

JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

Accommodation and Compliance Series

Accommodation and Compliance Series: Myasthenia Gravis

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Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

Preface

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JAN'S Accommodation and Compliance Series

Introduction

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

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

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

Information about Myasthenia Gravis

The name "Myasthenia Gravis" comes from the Greek and Latin words meaning "grave muscular weakness." The most common form of myasthenia gravis is a chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disorder that is characterized by fluctuating weakness of the voluntary muscle groups, which worsens with use of the affected muscle. Different muscle groups are affected in different individuals. Certain muscles are more frequently involved, including the ones that control eye movements, eyelids, chewing, swallowing, coughing, and facial expression. Muscles that control breathing and movements of the arms and legs may also be affected. Weakness of the muscles needed for breathing may cause shortness of breath, difficulty taking a deep breath, and coughing. The "gravis" or seriousness of myasthenia is noticeable when breathing muscles are affected.

Myasthenia Gravis and the Americans with Disabilities Act

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. For more information about how to determine whether a person has a disability under the ADA, see [How to Determine Whether a Person Has a Disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act \(ADAAA\)](#).

Accommodating Employees with Myasthenia Gravis

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

Questions to Consider:

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

Accommodation Ideas:

Limitations

Decreased Stamina/Fatigue

- Accessories for Scooters
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- All-Terrain Scooters
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Elevating Wheelchairs
- Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
- Ergonomic Assessments
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Examination and Procedures Chair
- Flexible Schedule

- Head Support for Wheelchairs
- Job Restructuring
- Low Task Chair
- Mechanic's Seats and Creepers
- Multi-Purpose Carts
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Scooters
- Stand-lean Stools
- Stools for Cutting Hair
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Walkers
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Wheelchair Accessible Scales
- Wheelchair Mounts
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Grasping

- Adjustable Drafting Tables
- Adjustable Massage Tables
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Alternative Spray Can Holders/Guns
- Anti-vibration Gloves
- Anti-vibration Tool Wraps
- Auto-dialers
- Automated Filing Systems
- Book Holders
- Breath and Mouth Controlled Alternative Computer Input Devices
- Cake Decorating and Baking Equipment
- Compact Material Handling
- Deburring Tools
- Dental and Surgical Instruments

- Door Knob Grips and Handles
- Electric Scissors
- Electric Stapler
- Electronic Organizers
- Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
- Ergonomic Knives
- Ergonomic Scissors
- File Carousels
- Filing Trays
- Graphics Design Software
- Grip Aids
- Hair Scissors
- Handheld Computers (General)
- Hands Free Resuscitation Devices
- Hands-free Telephones
- Headsets
- Height Adjustable Table Legs
- Independent Living Aids
- Left Hand-Dominant Keyboards
- Light Switch Extension Handles
- Lightweight Lead Aprons
- Manhole Cover Lifts
- Money Handling Products
- Mop Buckets
- Mops and Mop Handles
- Motorized Carts
- Multi-Purpose Carts
- One-Handed Keyboards
- Page Turners
- Pipettes
- Professional Organizers

- Reachers
- Scribe/Notetaker
- Shoulder Supports for Telephone Handsets
- Steering Grips
- Talking Bar Code Scanner/Reader
- Talking Money Identifier
- Test Tube Holders
- Tool Balancers
- Touchless Faucets
- Van Conversion
- Wheelchair Trays
- Writing Aids

Handling/Fingering

- Industry Work
 - Anti-vibration Gloves
 - Anti-vibration Tool Wraps
 - Compact Material Handling
 - Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
 - Extra Grip Gloves
 - Grip Aids
 - Money Handling Products
 - Vacuum Pickup Tools
- Office Work
 - Alternative Input Devices
 - Alternative Keyboards
 - Alternative Mice
 - Articulating Keyboard Trays
 - Book Holders
 - Ergonomic Equipment
 - Expanded Keyboards
 - Forearm Support

- Keyguards
- Miniature Keyboards
- On-Screen Keyboards
- One-Handed Keyboards
- Page Turners
- Other Services
 - Aide/Assistant/Attendant
 - Periodic Rest Breaks
 - Scribe/Notetaker

Overall Body Weakness/Strength

- Lifting/Moving
 - Animal Lift Tables
 - Battery Powered Lift Tables
 - Compact Material Handling
 - Lift Tables
 - Linen Carts
 - Multi-Purpose Carts
 - Patient Lifts (General)
- Other Services
 - Aide/Assistant/Attendant
 - Modified Break Schedule
 - Periodic Rest Breaks
 - Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Personal Mobility
 - Elevating Wheelchairs
 - Fall Protection
 - Foldable / Transport Wheelchairs
 - Independent Living Aids
 - Large-Rated Scooters
 - Large-Rated Wheelchairs
 - Personal Safety and Fall Alert Devices

- Personal Transportation and Mobility Products
- Power Assist for Manual Wheelchairs
- Scooters
- Stand-up Wheelchairs
- Walkers
- Walkers with Seats
- Wheelchairs
- Work Space Access
 - Adjustable and Ergonomic School Desks and Equipment
 - Anti-fatigue Matting
 - Ergonomic and Adjustable Office Chairs
 - Ergonomic Equipment
 - Forearm Support
 - Grab Bars
 - Office Chairs with Brakes and Locking Casters
 - Stair Lifts
 - Stand-lean Stools
 - Toileting Aids
 - Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
 - Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Reaching

- Adjustable Massage Tables
- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings
- Aerial Lifts
- Convex Mirrors
- Deburring Tools
- Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
- Ergonomic Assessments
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Folding Steps

- Height Adjustable Table Legs
- Independent Living Aids
- Large-Rated Small Step Ladders
- Lift Tables
- Long-Handled Mirrors
- Low Task Chair
- Mechanic's Seats and Creepers
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Power Lift IV Stands
- Reachers
- Rolling Safety Ladders
- Stair Assists
- Step Stools
- Telescopic Handle Attachments
- Vacuum Pickup Tools
- Wheelchair Trays
- Work Platforms

Walking

- Accessories for Scooters
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- All-Terrain Scooters
- All-Terrain Wheelchairs
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Boat Access
- Ergonomic and Pneumatic Tools
- Examination and Procedures Chair
- Foldable / Transport Wheelchairs
- Head Support for Wheelchairs
- Large-Rated Scooters
- Large-Rated Wheelchairs
- Low Task Chair

- Personal Transportation and Mobility Products
- Reclining Wheelchairs
- Rollators and Rolling Walkers
- Scooters
- Scooters for Small Stature
- Stair Assists
- Stools for Cutting Hair
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Van Conversion
- Walkers
- Walkers for Tall Individuals
- Walkers with Seats
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Wheelchair Accessible Scales
- Wheelchair Carts/Trailers
- Wheelchair Mounts
- Wheelchairs
- Wheelchairs for Small Stature
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Work-Related Functions

Commute

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

Parking

- Accessible Parking Space
- Flexible Schedule
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely

- Wheelchairs

Policies

- Additional Training Time / Training Refreshers
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Physical/Social Distancing Signage
- Policy Modification
- Reassignment
- Service Animal
- Sleep Alerting Devices
- Strobe Lights
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Touchless Faucets

Work Site Access

- Accessible Toilets and Toilet Seats
- Accessories for Scooters
- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings
- All-Terrain Scooters
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Automatic Door Openers
- Boat Access
- Braille and/or ADA Signage
- Door Knob Grips and Handles

- Examination and Procedures Chair
- Flexible Schedule
- Head Support for Wheelchairs
- High Visibility Floor Tape and Paint
- Low Task Chair
- Portable Ramps
- Ramps
- Scooters
- Service Animal
- Smart Locks/Keyless Entry Locks
- Stair Assists
- Stair Tread/Textured Tape
- Support Animal
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Van Conversion
- Walkers
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Wheelchair Accessible Scales
- Wheelchair Carts/Trailers
- Wheelchair Lifts
- Wheelchair Mounts
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Work Station Access

- Adjustable and Ergonomic School Desks and Equipment
- Adjustable Desk Top Workstations for Office Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Articulating Keyboard Trays
- Assist Lift Cushions
- Chair Mats

- Chairs for Little People
- Chairs for People who are Tall
- Dual Monitors
- Elevating Lift and Office Chairs
- Ergonomic and Adjustable Office Chairs
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Expanded Keyboards
- Forearm Support
- Forward Leaning Chairs
- Large-Rated Chairs
- Monitor Risers
- Mousing Surfaces
- Stand-lean Stools
- Supine Workstations
- Work Platforms
- Zero Gravity (reclining) Chairs

Situations and Solutions:

The following situations and solutions are real-life examples of accommodations that were made by JAN customers. Because accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis, these examples may not be effective for every workplace but give you an idea about the types of accommodations that are possible.

An administrator was having problems handling stress and had some double vision from myasthenia gravis.

He was allowed to take rest breaks, assigned a support person in the workplace, and provided a reader as an accommodation.

A clerical worker with myasthenia gravis was missing a lot of work because of problems breathing, speaking, and walking.

She was allowed to work at home part-time and to communicate via e-mail as an accommodation.

A delivery person was having difficulty loading and unloading his truck due to lower extremity weakness from myasthenia gravis.

He was accommodated with a transfer to a less physically demanding delivery route.

A teacher with myasthenia gravis was having difficulty meeting the physical demands of her job due to muscle fatigue.

She was accommodated with a full-time teaching aid, frequently used supplies/equipment were moved closer to her desk, and she was allowed several short rest breaks during the day.

A hospital employee with myasthenia gravis was having difficulty walking.

She was accommodated with a parking space closer to her work-site and was provided a scooter to use at work.

Products

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

Resources

Job Accommodation Network

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

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

Office of Disability Employment Policy

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

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

Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center (GARD)

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

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

Mayo Clinic

13400 E. Shea Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85259
Direct: (480) 301-8000
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/>

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

Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America

355 Lexington Avenue,
15th Floor
New York, NY 10017
Toll Free: (800) 541-5454
Fax: (212) 370-9047
<http://www.myasthenia.org/>

The Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America (MGFA) is the only national volunteer health agency dedicated solely to the fight against myasthenia gravis. MGFA, a nonprofit organization, was established to carry out the following: "To facilitate the timely diagnosis and optimal care of individuals affected by myasthenia gravis and closely related disorders and to improve their lives through programs of patient services, public information, medical research, professional education, advocacy and patient care." The vision of the Foundation is to have a "World Without MG."

National Center for Biotechnology Information

8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20894
pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

The National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

P.O. Box 5801
Bethesda, MD 20824
Toll Free: (800) 352-9424
Direct: (301) 496-5751
<http://www.ninds.nih.gov>

The NINDS, an agency of the U.S. Federal Government and a component of the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Public Health Service, is a lead agency for the congressionally designated Decade of the Brain, and the leading supporter of biomedical research on disorders of the brain and nervous system.

National Organization for Rare Disorders

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

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

Office on Women's Health

Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 712E
Washington, DC 20201
Toll Free: (800) 994-9662
Direct: (202) 690-7650
Fax: (202) 205-2631
<http://www.womenshealth.gov/>

The Office on Women's Health (OWH), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), works to improve the health and sense of well-being of all U.S. women and girls. OWH serves as the focal point for women's health activities across HHS offices and agencies and leads HHS efforts to ensure that all women and girls achieve the best possible health.

Remedy's Health Communities

<http://www.healthcommunities.com>

Remedy Health Media is America's fastest growing health information and technology company. We are a leading provider of clinical resources and wellness tools that help millions of patients and caregivers live healthier, more fulfilled lives.

Our mission is to empower patients and caregivers with the information and applications needed to efficiently navigate the healthcare landscape and as a result, to permit better health outcomes through use of our products and services.

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