

Your Right to Work

A Guide to Workplace Accommodations for Job Seekers with Disabilities



www.untappedtalent.ca

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Introduction

Untapped Talent is CCRW's online job board where people with disabilities can find jobs with disability-confident employers across Canada.

For employers, being disability confident means a company is willing and prepared to meet the diverse needs of all people in the workplace.

Job seekers can use Untapped Talent for free to find inclusive job listings and tools. Employers can find great candidates and show their commitment to creating an inclusive workplace.





Untapped Talent is powered by CCRW, Canada's leading organization on disability and work.

CCRW creates more accessible employment opportunities by working with others, building skills, sharing ideas, and changing how people think about disability and work.

Through CCRW's offices across the country, CCRW supports job seekers with disabilities find meaningful employment. CCRW supports job seekers with disabilities every step of the way, believing that everyone should have an equal opportunity to succeed.



Real CCRW Client Testimonial

CCRW taught me about workplace accommodations that I had previously been unfamiliar with. As a person underrepresented in my field of STEM (a woman, queer identifying with a disability, and a single parent), CCRW also provided valuable supports such as childcare and equipment that helped me reach the requirements to participate in my field.

My Employment Coach at CCRW was an absolute delight and remarkable, an ingenious support and caring worker. Going above and beyond in terms of trying to get me the equipment I needed and educating me about my rights and potential assistive aids in the workplace.

- Lesley

Before You Begin

This eBook will include some **key terms** that will be important in understanding workplace accommodations. Key terms will be **bold** and defined in the section they appear, and can be found in the glossary at the end of this eBook. To get started, we will review several of the key terms that relate to workplace accommodations.



Accessibility: Making places, products, or services usable by people with disabilities. This includes physical spaces, websites, documents, and workplace practices.

Accommodation: Changes made to a job, workplace, or work process to help someone with a disability perform their job duties. Examples include flexible schedules, special equipment, or modified workspaces. Also known as accessibility support.

Disability: Any physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory condition that can affect how someone does their job. Includes both visible and invisible disabilities.

Disclosure: Telling someone about your disability. You control when and how much you share about your disability at work.

Intersectionality: When a person belongs to more than one group that faces discrimination, and these identities combine to affect their experiences.

Understanding Your Rights

You have rights at work. If you have a disability and you are looking for a job or already have a job, the law protects you. This means no one can treat you unfairly because of your disability, you can ask for accommodations to do your job, and your workplace should be accessible for people with disabilities. These are your legal rights.

CHAPTER 1



What is Disability under Canadian Law?

In Canada, "disability" means many different things. It includes any physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory condition that can affect how you do your job.



Cognitive Disability: Conditions that affect thinking, learning, memory, or problem-solving. Examples include intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, ADHD, or brain injuries.

This Includes:

- Physical disabilities (mobility, dexterity, stamina issues).
- Mental health issues (depression, anxiety, PTSD).
- Intellectual or **cognitive disabilities**.
- Learning disabilities.
- Sensory disabilities (vision, hearing).
- Chronic illnesses (diabetes, epilepsy, chronic pain).
- Invisible disabilities (autism, ADHD, chronic fatigue).

You don't need a formal diagnosis to have rights. What matters is how your disability affects your ability to work.

Note on Intersectionality: Your experience with disability may be shaped by other aspects of your identity, such as race, gender, age, sexual orientation, or immigration status. These intersecting identities can affect how you experience workplace barriers and discrimination. For example, a Black woman with a disability may face unique challenges that differ from those experienced by a white man with the same disability. Understanding this can help you advocate for accommodations that address your full experience.

Your Rights Under the Canadian Human Rights Act

The **Canadian Human Rights Act** protects you from **discrimination** based on disability. This law applies to federal government jobs, banks and airlines, telecommunications companies, and transportation companies that cross provincial borders.

Your Rights

- The right to be treated fairly at work.
- The right to work without bullying or harassment.
- The right to ask for changes that help you do your job.
- The right to keep your disability private.



What This Means for You

These rights protect you at work. Your employer must treat you the same as other workers. They cannot bully you or let others bully you. If you need help to do your job well, you can ask for it. You choose who you tell about your disability. No one can force you to share this information.



Canadian Human Rights Act: Federal law that protects people from discrimination, including discrimination based on disability. Applies to federal government jobs and federally regulated industries.



Discrimination: Treating someone unfairly because of their disability. This is illegal in Canada.



Provincial Human Rights Laws

Each province and territory has its own human rights law. They may differ slightly, but all have similar protections for people with disabilities.



These laws protect you in most workplaces, including:

Private companies, which are businesses that are owned by people or shareholders to make money. Tim Hortons and Shoppers Drug Mart are private companies.

Provincial government jobs, which are jobs working for your province, paid with tax money. Examples include healthcare workers in hospitals and teachers in public schools.

Non-profit organizations, which are groups that help people or causes, not to make money. Food banks and the YMCA are examples of non-profit organizations.

Small businesses, which are workplaces owned by one person or a small group. This can include local coffee shops and hair salons.

The Duty To Accommodate

What is the Duty to Accommodate?

People with disabilities can face barriers or challenges in workplaces that were not designed with disability in mind. This can make it more difficult to complete tasks, keep a job long-term, build workplace relationships, maintain overall wellness, and much more.

To overcome these barriers and create equitable jobs for workers with disabilities, employers must work with their employees to adapt or modify the physical space, job tasks, or rules in a workplace. This is called accommodation, or accessibility support.



What You Need to Know About the Duty to Accommodate

- Employers must accommodate you up to a certain point - called the point of “**undue hardship.**” This means that the cost of difficulty would be too much for the employer to handle.
- You must be part of the process (called “the **interactive process.**”)
- Accommodation is your legal right, not a favour.
- The employer must try to find solutions.

The accommodation process includes:

- 1 Informing your employer about your need for an accommodation.
- 2 Providing details about the barriers you are facing at work.
- 3 Working with your employer to set up accommodations that work for you.
- 4 Working with your employer to set up accommodations that work for you.



Undue Hardship: The point at which accommodations would be too difficult or expensive for an employer to provide. This is a high standard - employers must prove accommodations would cause significant difficulty.



Interactive Process: The back-and-forth discussion between an employee and employer to identify and implement appropriate accommodations. Both parties should participate actively and in good faith.

Limits to Accommodation

For an employer to show that an accommodation is not possible, they need to consider the following:

- Cost of the accommodation
- Size and resources of the company
- Safety risks that cannot be eliminated
- Whether the accommodation changes the essential parts of the job

Important Note:

Employers cannot claim undue hardship easily. They must prove it would be too difficult or expensive.



Myth vs. Fact About Accommodations



Myth: It's too expensive to hire people with disabilities.

Fact: CCRW data shows that the average cost of accommodations is a one-time expense of \$375 to the employer.

Myth: You have to tell employers about your disability when you apply for jobs.

Fact: You can wait until after you get a job offer to discuss accommodations.

Myth: Accommodations give unfair advantages.

Fact: Accommodations level the playing field. They help you do the same job as everyone else.

Myth: Only people with invisible disabilities need accommodations.

Fact: Many people with invisible disabilities also need workplace accommodations.

Myth: Asking for accommodations will hurt your career.

Fact: Good employers value diverse employees and support accommodation needs.

Types of Accommodations

Accommodations can take many forms.

The right accommodation depends on your specific needs and job requirements.

CHAPTER 2



01 Physical Accommodations

These change your physical workspace or provide equipment to help you work.

Examples:

- Adjustable desk or chair.
- Special computer keyboard or mouse.
- Ramps or accessible parking.
- Better lighting.
- **Ergonomic** tools.
- Voice recognition software.
- Screen reading software.
- Magnification tools.



Ergonomic: Designed to be comfortable and safe for your body when you use it.



“ ————— Real CCRW Client Testimonial

My CCRW Employment Coach called me recently about a job with the PEI Co. Store. She said they were willing to accommodate me by providing a chair so I could sit down periodically and that I should apply.

CCRW's staff went with me to meet the store manager and the next day I had a job! They also followed up with me about how things have been going. I am so happy to be working again!

-Jennifer

02

Schedule and Time Accommodations

These change when or how long you work.

Examples:

- Flexible start and end times.
- Work from home options.
- Extra breaks during the day.
- Gradual **return to work** after illness.
- Reduced hours during treatment.
- Job sharing with another employee.
- Compressed work week (longer days, fewer days).



Return to Work: The process of coming back to work after a leave of absence, often with accommodations to support the transition.

03

Communication Accommodations

These help with workplace communication.

Examples:

- Sign language interpreters.
- Written instructions instead of verbal.
- Email communication instead of phone calls.
- Extra time to complete tasks.
- Quiet workspace to reduce distractions.
- Regular check-ins with supervisor.
- Clear, simple instructions.



Communication Accommodations: Changes to help people communicate at work. Examples include sign language interpreters, written instructions instead of verbal ones, or email communication instead of phone calls.



05

Policy and Procedure Modifications

These change workplace rules to meet your needs.

Examples:

- Allowing a **service animal** at work.
- Flexible dress code for medical devices.
- Modified training programs.
- Alternative ways to complete tasks.
- Different performance evaluation methods.
- Flexible leave policies.



Service Animal: A specially trained animal that performs tasks for someone with a disability. Different from emotional support animals.

06

Job Restructuring and Task Modifications

These change what tasks you do or how you do them.

Examples:

- Reassigning non-essential tasks to others.
- Changing the way tasks are done.
- Providing additional training.
- Pairing you with a buddy or mentor.
- Breaking large projects into smaller parts.
- Using different tools or technology.



Job Restructuring: Changing how job tasks are organized or assigned as an accommodation. This might include reassigning non-essential duties or changing how tasks are completed.



07

Mental Health and Cognitive Accommodations

These support employees with mental health conditions or cognitive differences.

Examples:

- Quiet workspace.
- Noise-canceling headphones.
- Written instructions and checklists.
- Regular feedback and support.
- Flexible deadlines.
- Stress management resources.
- Employee assistance program access.
- Modified supervision style.
- Access to mental health days or leave.



Accommodation Examples by Disability Type

Here are some common accommodations grouped by disability type.

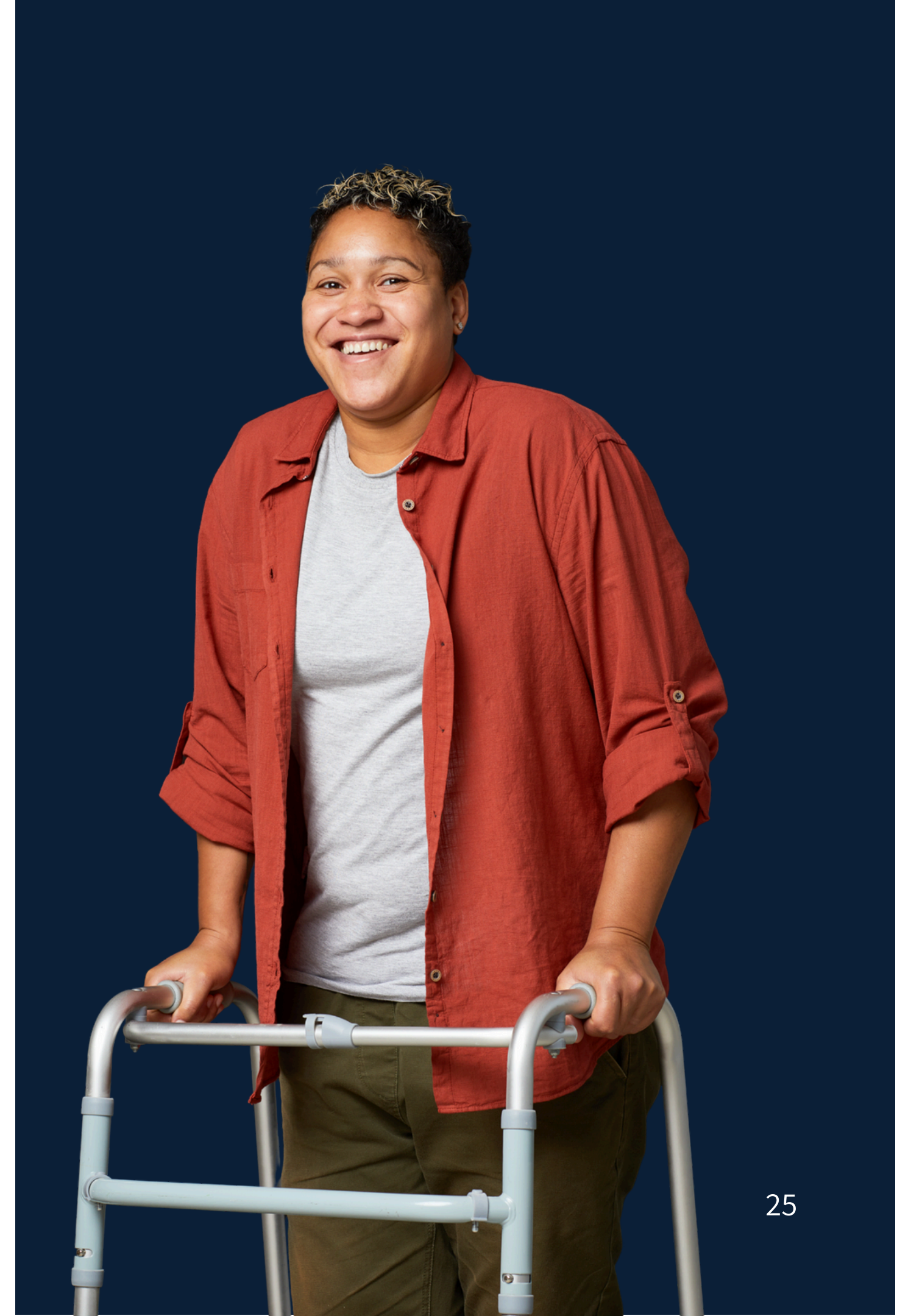
Remember: These are just examples. Your accommodation needs are unique to you.

01 Mobility Disabilities

These are disabilities that impact movement. People with mobility disabilities may use wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility tools.

Potential Accommodations :

- Wheelchair accessible workspace.
- Adjustable height desk.
- Accessible parking spot.
- Ergonomic chair and tools.



02 Vision Disabilities

Being blind, having low vision, and other sight differences are vision disabilities. People with vision disabilities may have a service animal, use a white cane, or other assistive technology.

Potential Accommodations

- Screen reading software.
- Large print materials.
- Better lighting.
- Magnification tools.
- Audio formats for documents.
- Braille materials.



Assistive Technology: Tools, equipment, or software that helps people with disabilities perform tasks. Examples include screen readers, voice recognition software, ergonomic keyboards, or hearing aids.



03 Hearing Disabilities

Being deaf, hard of hearing, or other processing sound differently are all hearing disabilities. People with hearing disabilities may use sign language, cochlear implants, hearing aids, or other communication tools.

Potential Accommodations

- Sign language interpreters.
- Written communication.
- Visual alerts instead of audio alarms.
- Video relay services.
- Assistive listening devices.



04 Learning Disabilities

Dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and language processing disorder are a few examples of learning disabilities. People with learning disabilities learn in different ways and use a variety of different techniques or tools.

Potential Accommodations

- Written instructions.
- Extra time for tasks.
- Quiet workspace.
- Regular check-ins.
- Training in different formats.
- Use of assistive technology like text-to-speech software.



05 Mental Health Disabilities

Living with depression, anxiety, or obsessive-compulsive disorder are examples of mental health disabilities. People with mental health disabilities may use strategies or tools to protect their mental wellness, stay focused, or cope with stress.

Potential Accommodations

- Flexible schedule
- Regular breaks
- Quiet workspace
- Reduced workplace stress
- **Employee assistance program**
- Gradual return to work



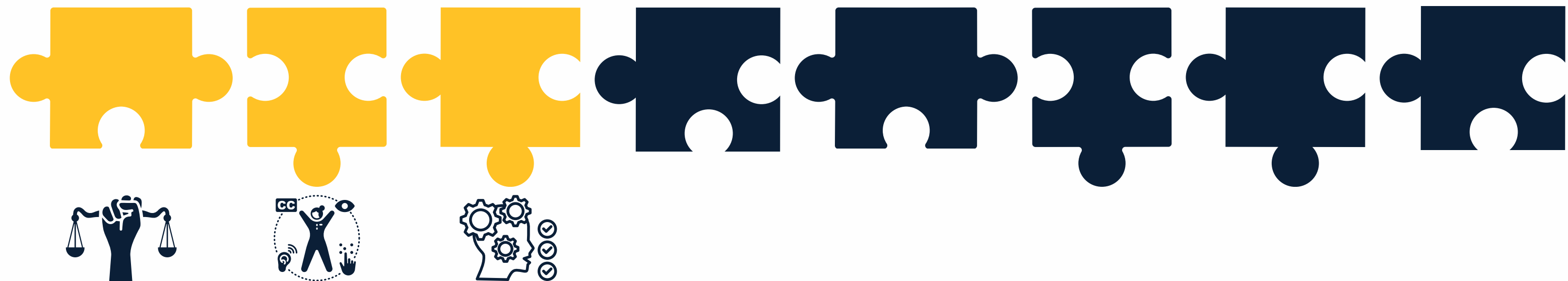
Employee Assistance Program: A free and private service your employer offers to help you with personal problems like stress, family issues, or mental health.



Before You Apply - Self-Assessment and Preparation

Before you start looking for jobs, it's important to understand your own needs and prepare for the accommodation process. First, read the job requirements carefully and ensure it is a job you are qualified for and can safely do. Then you can begin to plan for your accommodations.

CHAPTER 3



Identifying Your Accommodation Needs

While preparing, think about what would make a work environment accessible to you and support a long-term, healthy employment situation. Ask yourself or someone you trust these questions.

About Your Disability

- How might your disability impact your work tasks?
- What tasks could be difficult for you?
- What helps you work better?
- Do your disability needs change day to day?
- Do other aspects of your identity (such as cultural background, language, gender, or age) affect how you experience your disability at work or how comfortable you feel requesting accommodations?



About Your Potential Work Environment

- Do you work better in quiet or busy spaces?
- Do you need special lighting?
- Do you need specific equipment or software?
- How do you prefer to receive instructions?

About Your Schedule

- Do you work better at certain times of day?
- Do you need flexible hours?
- Do you need regular breaks?
- Can you work full-time hours?

About Communication

- How do you communicate best?
- Do you need things in writing?
- Do you need extra time to process information?
- Do you need regular feedback?

Understanding Your Disability and Its Impact on Work

It's important to think about the potential barriers you are concerned about in the workplace so you can explain it to your manager or boss.

Create a Simple Summary

- What are barriers you experience as an employee with disabilities?
- How might it affect your daily work activities?
- What accommodations or supports have helped you before?
- What accommodations do you think you might need?

Example:

"I have ADHD, which means I work better in quiet, distraction-free environments. I do well with written instructions and regular check-ins. In my last job, having a quiet workspace and a daily task list really helped me stay organized and productive."

Gathering Documentation and Medical Information

You may need **medical documentation** to support your accommodation request.



Medical Documentation: Information from healthcare providers that supports an accommodation request. Should focus on work-related impacts and recommended accommodations, not detailed medical history.

What You Might Need

- Letter from your doctor.
- Assessment reports.
- Previous accommodation plans.
- Medical records (relevant parts only).

What the Documentation Should Include

- Confirmation of disability barriers.
- How it affects your ability to work.
- The duration or timeline of your accessibility needs.

Important: You don't always need detailed medical information. Sometimes a simple letter from your doctor is enough.

Researching Potential Employers and Their Accessibility

Before applying to jobs, research companies to see how accessible and inclusive they are.



What to Look For

- Job ad mentions of inclusive hiring.
- Company website mentions of diversity and inclusion.
- Accessibility features in their buildings.
- Employee resource groups for people with disabilities.
- Awards or recognition for inclusive practices.
- Reviews from employees with disabilities.

Where to Look

- Company websites.
- Social media accounts.
- Employee review websites.
- News articles about the company.
- Professional networking sites.
- Google search.
- Affiliates with other organizations that promote inclusive hiring.



Preparing Your Accommodation Request Strategy

Think about how and when you'll discuss accommodations.

Key Decisions

- Will you disclose your disability before or after getting a job offer?
- How will you explain your accommodation needs?
- What alternatives are you willing to consider?
- Who will you contact about accommodations?

Prepare your Key Messages

- A brief explanation of your disability.
- The accommodations you need.
- How these accommodations will help you do the job.
- Examples of how accommodations have worked before.

Example:

“I have a disability which makes me sensitive to fluorescent lighting. Extended exposure brings on migraines. Is it possible to get light covers for my station to cut down on the lighting? It would help me focus on my tasks and prevent migraines from recurring, ensuring I can stay productive and healthy at work. At my last workplace, my employer ordered magnetic light covers and I never had an issue with migraines after that.”

Building Your Support Network

Having support makes the accommodation process easier.



Who Can Support You

- Family and friends.
- Disability advocacy organizations.
- Employment counselors.
- Healthcare providers.
- Legal aid services.
- Other people with disabilities who work.

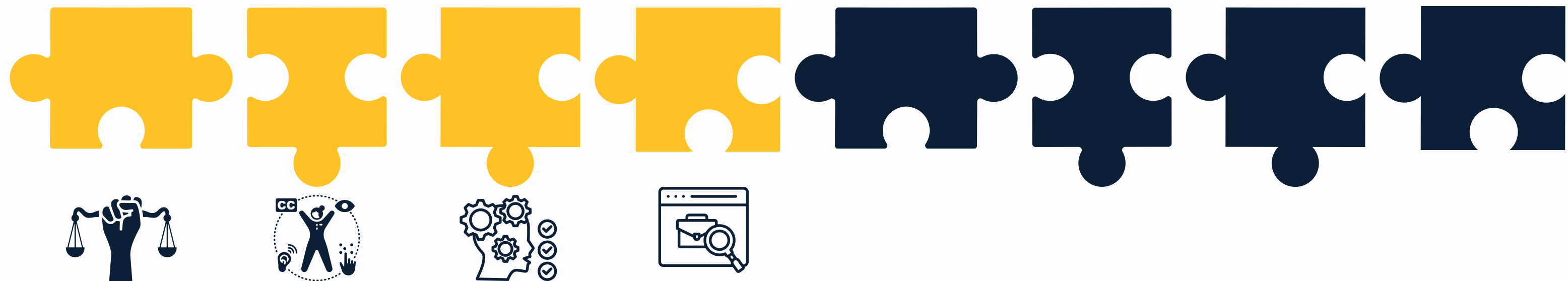
How They Can Help

- Practice accommodation conversations.
- Review your accommodation requests.
- Help you identify potential accommodation needs.
- Provide emotional support.
- Share their experiences.
- Help you understand your rights.
- Connect you with resources.

During the Job Search Process

Looking for a job when you have a disability requires some extra planning. This chapter will help you navigate disclosure, interviews, and negotiations.

CHAPTER 4



When to Disclose During the Hiring Process

Disclosure is a personal choice. Only disclose if and when you are comfortable, and when you understand your rights around privacy.

Intersectionality Consideration

If you belong to multiple **equity-seeking groups**, you may face compounded barriers in the hiring process. Consider whether a workplace demonstrates commitment to diversity beyond just disability (e.g., racial diversity, LGBTQ2S+ inclusion, gender equity). Employers with strong intersectional equity practices may be safer environments for disclosure."



Equity-Seeking Groups: Groups of people who face unfair treatment or barriers and are working toward equal opportunities.



Before applying, check if the job posting mentions wanting diverse candidates. Think about if you need accommodations for the application process. If possible, focus on employers who show signs of being inclusive (i.e., they have an **equity statement** in their job ad or on their website.)

In your application, disclosure is not usually recommended, unless you require an accommodation during the interview process. Even then, it is best to wait until you receive an interview and then request accommodations at that point. However, if the job ad states they are looking for people with **lived experience** of disability, or are looking to hire from equity-seeking groups, then you may decide to disclose during the application stage.



Equity Statement: A written promise from an employer that they will treat all people fairly and work to remove barriers.



Lived Experience: The real-life knowledge you have from being a person with a disability.



For job interviews, you might disclose if you need accommodations for the interview. While in an interview, it may come up in conversation. If so, ensure you share your disability-related strengths and skills. You may also choose to disclose during the interview if you want to see if the employer has an inclusive mindset.

After getting a job offer is the safest time to disclose, in terms of avoiding discrimination or stigma. At this stage, you know they want to hire you, and you can negotiate accommodations as part of starting the job. A job offer is a legal agreement between an employer and new hire, and employers must accommodate you once the job offer has been made.

Remember: You don't have to disclose your disability if you don't need accommodations.





How to Discuss Accommodations in Interviews

If you choose to discuss your disability in an interview, focus on solutions and abilities.

[Register for Untapped Talent to access Ace the Interview eBook](#)

How to Bring Up Accommodations

Example 1

Stating your experience: I have joint pain related to a disability
(Barrier, condition, or concern)

Stating what you need: I work best when I have an anti-fatigue mat to stand on
(Accommodation or accessibility support needed)

Ending on a positive note: This has never prevented me from doing excellent work.

Example 2

Stating what you need: I may need a picture chart of our menu to do my best work
(Accommodation or accessibility support needed)

How it has helped: In my previous job, this worked well by helping me talk to customers and increased my sales
(Positive effect and outcome)

What to Emphasize

- Your skills and qualifications.
- How accommodations help you perform better.
- Examples of your success in previous jobs.
- Your enthusiasm for the role.

What Not to Do

- Apologize for your disability.
- Focus on limitations.
- Provide unnecessary medical details.
- Ask if your disability is a problem.

Negotiating Accommodations in Job Offers

When you receive a job offer, you can discuss accommodations as part of accepting the position.



How to Approach It

- Express enthusiasm about the job offer.
- Explain that you have some accommodation needs.
- Describe the accommodations you need.
- Ask about the process for arranging them.

Be Prepared To

- Explain how the accommodations help you work better.
- Provide examples from previous jobs.
- Discuss alternatives if your first choice isn't possible.
- Provide medical documentation if requested.



Example:

"I'm very excited about this opportunity and eager to contribute to the team. I have [condition] and would benefit from [specific accommodations]. These accommodations have helped me be very successful in previous roles. What's the process here for arranging workplace accommodations?"



What Employers Can and Cannot Ask

Employers have limits on what they can ask about your disability.

Employers CAN Ask:

- If you can perform the job tasks assigned to you.
- About accommodations you might need.
- For medical documentation to support accommodation requests.

Employers CANNOT Ask:

- If you have a disability (before offering you a job).
- For detailed medical information or to see your medical records.
- About the cause or long-term impacts of your disability.
- To see all your medical records
- About medications you take (unless job-related).



Note: If you work in a position where the safety of you, your co-workers, or the public are at risk, and the employer has a drug policy, you may be required to provide a doctor's note approving you to work while on the medication.

If an employer asks inappropriate questions:

- You can politely redirect: "I can perform all the essential functions of this job."
- You can ask: "Is this question related to the job requirements?"
- You can refuse to answer and focus on your qualifications

Examples of how to professionally refuse feedback:

- "That's not something I feel comfortable sharing. Can we talk about how my qualifications meet the needs of your company?"
- "I'd like to refocus on my skills and how I can be a strong asset to your team."



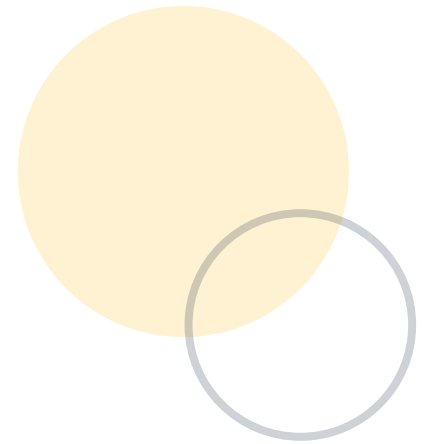
Handling Discrimination During the Job Search

Unfortunately, you may feel that an employer or a particular leader is discriminating against you because you have requested or receive workplace accommodations. Here's what this may look like and how you can handle it.

Signs of Discrimination

- Negative reaction when you mention your disability
- Suddenly losing interest after disclosure
- Inappropriate questions about your disability
- Comments about being "too much trouble" or "too expensive"
- Refusing to consider accommodations

Note: Discrimination may intersect with other forms of bias. For example, you might experience ageism alongside ableism, or racism combined with disability discrimination. These intersecting forms of discrimination can be more subtle and harder to identify, but they are equally illegal and should be documented and addressed.



What You Can Do

- Speak to the human resources team
- Have an open conversation with the employer about your concerns
- Document everything (dates, names, what was said)
- Save emails and written communications
- Continue looking for other opportunities
- Consider filing a **human rights complaint**

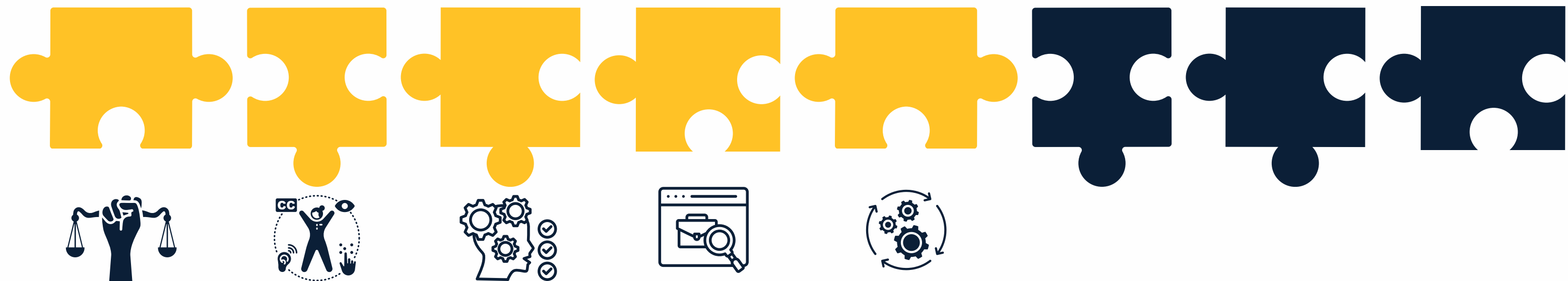


Human Rights Complaint: A formal legal process to address discrimination. Can result in remedies like compensation, policy changes, or required accommodations.

Starting Your New Job - The Accommodation Process

Congratulations on your new job! Now it's time to work with your employer to put accommodations in place. You may decide to submit your accommodation request in writing, or you may set up a meeting to discuss your accommodation in person.

CHAPTER 5



Writing Effective Accommodation Requests

Your accommodation request should be clear, specific, and professional.

Writing Professional Emails - Free eLearning Course





Key Elements to Include

- Your name and job title.
- Date of the request.
- Brief explanation of your disability (only work-related impacts).
- Specific accommodations you're requesting.
- How these accommodations will help you do your job.
- Any supporting documentation.
- Request for a meeting to discuss next steps.

Tips for effective requests:

- Be specific about what you need.
- Focus on solutions, not problems.
- Use positive language.
- Keep it concise but complete.
- Be professional and respectful.

Consider providing examples of past accommodations that worked well.

Example

"In my experience, the standard-size text on computer screens makes it difficult to read and process information. I am requesting screen magnification software and documents in large print format. These accommodations will allow me to review documents and complete computer-based tasks efficiently, as they did in my previous position."

Avoid Including

- Detailed medical history.
- Personal information not related to work.
- Negative language about your limitations.
- Apologies for having a disability.

“

Real CCRW Client Testimonial

I became a client of CCRW in May, where I received support to address ongoing health issues... which was causing constant headaches and negatively impacting my productivity at work.

After being introduced to CCRW's staff by my colleague, he quickly took action.

I scheduled an appointment, and they offered valuable recommendations.

After the consultation, I have received an ergonomic chair, electric desk, two ergonomic mice, a riser, a keyboard, and even a training program paid for by CCRW to expand my knowledge on the Employment Standards Act—this has been especially helpful as I continue to support my small and medium-sized business clients.

-Olusola

Who to Contact About Accommodations

Different people in your workplace may handle accommodation requests.

Human Resources (HR): Usually the main contact for accommodation requests.

Your Direct Supervisor: May be involved in day-to-day accommodation decisions.

Occupational Health and Safety: May assess workplace safety and accommodation needs.

Disability Coordinator: Some larger organizations have specialized staff.

Union Representative: If you're in a **union**, they can provide support.

Start with HR if you're not sure who to contact.



Union: An organization that represents workers in dealing with employers. Unions can help with accommodation requests and grievances.



Occupational Health and Safety: Workplace safety programs and staff who may be involved in assessing accommodation needs and ensuring workplace safety.



How to Make Your First Accommodation Request

If you have written and sent an accommodation request to your HR manager or employer, they may reach out to you to set up a meeting. If not, or if you plan to discuss your accommodation needs in-person, you can set up an accommodation meeting following these steps:





1 | Schedule a Meeting

- Contact HR or your supervisor.
- Ask for a private meeting to discuss accommodation needs.
- Give them a brief idea of what you want to discuss.



2 | Prepare for the Meeting

- List the barrier you have experienced and the accommodations you need to overcome those barriers.
- Explain how the requested accommodations will help you do your job.
- Bring any medical documentation
- Think about possible alternative accommodations that can be suggested.



3 | During the Meeting

- Be clear about your needs.
- Focus on solutions, not problems.
- Ask about the company's accommodation process.
- Take notes about what is discussed.
- Ask about next steps and timelines.



4 | Follow Up in Writing

- Send an email summarizing what was discussed.
- Include your specific accommodation requests.
- Attach any documentation they requested.
- Ask for confirmation that they received your request.

The Interactive Process

Explained

The accommodation process should be "interactive."
This means you and your employer work together to find solutions.

What Interactive Means

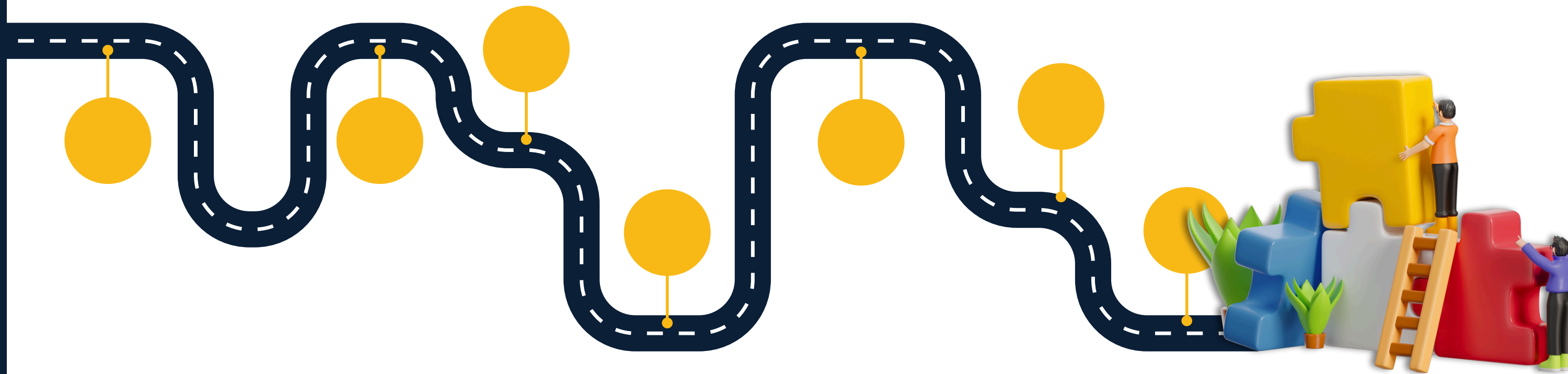
- Both you and your employer participate.
- You share information about your needs.
- Your employer shares information about job requirements.
- You both suggest possible accommodations.
- You work together to find solutions that work.

Your Role in the Process

- Be honest about your needs.
- Provide requested medical information.
- Try suggested accommodations.
- Give feedback about what works and what doesn't.
- Be open to alternatives.

Your Employer's Role

- Take your request seriously.
- Ask questions to understand your needs.
- Consider different accommodation options.
- Implement agreed-upon accommodations.
- Monitor how well accommodations are working.



Timeline Expectations

Accommodation requests should be handled promptly, but the timeline can vary.

Factors that Affect Timing

- Complexity of the accommodation.
- Need for medical documentation.
- Cost and approval requirements.
- Availability of equipment or services.
- Need to modify workspace.

Typical Timelines

- **Simple accommodations:** Days to weeks (flexible schedule, different chair).
- **Moderate accommodations:** Weeks to a month (software, workspace changes).
- **Complex accommodations:** 1-3 months (major equipment, renovation).

What You Can Do

- Ask about expected timelines.
- Follow up regularly but politely.
- Be flexible about interim solutions.
- Document any delays.



Working with HR, Supervisors, and Occupational Health

You may work with several people during the accommodation process.

Human Resources

- They often lead the accommodation process.
- Provide them with clear, written requests.
- Give them any medical documentation they need.
- Keep them updated on how accommodations are working.

Your Supervisor

- They implement day-to-day accommodations.
- Help them understand how accommodations help you work better.
- Keep communication open and regular.
- Ask for feedback and provide updates.

Occupational Health

- They may assess your workspace and needs.
- Be honest about your limitations and needs.
- Follow their recommendations for workplace safety.
- Ask questions if you don't understand their assessment.

Trial Periods and Adjustments

Accommodations often need to be tried and adjusted. Every person with a disability is unique and can experience barriers in very different ways.

Disabilities and barriers can also change over time, so it is important to expect that the accommodation process will be an ongoing effort to find the best solution.

What to Expect

- Initial accommodations may not be perfect.
- You might need to try different solutions.
- Accommodations may need fine-tuning.
- Your needs might change over time.

During Trial Periods

- Keep track of what works and what doesn't.
- Communicate regularly with your supervisor.
- Be patient with the adjustment process.
- Document any problems or concerns.

Making Adjustments

- Discuss issues promptly with HR or your supervisor.
- Suggest specific changes.
- Be open to trying new approaches.
- Focus on finding solutions that work for everyone.

Sample Request Letters and Templates

TEMPLATE 1

Initial Accommodation Request

Dear [HR Manager/Supervisor Name],

I am writing to request workplace accommodations under the duty to accommodate provisions of human rights legislation.

I have [brief description of disability] which affects my ability to [specific work functions]. To perform my job duties effectively, I am requesting the following accommodations:

1. [Specific accommodation]
2. [Specific accommodation]
3. [Specific accommodation]

These accommodations will enable me to [explain how they help you work]. I have attached medical documentation supporting this request.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these accommodations and the implementation process. Please let me know when you are available to meet. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

TEMPLATE 2

Follow-up Request

Dear [Name],

I am following up on my accommodation request submitted on [date]. I have not yet received a response and wanted to confirm that you received my request.

As discussed, I need [brief restatement of key accommodations] to perform my job duties effectively. I am available to meet and discuss the implementation of these accommodations.

Could you please let me know the status of my request and the next steps in the process?
Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Follow-up Strategies

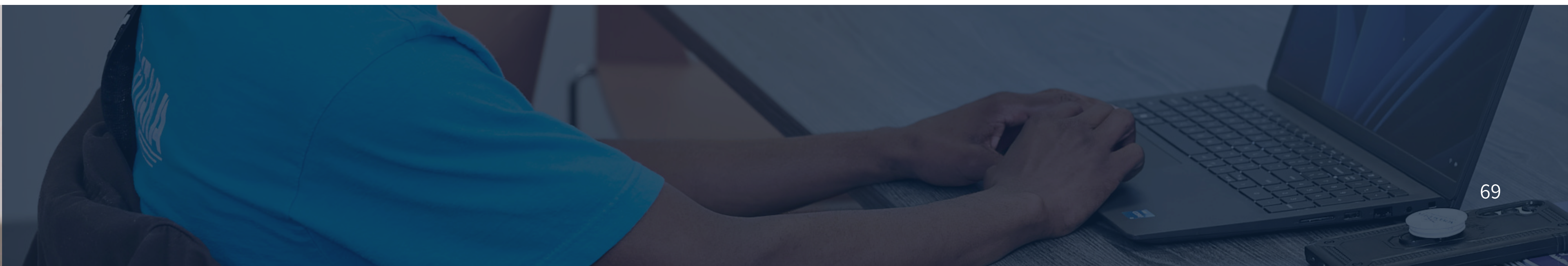
If you don't hear back about your accommodation request, follow up appropriately.

Timeline for Follow-ups

- **1 week:** Polite inquiry about receipt of request.
- **2 weeks:** Request for meeting to discuss accommodations.
- **3-4 weeks:** More formal follow-up expressing concern about delay.
- **Beyond 1 month:** Consider involving union or external support.

Follow-up Tips

- Be polite but persistent.
- Document all communications.
- Copy relevant people (union rep, disability coordinator).
- Keep focusing on solutions.
- Stay professional even if frustrated.



Keep Records of All Communications

Good record-keeping protects you from discrimination or mistreatment and helps you track the accommodation process.

What to Document

- All accommodation requests (copies.)
- Emails and letters about accommodations.
- Meeting notes and dates.
- Names of people you spoke with.
- Decisions made and timelines.
- Any problems or delays.

How to Organize Records

- Create a dedicated file folder.
- Save electronic copies.
- Include dates on everything.
- Back up important documents.
- Keep personal copies at home.

Why Records Matter

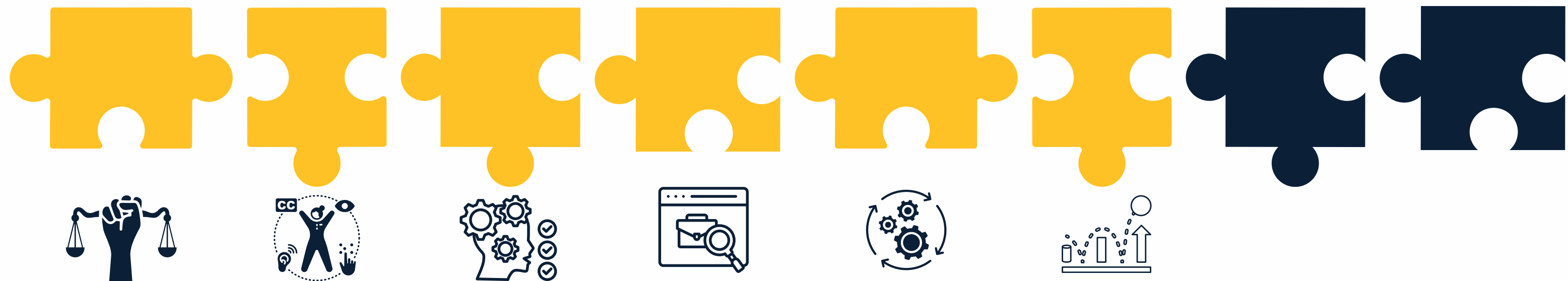
- Prove you made requests.
- Track response times.
- Show good faith participation.
- Support complaints if needed
- Help with future accommodation requests.



Working Through Challenges

Sometimes accommodations don't work perfectly right away. This chapter helps you work through common challenges.

CHAPTER 6



When Accommodations Aren't Working

If your accommodations aren't meeting your needs, address the issue promptly.

Common Problems

- Accommodation doesn't fully address your needs.
- Equipment isn't working properly.
- Other employees aren't following accommodation plans.
- Workplace changes affect your accommodations.
- Your needs have changed.

Steps to Take

1. **Document the problems** - Keep track of specific issues.
2. **Try to solve minor issues yourself** - Adjust settings, ask for quick fixes.
3. **Talk to your supervisor** - Explain what isn't working.
4. **Contact HR** - Request a meeting to discuss modifications.
5. **Provide specific feedback** - Explain exactly what needs to change.



Requesting Modifications or Additional Supports

Accommodations often need adjustments. This is normal and expected.

How to Request Changes

- Be specific about what isn't working.
- Suggest possible solutions.
- Explain how changes would help.
- Offer to try alternatives.
- Set timelines for trying new approaches.

Example Request

"The flexible start time accommodation is working well, but I'm finding that leaving early means I miss important end-of-day team updates. Could we try having these updates sent by email, or could I attend them by phone from home?"

Remember

- Accommodation is an ongoing process.
- Your needs may change over time.
- Employers should work with you to find solutions.
- Small adjustments are usually easier than major changes.

Dealing with Resistance or Negative Attitudes

Unfortunately, you may encounter resistance to your accommodation needs..

Types of Resistance

- Supervisors who don't understand accommodations.
- Coworkers who think accommodations are unfair.
- HR staff who see accommodations as problems.
- Management focused only on costs.
- Bias based on intersecting identities (e.g., assumptions about your capabilities based on both your disability and your gender, race, or age).



Strategies for Dealing with Resistance

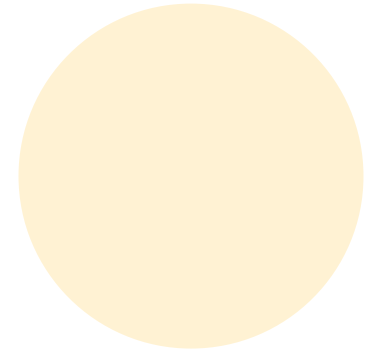
Stay Professional

- Don't get defensive or angry.
- Focus on facts and solutions.
- Keep your tone respectful.
- Document problematic interactions.

Educate When Possible

- Explain how accommodations help you work better.
- Share information about legal requirements.
- Provide examples of successful accommodations.
- Focus on business benefits.

CCRW offers Virtual Reality training - Visit our website to learn more!



Seek Support

- Talk to HR if your supervisor is resistant.
- Contact your union representative.
- Reach out to disability advocacy organizations.
- Consider involving a disability coordinator.

Know Your Rights

- Resistance doesn't eliminate the duty to accommodate.
- You have the right to a discrimination-free workplace.
- Employers must engage in good faith.
- You can file complaints about discrimination.



Handling Conflicts with Supervisors or Coworkers

Workplace conflicts about accommodations require careful handling.

Common Conflict Situations

- Supervisor doesn't want to implement accommodations.
- Coworkers complain about "special treatment".
- Team members don't understand accommodation needs.
- Conflicts about workload distribution.

De-escalation Strategies

- Address issues early before they get worse.
- Have calm, private conversations.
- Focus on work performance and team goals.
- Suggest team meetings to clarify roles.
- Ask HR to facilitate discussions.

When to Involve Others

- If conflicts affect your ability to work.
- If you face harassment or discrimination.
- If your supervisor won't address the issues.
- If conflicts are escalating.

Maintaining Confidentiality and Privacy

You have the right to privacy about your disability and accommodations.

What Employers Must Keep Confidential

- Medical information you provide.
- Details about your specific disability.
- Accommodation requests and arrangements.
- Any related correspondence.

Who Can Know About Your Accommodations

- People who need to know to implement accommodations.
- Your direct supervisor (usually).
- HR staff handling your request.
- Safety personnel if relevant.

Managing Privacy

- You can ask who will have access to information.
- Request that information be shared only as needed.
- Ask for accommodations to be implemented discreetly.
- Address any privacy breaches immediately.

Professional vs. Personal Disclosure Decisions

You control how much you share about your disability.

Guideline

- Start with minimal disclosure and add details if needed.
- Focus on barriers that are causing your disability in the workplace.
- Separate work accommodations from personal relationships.
- Don't feel obligated to educate everyone about your disability.
- Protect your energy and emotional well-being.

Writing a Disclosure Statement - Free eLearning Course



Professional Disclosure

- Focus on work-related impacts.
- Share only necessary information.
- Emphasize how accommodations help performance.
- Keep explanations brief and factual.

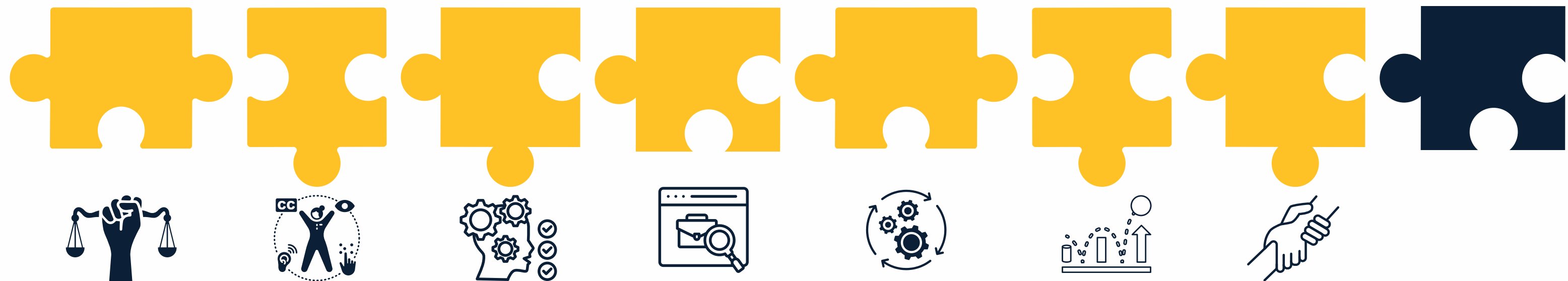
Personal Disclosure

- Sharing personal experiences is your choice.
- Some colleagues may be supportive and understanding.
- Consider your comfort level and workplace culture.
- Remember that you can always share more later.

When Things Go Wrong - Seeking Support and Intervention

Sometimes the accommodation process doesn't work smoothly. This chapter explains your options when you need outside help.

CHAPTER 7



Recognizing Accommodation Failures

It's important to recognize when the accommodation process isn't working properly.

Signs of Accommodation Failure

- Your employer refuses to provide reasonable accommodations.
- Long delays without explanation or progress.
- Inadequate accommodations that don't meet your needs.
- Harassment or discrimination because of your disability.
- Retaliation for requesting accommodations.
- Failure to engage in the interactive process.
- Dismissal of your accommodation needs based on **stereotypes** about your other identities.





Documentation to Gather

- Copies of all accommodation requests.
- Email communications and letters.
- Notes from meetings.
- Examples of inadequate responses.
- Evidence of discrimination or harassment.
- Witness statements if available.



Stereotypes: False beliefs or unfair assumptions about a group of people.

Internal Complaint Process

Start with your employer's internal processes before making a human rights complaint.

1 Options Within your Workplace

- Speak with a higher-level manager if your supervisor is the problem.
- File a formal complaint with HR about discrimination or harassment.
- Use your company's **grievance** process if one exists.
- Contact the ombudsperson in larger organizations.
- Speak with senior leadership about systemic issues.



Grievance: A formal complaint process, often through a union, to resolve workplace disputes including accommodation issues.



2 Benefits of Internal Processes

- Often faster than external complaints.
- May preserve working relationships.
- Shows good faith effort to resolve issues.
- May lead to policy improvements.
- Less formal and stressful.



3 When Internal Processes Aren't Enough

- Your employer refuses to engage.
- Internal investigations are biased.
- No progress after reasonable time.
- Discrimination or harassment continues.
- Your employer retaliates against you.



Union Support and Grievance Procedures

If you're in a union, you have additional support options.

How Unions Can Help

- Advocate for your accommodation needs.
- File grievances about accommodation failures.
- Negotiate accommodation policies in collective agreements.
- Provide representation in meetings with management.
- Support human rights complaints if needed.

Union Grievance Process

- Usually starts with informal discussion.
- Moves to formal written grievance.
- May go to arbitration if not resolved.
- Union representative supports you throughout.

Tip: Keep detailed records of all interactions with your union and management related to accommodations. This documentation can be crucial if the grievance process escalates.

Tips for Working with Your Union

- Contact your union rep early in the process.
- Provide all documentation about your accommodation needs.
- Attend meetings and participate in the process.
- Understand your collective agreement rights.
- Ask about accommodation language in your contract.



Human Rights Complaints Process

Human rights complaints are a legal way to address discrimination. While these strategies don't cover all of the situations and actions you may encounter, they should provide a general sense of when it would be appropriate to consider filing a human rights complaint.

[Human Rights Commission Website](#)



You may consider a human rights complaint, if...

Your employer fails to accommodate you properly and...

- has ignored your express concerns.
- your attempts to participate in the interactive process are ignored.
- you have exhausted other options, such as contacting your HR department.

.....> and/or <.....

Your employer retaliates against you by...

- mistreating or bullying you.
- giving you the worst shifts or changing your tasks to intentionally punish you.
- preventing you from moving up in the company.

.....> and/or <.....

Internal processes have failed because...

- no one is taking your concerns seriously or providing you with support.
- there are no formal internal processes to address discrimination.
- a “solution” was offered but it didn’t truly address the problem or the harm caused.

.....> and/or <.....

You want formal resolution, such as...

- legal enforcement of your right to safe, harassment-free work.
- compensation for financial or emotional stress that resulted from the discrimination.
- disciplinary action taken against the person(s) or company who discriminated you.

Steps in the Complaint Process

- 1 Contact the human rights commission.** For federal complaints, contact the Canadian Human Rights Commission. For provincial complaints, contact your provincial human rights commission. They can explain your rights and options.
- 2 File your complaint.** It usually must be filed within one year that the discrimination has occurred. Make sure to include all related documents and describe what happened and what you want resolved. The Commission staff may help you file your complaint if you need support.
- 3 Looking into your complaint.** The Human Rights Commission works to understand all aspects of your complaint. They may try **mediation** first, which is a guided conversation between you, your employer, and a professional **mediator** who helps to ensure the conversation is fair and respectful. Then, a Human Rights Commission officer may conduct interviews and review your documents. This process can take several months.
- 4 Possible outcomes.** If there is no discrimination found, your complaint would be dismissed. If discrimination is found, there may be a settlement between you and employer, often in the form of financial compensation for time lost and emotional impact. If escalated, it could result in a hearing before human rights tribunal, which is a court dedicated to workplace discrimination issues. When resolved, remedies may include money, policy changes, and/or accommodations.

Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution

Mediation can resolve accommodation disputes without formal complaints.



Mediation: A process where a neutral person helps resolve disputes between an employee and employer. Often used to resolve accommodation disagreements without formal complaints.



Mediator: A neutral person who helps two sides talk through a problem and find a solution they both agree on.





How Mediation Works

- Neutral mediator helps you and your employer communicate.
- Focus on finding mutually acceptable solutions.
- Usually voluntary for both parties.
- Confidential process.
- Often faster and less expensive than formal complaints.

Benefits of Mediation

- Preserves working relationships.
- Creative solutions possible.
- Less adversarial than complaints.
- You maintain control over outcome.
- Can be combined with other processes.





When Mediation Works Best

- Both parties want to find solutions.
- Communication has broken down.
- Misunderstandings are the main problem.
- Relationship can be repaired.
- Power imbalance isn't too severe.

Available Through

- Human rights commissions.
- Labour relations boards.
- Private mediation services.
- Some employers offer internal mediation.



Legal Support and Advocacy Services

You don't have to navigate legal processes alone.

Types of Legal Support

- **Legal aid services:** Free legal help for low-income individuals.
- **Disability advocacy organizations:** Support and representation.
- **Employment lawyers:** Specialized legal advice.
- **Human rights clinics:** Free or low-cost legal help.
- **Law school clinics:** Students supervised by lawyers.





What Legal Advocates Can Do

- Explain your rights and options.
- Help you file complaints.
- Represent you in proceedings.
- Negotiate with employers.
- Provide ongoing support.

How to Find Legal Support

- Contact your provincial legal aid office.
- Call disability advocacy organizations.
- Search lawyer referral services.
- Ask human rights commissions for referrals.
- Contact law schools with clinical programs.

When to Involve Disability Organizations

Disability advocacy organizations are valuable allies.

Services They Often Provide

- Information about your rights.
- Advocacy and support.
- Help with complaint processes.
- Training for employers.
- Policy change advocacy.
- **Peer support networks.**



Peer Support Networks: Groups of people with similar experiences who meet to share advice, encouragement, and help each other.

Provincial and Local Organizations

- Independent living centers.
- Disability advocacy groups.
- Condition-specific organizations.
- Employment support services.

National Organizations

- Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
- Council of Canadians with Disabilities
- Inclusion Canada
- March of Dimes Canada

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Real CCRW Client Testimonial

CCRW offers support to anyone with a disability. They supported me with arranging workplace accommodations and following up with potential employers after interviews.

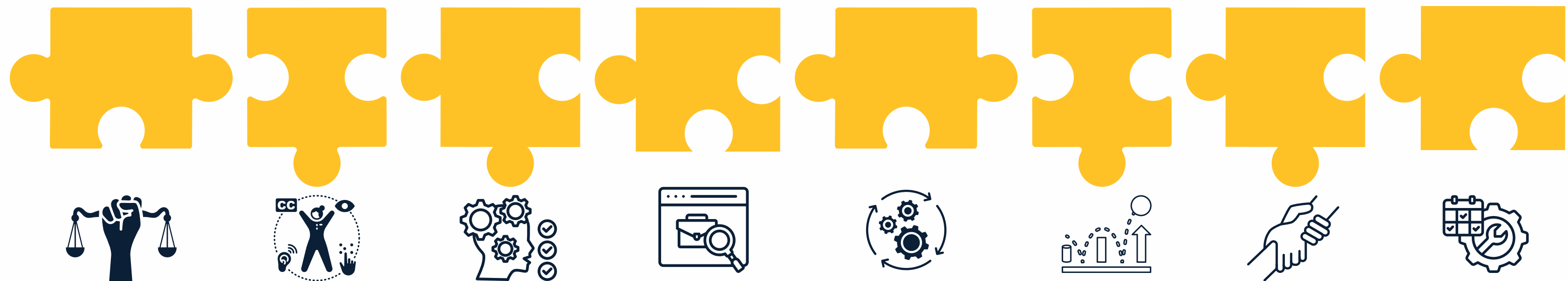
My CCRW Employment Coach was there for me 100 percent. They helped me create unique resumes and cover letters to the jobs I was applying for, met with me to go over questions before an interview, offered workplace accommodations, performed follow up calls regarding jobs I applied for, and even recommended me for positions when employers reached out looking for potential employees.

-Brandon

Maintaining Your Accommodations

Successfully maintaining accommodations over time requires ongoing attention and communication.

CHAPTER 8



Regular Accommodation Reviews

Accommodations should be reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet your needs.

Why Reviews are Important

- Your job duties may change.
- Your disability may evolve.
- New technology may become available.
- Workplace changes may affect accommodations.
- What works initially may need adjustment.

How Often to Review

- Annually as part of performance reviews.
- When job duties change significantly.
- After workplace reorganizations.
- When accommodations aren't working well.
- When your health condition changes.

Who Should be Involved

- You and your direct supervisor.
- HR representative.
- Occupational health staff if relevant.
- Union representative if applicable.
- Anyone else involved in implementing accommodations.

What to Discuss

- How well current accommodations are working.
- Any new needs or challenges.
- Changes in job requirements.
- New accommodation options.
- Timeline for any needed changes.



Updating Accommodations as Needs Change

Your accommodation needs may change over time for various reasons.

Reasons Needs Might Change

- **Progression of disability:** Some conditions worsen over time.
- **Recovery or improvement:** Your condition may get better.
- **New treatments:** Medical treatments may change your needs.
- **Aging:** Age-related changes may affect accommodations.
- **Job changes:** New responsibilities may require different supports.



How to Request Changes

- Document what's not working with current accommodations.
- Explain how your needs have changed.
- Suggest specific modifications.
- Provide updated medical information if needed.
- Be open to trying different solutions.

Example of Requesting Updates

"My arthritis has progressed since we set up my accommodations last year. The ergonomic keyboard is still helpful, but I'm now having difficulty with the standard mouse. I'd like to try a vertical mouse or voice recognition software to reduce strain on my wrist."



Career Advancement with Accommodations

Having accommodations doesn't limit your **career advancement** opportunities.

Key Principles

- Accommodations help you perform at your best.
- Your skills and performance matter most.
- You have the same right to promotions as anyone.
- Accommodations can be modified for new roles.

Intersectionality and Advancement

Be aware that barriers to advancement may stem from multiple sources. If you face obstacles, consider whether they relate solely to disability or also to other aspects of your identity.

Understanding this can help you advocate more effectively and seek appropriate support.



Career Advancement: Moving forward in your job to get more responsibility, higher pay, or a better position.



Preparing for Advancement

- Continue developing your skills and expertise.
- Build strong relationships with colleagues.
- Document your achievements and contributions.
- Seek out stretch assignments and leadership opportunities.
- Consider how accommodations might work in new roles.

Discussing Accommodations in New Roles

- Think about how your current accommodations would transfer.
- Consider what new accommodations you might need.
- Be prepared to explain how accommodations support your performance.
- Focus on your qualifications and abilities.
- Address any concerns proactively.



Performance Evaluations and Accommodations

Performance should be evaluated based on your results, not your accommodations.

What Performance Reviews Should Focus On

- Achievement of job goals and objectives.
- Quality of work produced.
- Contribution to team and organization.
- Professional development and growth.
- Collaboration and communication skills.

What Should NOT Be Considered

- The fact that you have accommodations.
- Costs associated with accommodations.
- Differences in how you complete tasks.
- Use of assistive technology or supports.

If Accommodations Affect Your Performance Evaluation

- Request a meeting to discuss concerns.
- Explain how accommodations help you perform.
- Provide examples of your achievements.
- Ask for specific feedback about work quality.
- Document any discriminatory comments.

Preparing for Performance Reviews

- Document your accomplishments throughout the year.
- Gather feedback from colleagues and clients.
- Prepare examples of how you've exceeded expectations.
- Consider requesting accommodations for the review meeting itself.
- Focus on results and contributions.

Changing Roles or Departments

Moving to a new position may require accommodation adjustments.



Before Applying for Internal Positions

- Consider how your accommodations would work in the new role.
- Think about any additional accommodations you might need.
- Research the new department's culture and accessibility.
- Talk to people who work in that area.



During the Application Process

- Apply based on your qualifications.
- Decide whether to discuss accommodations before or after selection.
- Be prepared to explain how accommodations support your work.
- Focus on your ability to perform **essential job functions**.



Essential Job Functions: The main duties and responsibilities that are central to a job. These are tasks that must be performed, though the way they're done can sometimes be changed through accommodations.



After Getting a New Position

- Meet with your new supervisor about accommodations.
- Work with HR to transfer or modify accommodations.
- Allow time for adjustment and fine-tuning.
- Build relationships with new colleagues.
- Monitor how well accommodations work in the new environment.



Conclusion



We hope this eBook has helped you understand your rights around accommodation, the accommodation process and how to request accommodations, discuss and negotiate accommodations, and monitor and request adjustments to accommodations.

If you're looking for accommodation support, CCRW's mission is to promote and support meaningful and equitable employment for people with disabilities. We encourage job seekers to check out Untapped Talent as we believe everyone deserves the chance to shine in their career.

Untapped Talent will connect you with disability confident employers who are committed to creating accessible workplaces and providing equal opportunities for all. Untapped Talent is a great place to look for employers who are already familiar with offering accessibility supports.



www.untappedtalent.ca





Thank You

Thank you to all those who made this eBook possible.
Researched, written, and designed by: Linda Brown
Reviewed by: Kimberly Spevack, Melissa Silva, Shivani Sharma, Wilcady Dume Baez de Grullon, Kat Rulona

Photographs

Disabled and Here

[Visit Site](#)

Disability:IN

[Visit Site](#)

Josh Hotz

[Visit Site](#)

 UNTAPPEDTalent.

 CCRW | CCRT

Glossarie

A

Accessibility: Making places, products, or services usable by people with disabilities. This includes physical spaces, websites, documents, and workplace practices.

Accommodation: Changes made to a job, workplace, or work process to help someone with a disability perform their job duties. Examples include flexible schedules, special equipment, or modified workspaces.

Assistive Technology: Tools, equipment, or software that helps people with disabilities perform tasks. Examples include screen readers, voice recognition software, ergonomic keyboards, or hearing aids.

C

Canadian Human Rights Act: Federal law that protects people from discrimination, including discrimination based on disability. Applies to federal government jobs and federally regulated industries.

Career Advancement: Moving forward in your job to get more responsibility, higher pay, or a better position.

Cognitive Disability: Conditions that affect thinking, learning, memory, or problem-solving. Examples include intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, ADHD, or brain injuries.

Communication Accommodation: Changes to help people communicate at work. Examples include sign language interpreters, written instructions instead of verbal ones, or email communication instead of phone calls.

D

Disability: Any physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory condition that can affect how someone does their job. Includes both visible and invisible disabilities.

Disclosure: Telling someone about your disability. You control when and how much you share about your disability at work.

Discrimination: Treating someone unfairly because of their disability. This is illegal in Canada.

Duty to Accommodate: The legal requirement for employers to make changes to help employees with disabilities do their jobs, up to the point of undue hardship.

Glossarie

E

Employee Assistance Program: A free and private service your employer offers to help you with person problems like stress, family issues, or mental health.

Equity-Seeking Groups: Groups of people who face unfair treatment or barriers are and working toward equal opportunities.

Equity Statement: A written promise from an employer that they will treat all people fairly and work to remove barriers.

Ergonomic: Designed to be comfortable and safe for your body when you use it.

Essential Job Functions: The main duties and responsibilities that are central to a job. These are the tasks that must be performed, though the way they're done can sometimes be changed through accommodation.

F

Functional Limitation: How a disability affects someone's ability to perform specific work tasks. This focuses on work-related impacts rather than medical details.

G

Grievance: A formal complaint process, often through a union, to resolve workplace disputes including accommodation issues.

H

Human Rights Commission: Government agencies that investigate discrimination complaints and protect human rights. Each province has its own commission, plus there's a federal commission.

Human Rights Complaint: A formal legal process to address discrimination. Can result in remedies like compensation, policy changes, or required accommodations.

I

Interactive Process: The back-and-forth discussion between an employee and employer to identify and implement appropriate accommodations. Both parties should participate actively and in good faith.

Glossarie

Intersectionality: When a person belongs to more than one group that faces discrimination, and these identities combine to affect their experiences.

Invisible Disability: Disabilities that are not immediately apparent to others. Examples include mental health conditions, chronic pain, diabetes, or learning disabilities.

J

Job Restructuring: Changing how job tasks are organized or assigned as an accommodation. This might include reassigning non-essential duties or changing how tasks are completed.

L

Legal Aid: Free or low-cost legal services for people who cannot afford to hire a lawyer. Available for employment and human rights issues.

Lived Experience: The real-life knowledge you have from being a person with a disability.

M

Medical Documentation: Information from healthcare providers that supports an accommodation request. Should focus on work-related impacts and recommended accommodations, not detailed medical history.

Mediation: A process where a neutral person helps resolve disputes between an employee and employer. Often used to resolve accommodation disagreements without formal complaints.

Mediator: A neutral person who helps two sides talk through a problem and find a solution they both agree on.

O

Occupational Health and Safety: Workplace safety programs and staff who may be involved in assessing accommodation needs and ensuring workplace safety.

P

Peer Support Networks: Groups of people with similar experiences who meet to share advice, encouragement, and help each other.

T

Trial Period: A time to test whether an accommodation works well. Accommodations often need adjustments during trial periods.

U

Undue Hardship: The point at which accommodations would be too difficult or expensive for an employer to provide. This is a high standard - employers must prove accommodations would cause significant difficulty.

Union: An organization that represents workers in dealing with employers. Unions can help with accommodation requests and grievances.