line manager, or legal expert, this Toolkit is designed to assist anyone responsible for handling workplace accommodation requests.

JAN is the leading source of free and expert guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. This toolkit draws from JAN's extensive experience, [AskJAN.org](https://askjan.org) resources, templates, checklists, and training materials—all curated to support workplace accommodation efforts.

The Toolkit offers:

- A basic overview of reasonable accommodations and key concepts,
- Step-by-step guidance on engaging in the accommodation process,
- Practical guidance on documenting the accommodation process, including sample templates, forms, and a log to support documentation efforts,
- Tools for ongoing accommodation process support, and
- Training and development resources.

This Toolkit will be updated as new information becomes available and accommodation strategies evolve. If you encounter a situation not covered here or would like to explore an issue in more detail, [contact JAN](#) for free and confidential consultation.

Reasonable Accommodation Basics

One of the key non-discrimination requirements of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified job seekers and employees with disabilities. Accommodation refers to any change to the application or hiring process, the job, or the work environment that enables an individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job or enjoy equal employment opportunities. A modification or adjustment is "reasonable" if it seems reasonable on its face, if it appears to be "feasible" or "plausible" ([EEOC, 2022](#)).

Reasonable accommodation must be provided by ADA covered entities unless providing one would pose an [undue hardship](#)—significant difficulty or expense—for the employer. Covered entities include private employers with 15 or more employees, state and local government employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, and joint labor-management committees. For simplicity, this Toolkit refers to covered entities as “employers.” For more information, refer to [Threshold Issues](#), section 2-III-B.

There is no exhaustive list of reasonable accommodations. Common examples include:

- Making existing facilities accessible
- Job restructuring, including reassigning non-essential job tasks or changing when or how essential tasks are performed
- Flexible, part-time, or modified scheduling
- Modifying workplace policies (e.g., telework, attendance, dress code, animals in the workplace, etc.)
- Acquiring assistive technology or adaptive equipment
- Changing tests, training materials or formats
- Providing written instructions, visual aids, or communication supports
- Providing qualified interpreters, captioners, readers, or job coaches
- Reassignment to a vacant position
- Leave

For additional information about reasonable accommodation, refer to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) [Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA](#) and JAN's [Employers' Practical Guide to Reasonable Accommodation under the ADA](#).

Use JAN's [A to Z Listing of Disabilities and Accommodations](#) for a searchable database of accommodation ideas by disability, limitation, job function, topic, or accommodation, and the [Situations and Solutions Finder](#) to explore a wide range of accommodation scenarios.

Key Terms and Concepts

Individual with a Disability

Reasonable accommodation must be provided to **individuals with disabilities** except when it would cause an undue hardship. The ADA does not contain a definitive list of medical conditions that constitute disabilities. Instead, the ADA defines a person with a disability as someone who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more "major life activities," (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Individuals who only meet the "regarded as" definition are not entitled to receive reasonable accommodation. For information about how to determine whether a person has a disability under the ADA, refer to the ADA National Network's [How is Disability Defined in the ADA](#).

An individual with a disability must also be qualified. Meaning, they must meet the minimum job requirements for education, experience, skills, etc., and be able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

Essential vs. Marginal Job Functions

Reasonable accommodations enable employees with disabilities to perform the **essential functions** of a job. Employers never have to reallocate essential functions as a reasonable accommodation but may if they choose.

- **Essential functions** are the core duties of the job. Accommodations must enable the employee to perform these duties.
- **Marginal functions** are less critical and may be modified or reassigned as part of a reasonable accommodation.

Refer to Chapter II, 2.3(a) Identifying the Essential Functions of a Job in the [Technical Assistance Manual for Title I of the ADA](#).

Accommodation Process

The **accommodation process** (also known as the interactive process) is a flexible collaborative process where employers and employees with disabilities who request accommodations work together to come up with accommodations by:

- Understanding the nature of the employee's accommodation need,
- Exploring possible accommodation solutions, and
- Identifying and implementing effective, reasonable accommodation solutions.

The ADA doesn't mandate a specific process, but the EEOC and JAN suggest using a structured approach centered on communication and flexibility. Refer to JAN's [Sample Accommodation Process](#) for step-by-step guidance.

Undue Hardship

Undue hardship can result when an accommodation causes significant difficulty or expense relative to the size, resources, or structure of the employer. This is evaluated on a case-by-case basis, has a high threshold, and is typically a defense for when no accommodation can be provided.

Detailed information about reasonable accommodation and these key terms and concepts can be found in the EEOC [Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA](#).

Costs and Benefits of Accommodations

Accommodations are often simple, low-cost, and highly effective. They can level the playing field for people with disabilities and boost productivity for everyone. Plus, accommodations help employers attract top talent, retain experienced workers, build adaptable teams, and stay compliant with laws such as the ADA.

JAN data shows that workplace accommodations are not only typically low in cost, but also positively impact the workplace in many ways. The [Low Cost, High Impact Report](#) summarizes cost and benefit data from employer surveys collected by JAN. The surveyed employers represent various industries and company sizes that previously contacted JAN for guidance on accommodations, the ADA, or both. Overall employers report that the benefits of workplace accommodations far exceed the costs. Recent survey results show that most accommodations cost nothing and the median cost for providing a one-time accommodation is \$300. Key advantages include retaining valuable employees, boosting productivity and morale, and lowering workers' compensation and training expenses.

Common Myths & Facts

Myth	Fact
Accommodations are expensive.	Most cost less than \$300—many are no cost.
Only full-time employees are entitled to accommodations.	The ADA covers qualified applicants and employees, regardless of status.
Employers must always grant the requested accommodation.	Employers must consider the request and can offer effective alternatives if available.
Medical documentation is always required.	It may be requested when the disability or need for accommodation is not known or obvious but isn't required.

Sample Accommodation Process

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires covered employers to provide effective, reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. To help determine effective accommodations, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) recommends that employers use an “interactive process,” which simply means that employers and employees with disabilities who request accommodations work together to come up with accommodations.

Successfully handling a request for accommodation requires a clear, consistent accommodation process. The ADA doesn’t mandate a specific process, but the EEOC and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) suggest using a structured approach centered on communication and flexibility. In many instances, the appropriate accommodation is obvious and therefore it is not necessary to go through a formal step-by-step process. When an accommodation is not obvious, an appropriate accommodation is best determined through a flexible process. The EEOC recommends that employers:

- Analyze the job involved and determine its purpose and essential functions.
- Consult with the individual requesting accommodation to ascertain the precise job-related limitations imposed by their disability and how those limitations could be overcome with a reasonable accommodation.
- Identify potential accommodations and assess the effectiveness each would have in enabling the individual to perform the essential functions of the job.
- Consider the individual’s accommodation preference and select and implement the accommodation that is most appropriate for both the employee and the employer.

Below is a sample accommodation process that includes practical guidance and tools. Please note that this is a general example and may not reflect your organization’s preferred process. Before following this sample accommodation process, review your organization's formal policies and standard procedures.

Step 1: Recognize the Accommodation Request

The accommodation process is typically initiated by a request from an employee with a disability and it is vital that employers recognize when a request is being made.

According to the EEOC, individuals do not need to use legal terms or mention the ADA when requesting an accommodation. The individual can simply state the need for a change due to a health condition or disability.

When an applicant or employee expresses difficulty on-the-job related to a health condition or disability, the employer should assess whether it constitutes a request for accommodation under the ADA.

Examples:

- “The side effects of my medication are making it hard for me to focus.”
- “I’ll need to take six weeks off for medical treatment related to my back.”
- “I’d like to adjust my schedule so I can attend regular counseling sessions.”
- “My current desk isn’t accessible for my wheelchair.”

Practical Guidance:

- **Err on the side of caution:** If the employer is not sure whether an employee has requested an accommodation, they may ask the employee to clarify what is being requested and why.
- **Act quickly:** Employers should respond without delay once an accommodation request is identified. According to the EEOC, unnecessary delays in processing an accommodation request can violate the ADA ([EEOC, 2002](#)).
- **Assign responsibility:** Assign a specific individual or team to oversee the processing of accommodation requests to ensure timely and effective handling, and to prevent requests from being overlooked or delayed.
- **Conduct training:** Ensure that all managers and supervisors are trained to identify accommodation requests and understand the appropriate procedures for responding to and handling such requests.

Refer to the JAN resource [Recognizing an Accommodation Request Under the ADA](#) for strategies to help identify and respond to accommodation requests.

JAN’s [Sample Accommodation Request for Employers](#) is a useful resource to clarify and document employee accommodation requests. It includes sections to identify the accommodation being requested, document the reason for the request, and capture any additional information that may assist in processing the request.

Step 2: Begin the Accommodation Process

Once an accommodation request is made, begin a conversation with the employee and remember to engage in active listening, work collaboratively, identify common ground, and demonstrate mutual respect. The process may involve:

- Discussing the nature of the disability and any difficulty the individual is having,
- Identifying limitations affecting job performance,
- Clarifying the essential functions of the job, and
- Exploring potential accommodations.

This process need not be formal or complex. It can be flexible and often involves understanding the employee's functional limitations, job duties, and accommodation needs—and then working together to explore solutions. Maintaining open, respectful, and timely [communication is key](#).

While employees often propose specific accommodations, both parties are encouraged to suggest potential solutions. Employers can provide employees with an opportunity to share relevant information, while avoiding unnecessary requests for detailed medical information. However, gathering additional information about the employee's health condition and limitations may be necessary as part of the accommodation process.

Step 3: Request Information

Employers may gather the information necessary to evaluate and process an accommodation request. This may include documentation of the individual's disability and need for accommodation. According to the EEOC, an employer may ask an employee for reasonable documentation about their disability and functional limitations when the disability and/or the need for accommodation is not obvious. Reasonable documentation means that the employer may require only the documentation that is needed to establish that a person has an [ADA disability](#), and that the disability necessitates an accommodation. An employer cannot ask for documentation when: (1) both the disability and the need for reasonable accommodation are obvious, or (2) the individual has already provided the employer with sufficient information to substantiate that they have an ADA disability and needs the reasonable accommodation requested ([EEOC, 2002](#)).

If the disability or need for accommodation is not known or obvious, the employer may request medical information to:

- Confirm the existence of a covered disability,
- Understand the functional limitations, and
- Understand the need for accommodation.

The employee requesting the accommodation is often the best source of information about their disability and potential accommodations. When an employee is unable to provide [sufficient information](#), it may be appropriate to seek medical documentation. Employers should be careful not to request more information than necessary.

To determine whether an employee has a disability under the ADA, an employer may request medical documentation from an appropriate health care or rehabilitation professional. According to the EEOC, [appropriate professionals](#) include, but are not limited to, doctors (including psychiatrists), psychologists, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, vocational rehabilitation specialists, and licensed mental health professionals. Refer to the JAN resource [Who Can Provide Medical Documentation for ADA Purposes?](#).

Practical Guidance:

- **Identify the limitation and associated difficulty.** To determine effective accommodations, employers typically need to understand which limitation is creating a specific barrier.
- **Request information directly from the employee when possible.** Employees with disabilities are typically familiar with their limitations and often know what accommodations will work best for them.

- **Follow ADA rules for medical inquiries.** A good policy for employers is to only ask for information that is necessary. Broad requests for complete medical records will rarely, if ever, meet this test.

JAN provides practical guidance on [medical inquiries](#) and the ADA, including the following resources:

- [To Ask, or Not to Ask?](#) (when to request medical documentation)
- [Medical Inquiry in Response to an Accommodation Request](#) (how much documentation can be required to support an accommodation request)
- [A Flexible Approach to ADA Medical Documentation](#) (options when an employee has difficulty getting medical documentation)
- [Avoiding “The Waiting Place” After Requesting Medical Information](#) (how to avoid delays in getting medical documentation)
- [Recertifying the Ongoing Need for Accommodation](#) (when it’s appropriate to ask for updated medical documentation to support an existing accommodation)

Confidentiality of Medical Information

The ADA requires that all medical information—regardless of how it’s obtained—be kept confidential, stored separately from personnel files, and accessible only to authorized personnel (e.g., human resources professionals, reasonable accommodation coordinators, etc.). The EEOC allows limited exceptions:

- **Supervisors/managers** may be informed of necessary work restrictions or accommodations.
- **First aid/safety personnel** may be told if emergency treatment or special procedures are needed.
- **Government officials** may access information when investigating ADA compliance.
- **State workers' compensation offices/second injury funds** may receive relevant data per state laws.
- **Insurance providers** may be given information if a medical examination is required for coverage.

In some cases, supervisors may need to know the nature of a disability to implement accommodations; consult the employee before sharing such details. Often, only the accommodation(s)—not the specific medical diagnosis—is necessary for the supervisor to know. For more information, refer to the EEOC [Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees under the ADA](#).

Step 4: Explore and Choose Accommodations

Once the employer understands the employee's limitation and the related workplace issue, it's time to explore accommodation options. Employers should be open to creative solutions and start by inviting the employee to suggest ideas. If more input is needed, the employee's health care provider or other appropriate professional (e.g., vocational rehabilitation counselor, licensed professional counselor, etc.) may offer suggestions or confirm whether proposed accommodations would be effective. Employers can also consult outside resources like [JAN](#), vocational rehabilitation services, assistive technology experts, and disability-related organizations. However, remember to ensure confidentiality by omitting the employee's name and identifying details. Drawing from these resources, employers can suggest alternative accommodations that enable the employee to fulfill the critical elements of the job.

When exploring accommodations, evaluate all potential accommodations and consider:

- The employee's preferences,
- Effectiveness of the accommodation,
- Feasibility and cost, and
- Impact on operations.

Practical Guidance:

- **Stay open-minded.** Accommodations often involve doing things differently to address disability-related limitations.
- **Invite the employee to suggest accommodations.** They may have helpful ideas but are hesitant to share them without being asked.
- **Consult the employee's health care provider or other appropriate professional for input.** Some providers may help generate accommodation ideas collaboratively with employers.
- **Don't hesitate to use the [JAN](#) service.** It's a free, nationwide resource specifically designed to help employers and others find accommodation solutions.

After exploring accommodation options, the employer may choose the accommodation(s) to implement. According to the EEOC, while employee preference should be considered, the employer may choose any effective option, including the most cost-effective one. Consider alternative effective accommodations if the employee's preferred option causes undue hardship. Offering an alternative effective accommodation to the employee is not a denial of the employee's request for reasonable accommodation. Refer to [question 9 in the EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA](#).

If unsure about an accommodation's effectiveness, employers can test it for a trial period without being locked in. Trial accommodations can help evaluate an accommodation's effectiveness, bridge delays in securing permanent solutions, or address short-term needs. Providing temporary accommodations—even beyond ADA requirements—demonstrates good faith and might be valuable when time is needed to implement a permanent solution. Temporary accommodations are also a tool for retaining employees by addressing serious short-term impairments, helping navigate temporary workplace challenges, and providing support without creating long-term hardship for the employer.

A written agreement outlining a temporary accommodation or trial period and next steps if it doesn't work can help manage accommodation expectations and ensure clarity. Refer to the JAN resource [Temporary or Trial Accommodations](#) and a sample template for [documenting trial and temporary accommodations](#).

Step 5: Implement Accommodations

Once an accommodation is chosen, proper implementation is key. This may involve purchasing products or installing equipment, providing training to ensure effective use, modifying the employee's work schedule, adjusting relevant policies and informing appropriate personnel, coordinating services, or reassigning the employee and offering support as needed. According to the EEOC, employers should act promptly to provide the accommodation, as unnecessary delays can result in a violation of the ADA ([EEOC, 2002](#)).

Practical Guidance:

- **Ensure the accommodation is fully implemented.** One effective approach is to simply follow up with the employee and confirm the accommodation is working as intended.
- **Share accommodation details with essential personnel only when needed, keeping ADA confidentiality rules in mind.** Limit accommodation information to managers or supervisors who must be involved in implementation, reserving specific medical information (e.g., diagnosis).
- **Establish a point of contact responsible for monitoring accommodations.** Employers should provide an assigned point of contact to encourage employees to communicate any issues they have with their accommodations.

Step 6: Monitor Accommodations

Accommodations must effectively meet the individual's needs by enabling them to perform the essential functions of the job or access equal benefits and privileges of employment. Accommodations may lose effectiveness due to changes in an employee's health condition, job duties, workplace, or equipment. Changes sometimes occur and employers may need to periodically monitor the ongoing effectiveness of accommodations to ensure they do not become an undue hardship.

After implementation, ensure the accommodation is effective, monitor for changes in performance or needs, and return to the accommodation process when it's necessary to explore alternative accommodation solutions. There is no one-size-fits-all approach for monitoring accommodations. Accommodations should generally be reviewed:

- Periodically (e.g., annually or during performance reviews),
- When workplace conditions change (e.g., new equipment, policies, or job duties),
- When the employee's health condition changes,
- If performance issues arise and there is a connection to the employee's health condition, or
- When the employee requests a reassessment.

Regular, proactive check-ins—paired with open communication—help ensure accommodations remain effective and appropriate over time. Using a checklist or customizable form can help guide and document the process. JAN offers a resource, intended as a general guide—not legal advice. Refer to the JAN [Sample Form for Monitoring Accommodations](#).

Practical Guidance:

- **Evaluate effectiveness regularly.** As workplace conditions evolve, accommodations may need adjustment, so employers should periodically review their effectiveness.
- **Ensure ongoing maintenance.** When accommodations involve equipment, employers must ensure the equipment is properly maintained and/or updated to prevent breakdowns and support continued effectiveness.
- **Promote open communication.** Just like with any workplace issue, ongoing dialogue is essential for successful accommodations. Employees should feel comfortable reporting any accommodation issues or changes.
- **Limit medical inquiries.** While monitoring accommodations, focus questions on the accommodation's effectiveness, not the employee's medical condition. Refer to [Medical Exams and Inquiries](#) for practical guidance on disability-related inquiries and the ADA.
- **Document outcomes.** Note whether the accommodation is still effective. If adjustments are needed, document the steps taken to explore, choose, and implement changes.

The [Accommodation Process Quick Reference Checklist](#) is a quick reference guide to help employers effectively respond to and manage employee accommodation requests under the ADA. It outlines key accommodation process actions, from recognizing the accommodation request, to requesting information, and exploring, implementing, and monitoring accommodations.

Document the Accommodation Process

Documentation helps employers maintain consistency, demonstrate good-faith efforts, and ensure continuity when roles, needs, or personnel change. It also protects both the employer and employee by creating a transparent, verifiable record of the accommodation process. Practical guidance on documenting the accommodation process can be found in the [Documenting the Accommodation Process](#) section of the [Workplace Accommodation Toolkit](#), which includes a sample [Accommodation Process Documentation Log](#).

Accommodation Process Support

Looking for accommodation process support? Just remember—Ask JAN! Whether managing a first request for accommodation or a well-established process, [JAN](#) is here to help. JAN provides free, confidential consultation services, expert guidance, and practical tools to help employers navigate the accommodation process and implement effective workplace accommodations. Refer to the [Accommodation Process Support](#) section of the Toolkit for information on key services and tools.

Accommodation Process Quick Reference Checklist

Recognize the Accommodation Request

- ☐ Receive and acknowledge the request
- ☐ Note date and method of accommodation request (verbal, email, written, etc.)
- ☐ Confirm understanding of the employee's concern or limitation
- ☐ Acknowledge the request in writing (if not already documented)
- ☐ Begin an accommodation file (separate from personnel file)

Begin the Accommodation Process

- ☐ Schedule and document a meeting with the employee
- ☐ Discuss job duties and limitations
- ☐ Ask for employee input on accommodation solutions
- ☐ Keep a log of dates, participants, and summary notes

Request Information

- ☐ Determine whether documentation is necessary, if condition/accommodation need is not obvious
- ☐ Send written request outlining necessary information
- ☐ Receive and store medical documentation securely and separately
- ☐ Document summary of limitations (not diagnosis)

Explore and Choose the Accommodation(s)

- ☐ Review potential accommodations for effectiveness and feasibility
- ☐ Consult with relevant departments (IT, facilities, legal, etc.)
- ☐ Make a decision and communicate it in writing to the employee
- ☐ Document the rationale (especially if denied or an alternative was approved)

Implement the Accommodation(s)

- ☐ Coordinate logistics and confidentially notify necessary personnel
- ☐ Provide instructions or training if needed
- ☐ Use a checklist to ensure completion of implementation steps
- ☐ Document the implementation date and steps taken

Monitor the Accommodation(s)

- ☐ Schedule a follow-up meeting (e.g., 1–2 weeks after implementation)
- ☐ Ask for feedback on the effectiveness of the accommodation
- ☐ Make adjustments if needed
- ☐ Log follow-up conversations and changes
- ☐ Monitor performance and any changes in condition or job duties
- ☐ Return to the accommodation process if accommodation becomes ineffective
- ☐ Continue documenting all updates and decisions

Documenting the Accommodation Process

Documenting the accommodation process is a critical part of managing workplace accommodations. It helps employers maintain consistency and ensure continuity when roles, needs, or personnel change. It also protects both the employer and employee by creating a transparent, verifiable record of the process.

Effective documentation of the accommodation process is clear, concise, factual, and respectful. Begin by recording all steps from the initial request—whether verbal or written—including request forms, relevant medical documentation when applicable, communications, meeting notes, decisions, and follow-up. Track all interactions, noting who was involved, what was discussed, and any outcomes or next steps. Avoid subjective language. Instead focus on objective details to ensure transparency and accountability.

Clearly document whether an accommodation was approved (including if/when an alternative accommodation was offered) or denied, when it was implemented, and any conditions attached, such as a trial period. If a request is denied, explain the reason (e.g., undue hardship) and record any alternative solutions considered. If an employee declines or refuses the alternative effective accommodation offered, the refusal is not considered a denial by the employer. Confidentiality is essential—store records securely and limit access to only those who need to know. Human resources staff and managers should be trained to document the process consistently and understand the importance of maintaining clear, confidential records.

Generally, documentation of the accommodation process will include:

- Date and method of the accommodation request,
- Notes from meetings, discussions, and correspondence with the individual,
- What accommodation(s) was approved, modified, or denied, and why,
- What accommodation(s) was implemented, and the timeline, personnel, and actions involved, and
- Steps taken to monitor for effectiveness and adjustments if needed.

Sometimes, documentation will include medical information, but only when necessary. Medical documentation must be kept in accordance with the confidentiality rules of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA requires that all medical information—regardless of how it's obtained—be kept confidential, stored separately from personnel files, and accessible only to authorized personnel (e.g., human resources professionals, reasonable accommodation coordinators, etc.).

Also, include evaluations or assessments completed by internal or third-party evaluators that informed the accommodation decision. These might come from internal human resources or occupational health and safety staff, or from third-party professionals. Details such as the date, provider, summary of findings relevant to job performance, and how the assessment or evaluation informed the final accommodation decision may be helpful. These assessments may include, but are not limited to:

- Functional capacity evaluation,
- Job analysis or job task evaluation,
- Ergonomic assessment,
- Assistive technology assessment, or
- Mental health evaluation, etc.

Keeping accommodation records well-organized is essential for managing the process efficiently. Use a consistent system—either digital or physical folders—for each individual case. This helps track progress, provides clarity during internal reviews, and ensures that relevant documentation is easily accessible if questions or disputes arise later.

To support employers in managing this process, JAN offers free tools, templates, and practical guidance to help document accommodation situations. These resources can make it easier to maintain thorough, consistent records while respecting confidentiality and promoting effective accommodation outcomes. For example, JAN's sample [Accommodation Process Documentation Log](#) is a customizable tool for ensuring consistent and thorough documentation of the accommodation process. Check if your organization requires a specific documentation process before using the log. It can be used with the [Accommodation Process Quick Reference Checklist](#).

Also refer to these other JAN resources for documenting the accommodation process:

- [Sample Reasonable Accommodation Request for Employers](#)
- [Sample Limited Medical Documentation Template](#)
- [Sample Medical Inquiry in Response to an Accommodation Request](#)
- [Sample Accommodation Approval Template](#)
- [Sample Accommodation Denial Template](#)
- [Sample Temporary/Trial Accommodation Approval Template](#)
- [Sample Plan of Action](#)
- [Sample Monitoring Accommodations Template](#)

Accommodation Process Documentation Log

This Accommodation Process Documentation Log is a customizable tool to help ensure consistent and thorough documentation of the accommodation process. Check if your organization requires a specific documentation process before use. This log can be used in combination with the [Accommodation Process Quick Reference Checklist](#). This sample documentation log is not legal advice and does not ensure legal compliance.

Document each step of the accommodation process, including discussions, gathered information, and decisions. All medical information must remain confidential, be stored separately from personnel files, and be accessible only to authorized personnel.

1. Recognize the Accommodation Request

The accommodation process is typically initiated by a request from an employee with a disability; therefore, it is vital that employers recognize and document when such a request has been made. Refer to JAN's [Sample Reasonable Accommodation Request Form](#) for a template to help document accommodation requests.

Date accommodation request was received:

Method of request (verbal, written, email, form):

Name and contact information of the requester:

Job title of the requester:

Description of the reason for the request (health condition, limitation, work-related issue, etc.):

Description of the accommodation requested:

Confirmation of acknowledgment sent to the requester (date and method):

2. Begin the Accommodation Process

Once an accommodation request is made, begin communicating with the employee. During the accommodation process, it is important to engage in active listening, work collaboratively, identify common ground, and demonstrate mutual respect.

Date(s) of accommodation meeting(s):

Attendees (internal and external):

Notes from discussion(s):

Alternative accommodation options proposed (if applicable):

Requester's input documented:

Agreement on next steps:

Summary email sent to employee (date):

3. Request Information

Employers may gather the information necessary to evaluate and process an accommodation request. This may include documentation of the employee's disability and need for accommodation. According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, an employer may ask an employee for reasonable documentation about their disability and functional limitations when the disability and/or the need for accommodation is not obvious. Refer to JAN's [Sample Forms](#) page for templates to help with requesting information.

Request for medical or supporting documentation, if applicable (include date(s) and method of request):

Documentation received (date(s), medical notes, evaluations, etc.):

Review of documentation completed (date):

Eligibility for accommodation determined (yes/no):

Notes on how the individual's health condition qualifies as a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act:

4. Explore and Choose Accommodation(s)

Once the employer understands the employee's limitation(s) and the related workplace issue(s), it's time to explore and choose accommodation options.

Notes on accommodation solution(s) explored and proposed:

Accommodation approved/denied/modified: (Refer to JAN's [Sample Forms](#) page for templates to help draft approval/denial letter.)

Date of decision:

Summary of rationale for decision:

Notification sent to requester (date(s) and method):

Documentation of requester's acceptance of accommodation(s) or appeal:

5. Implement the Accommodation(s)

Once an accommodation is chosen, proper implementation is key. This may involve installing equipment and training the employee, informing a manager of a schedule or policy change, coordinating outside services, or supporting the employee through a reassignment. Implement the accommodation promptly.

Implementation plan:

Responsible parties identified (supervisor, IT, facilities, etc.):

Date of implementation:

Confirmation that accommodation was implemented:

Describe training or support provided to implement the accommodation:

Point of contact for monitoring the accommodation:

6. Monitor the Accommodation(s)

An accommodation must effectively meet the individual's needs by enabling them to perform the essential functions of the job or access equal benefits and privileges of employment. After implementation, ensure the accommodation is effective, monitor for changes in performance or needs, and return to the accommodation process when it's necessary to explore alternative accommodation solutions. Refer to JAN's [Sample Form for Monitoring Accommodations](#).

Scheduled follow-up date(s):

Feedback collected from requester:

Accommodation adjustments made (if necessary):

Ongoing notes or progress updates:

7. Confidentiality and Recordkeeping

Employee medical information and accommodation details must be stored separately from personnel files, and accessible only to authorized personnel (e.g., human resources (HR) professionals, reasonable accommodation coordinators, etc.). Supervisors/managers may be informed of necessary work restrictions or accommodations. Often, only the accommodation(s)—not the specific medical diagnosis—is necessary for the supervisor to know.

Documentation stored in secure, access-controlled system:

Records filed separately from general HR files:

Staff access reviewed and restricted:

Retention timeline noted (per organizational/legal policy):

8. Audit and Review (Optional)

Accommodation situation reviewed for completeness:

Organizational policy compliance confirmed:

Lessons learned or process improvements noted:

Accommodation Process Support

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) provides free, confidential consultation services, expert guidance, and practical tools to help employers navigate the accommodation process and implement effective workplace accommodations. JAN is a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and has provided guidance on workplace accommodations since 1983.

Key Services

Direct Assistance: Looking for accommodation process support? Just remember—Ask JAN! Whether managing a first request for accommodation or a well-established process, JAN is here to help. JAN provides direct assistance to employers, helping them find practical solutions tailored to job tasks, functional limitations, and workplace settings. JAN offers strategies to navigate the accommodation process and provides guidance on laws such as Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act.

JAN consultants specialize in various disability and ADA-related areas, offering personalized guidance, practical solutions, and relevant resources—typically at the time of contact or within 24 hours. While JAN offers trusted technical assistance, it does not provide legal advice or advocacy services.

JAN offers easy and convenient access to direct assistance. Users can contact JAN through a toll-free phone line, live chat at [AskJAN.org](https://askjan.org), or email. Email options include a general [contact form](#) for quick questions or [JAN On Demand](#), which collects detailed information to better tailor support. This flexible approach ensures users receive personalized, expert guidance in the way that works best for them.

Key Tools at AskJAN.org

Accommodation and ADA Information at AskJAN.org: [AskJAN.org](https://askjan.org) is a comprehensive resource for guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment. The site offers free tools, resources, and expert information on the ADA, accommodation ideas by disability or limitation, and direct access to guidance for employers and individuals.

A to Z of Disabilities and Accommodations: The [A to Z of Disabilities and Accommodations](#) is an easy-to-navigate feature linking specific disabilities and limitations to practical workplace accommodation ideas. It includes detailed information on health conditions, job functions, sample solutions, and ADA-related guidance. Designed for employers, people with disabilities, and service providers, it's a helpful starting point in the accommodation process. Accommodations should be tailored to individual needs; contact JAN for personalized support.

Situations and Solutions Finder: The [Situations and Solutions Finder](#) is an interactive tool that provides access to real-world examples of accommodation scenarios organized by disability, limitation, or occupation. It allows users to explore how similar accommodation situations have been addressed, offering practical ideas and outcomes. The **Situations and Solutions Finder** is not a comprehensive accommodation resource, but it offers ideas about the types of accommodations that may be possible.

MyJAN: [MyJAN](#) is unique to AskJAN.org. This feature allows users to create a personalized, secure space to electronically organize and save accommodation and ADA resources published by JAN at AskJAN.org. Key features include automatic updates to saved links, alerts for new content, customizable organization options, and flexible viewing formats. MyJAN supports collaboration, documentation, and continuity throughout the accommodation process. Accounts are free, private, and require only an email to set up. A vanity account may be created for use by a group, department, or organization wide.

Key Pages for Employers at AskJAN.org

Information for Employers: JAN supports employers in the accommodation process through a dedicated [Employer](#) page on AskJAN.org. This resource hub provides easy access to information on ADA compliance, accommodation solutions by occupation and industry, policy development, handling accommodation requests during hiring and employment, and related training sources for human resources (HR) professionals, managers, and accommodation coordinators.

Practical Guides: JAN [Practical Guides](#) provide concise, actionable information on a wide range of accommodation and ADA topics and are grounded in ADA compliance and accommodation process best practices.

Industry/Occupation-Specific Accommodation Ideas: JAN offers accommodation situations and solutions by industry and occupation on the [Employer](#) page. This section helps employers address common barriers faced by workers in sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, and more. It emphasizes solutions that are job-specific and contextually relevant.

ADA Library: The ADA Library offers a curated collection of ADA information, including guidance on Title I employment provisions, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforcement guidance, and more.

Training: The JAN [Training](#) page links to free, high-quality training materials offering practical strategies and expert insights to inform and empower HR professionals, managers, and accommodation coordinators. Register to attend JAN [Live Webcasts](#) or access training content in the [Webcast Series Library](#), [eLearning](#), [Video Training Resources](#), and [Solution Showcase Video Series](#) sections. These materials are [copyright-free](#) and may be used, shared, or customized for training and development purposes.

Navigating the accommodation process can be complex, but employers don't have to do it alone. JAN offers a wide range of free, expert services and tools designed to support every step of the accommodation process—from identifying practical, individualized accommodation solutions to understanding ADA requirements. Need assistance? [Ask JAN!](#) We can help.

Training and Development

Effective accommodation practices begin with informed people. Providing training and ongoing education helps ensure that human resources (HR) personnel, managers, and supervisors understand their responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and can respond to accommodation needs with confidence and consistency. Training promotes consistency and fairness because it helps standardize how accommodation requests are handled across departments, reducing confusion, bias, and compliance risk.

Informed HR personnel, managers, and supervisors are better equipped to recognize and respond constructively to employee needs when trained. Training also empowers managers to support employee success. When supervisors view accommodations as opportunities—not obstacles—they become more creative and flexible in supporting employees while maintaining team productivity.

Communication, trust, and morale also improve with training. Training encourages open, respectful dialogue about accommodations, building trust between employees and leadership. This transparency leads to a more engaged workplace.

Training Benefits Everyone

Training on the ADA and reasonable accommodations can benefit the entire organization by ensuring that every employee—regardless of role—understands their responsibilities and rights. Human resources personnel play a central role in developing policies, managing documentation and medical information, and guiding the accommodation process to ensure ADA compliance. Supervisors and managers must be equipped to recognize accommodation requests, uphold confidentiality, and communicate effectively with both employees and HR. Executives and leadership benefit by understanding [the business case for accommodations](#), enabling them to allocate resources wisely. Even employees not directly involved in processing accommodations should know their rights and responsibilities under the ADA, including how to request support when needed. With proper training, every level of the organization is empowered to enhance communication and create an environment where all employees can succeed.

Training should cover key topics that build understanding and help HR personnel, managers, and supervisors navigate the accommodation process effectively. Suggested areas of training include:

- ADA and [reasonable accommodation basics](#)
- Recognizing and responding to accommodation requests
- Engaging in the [accommodation process](#)
- Maintaining confidentiality
- [Documenting accommodations](#) and best practices
- Examples of common accommodations
- Avoiding discrimination, retaliation, or inappropriate disclosure

Training Resources

JAN offers free, high-quality [training](#) materials—webinars, videos, and guides—that can be accessed through the [Webcast Series](#), [Webcast Series Library](#), [eLearning](#), [Video Training Resources](#), and [Guides](#) sections of the website. These materials are [copyright-free](#) and may be used, shared, or customized for training and development purposes. [AskJAN.org](#) also includes extensive information about ADA and accommodation topics to support ongoing education.

Other Training Sources

In addition to JAN, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and organizations like the ADA National Network and Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability (EARN) also offer valuable training resources and certification on ADA and accommodation topics.

- [ADA Coordinator Training Certification Program](#) (Titles I, II, and III)
- [ADA National Network – ADA Training](#)
- [Disability Management Employer Coalition \(DMEC\) Certification and Training](#)
- [EARN – Dinah Cohen Learning Center](#)
- [EEOC – Outreach, Education, and Technical Assistance](#)
- [HR Certification – ADA Training and Certification Program](#)

This document was developed by the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). JAN is fully funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy under Cooperative Agreement No. 26475OD000008-01-00 through a two-year award totaling \$7,000,000. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Labor. Nor does mention of tradenames, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Labor.