

# JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

## Accommodation and Compliance Series

# Accommodation and Compliance Series: Graves' Disease

Job Accommodation Network  
PO Box 6080  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6080  
(800)526-7234 (V)  
(877)781-9403 (TTY)  
[jan@askjan.org](mailto:jan@askjan.org)  
[AskJAN.org](http://AskJAN.org)



**ODEP**

Office of Disability  
Employment Policy

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## Preface

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

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

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

### **Introduction**

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

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

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

### **Information about Graves' Disease**

Graves' disease (toxic diffuse goiter) is characterized by hyperthyroidism and one or more of the following: goiter, exophthalmos, and pretibial myxedema. Many symptoms and signs are associated with Graves' disease. The more common signs are goiter, moist skin, tremor, eye signs (stare, lid lag, and irritation), nervousness, fatigue, and weakness.

### **Graves' Disease 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 Graves' Disease**

People with Grave's disease 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 Grave's disease 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

- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Ergonomic Assessments
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Job Restructuring
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Stand-lean Stools
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

##### Erratic/Inconsistent Behavior

- Apps for Miscellaneous Mental Health / Control of Anger & Emotions
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy
- Cubicle Doors, Shields, and Shades

- Disability Awareness/Etiquette Training
- Employee Assistance Program
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule
- Habit Monitoring
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring
- Noise Canceling Headsets
- On-site Mentoring
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Reminders
- Social Skill Builders
- Strobe Lights
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Training Modifications
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace
- Written Instructions

#### Suppressed Immune System

- Disability Awareness/Etiquette Training
- Hand Protection
- Physical/Social Distancing Signage
- Policy Modification
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

#### Temperature Sensitivity

- Air Deflectors
- Cold Resistant Gloves

- Cooling Clothing
- Fans
- Flexible Schedule
- Heated Clothing
- Heated Ergonomic and Computer Products
- Heated Gloves
- Portable Air Conditioners
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Vent Covers
- Workstation Space Heaters

### **Work-Related Functions**

#### 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

## Stress

- Apps for Anxiety and Stress
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Monitor Mirrors
- Odor Control
- On-site Mentoring
- Service Animal
- Simulated Skylights and Windows
- Strobe Lights
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Uninterrupted Work Time

## Temperature

- Air Deflectors
- Cold Resistant Gloves
- Cooling Clothing
- Fans
- Flexible Schedule
- Foot Warmers
- Heat Resistant Gloves
- Heated Clothing

- Heated Ergonomic and Computer Products
- Heated Gloves
- Modified Break Schedule
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Vent Covers
- Workstation Space Heaters

## 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 applicant disclosed that she has Graves' disease and mentioned trouble with writing due to persistent hand shaking.**

The employer agreed to provide weighted pens to limit the effects of the hand shaking if the applicant is selected for the position.

**An applicant mentioned that she had a sensitivity to heat due to Graves' disease.**

The employer agreed to provide the employee with an office with a window. This would enable her to use a window air conditioning unit as an accommodation.

**An employee with Graves' disease requested additional access to the restroom due to frequent diarrhea.**

The employer provided additional unpaid breaks as an accommodation and allowed the employee to make up the lost time.

**An employee diagnosed with Graves' disease mentioned difficulty using a mouse due to hand tremors.**

The employer provided an alternative mouse designed to reduce the effects of tremors as an accommodation.

**An employee with Graves' disease was having trouble getting to work on time due to insomnia.**

The employer gave him flexibility in start and end times as an accommodation.

## Products

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

## Resources

### **Job Accommodation Network**

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

### **American Thyroid Association**

6066 Leesburg Pike  
Suite 550  
Falls Church, VA 22041  
[thyroid@thyroid.org](mailto:thyroid@thyroid.org)  
<http://www.thyroid.org/>

The American Thyroid Association (ATA) is the leading worldwide organization dedicated to the advancement, understanding, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of thyroid disorders and thyroid cancer. ATA is an international membership medical society with over 1,700 members from 43 countries around the world

### **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.

### **Graves' Disease & Thyroid Foundation**

P.O. Box 2793  
Rancho Sante Fe, CA 92067  
Toll Free: (877) 643-3123  
Direct: (828) 877-5251  
Fax: (877) 643-3123  
[info@gdatf.org](mailto:info@gdatf.org)  
<http://www.gdatf.org/>

Established in 1990 as the National Graves' Disease Foundation, the Graves' Disease and Thyroid Foundation is the leading source of help and hope for people with Graves' disease and other thyroid related disorders. We provide education and support for patients, family members, caregivers, friends and healthcare professionals.

### **Living with Graves' Disease**

<http://www.livingwithgravesdisease.com/>

You've found your way to the community created specifically for Graves' Disease sufferers. We are a public education organization for sufferers. We launched our first website about Graves' Disease and Thyroid disease in 1999.

### **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.

### **National Center for Biotechnology Information**

8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20894  
[pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](mailto: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 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.

**Thyroid Foundation of Canada**

P.O. Box 298

Bath, Ontario K0H 1- 1G0

Toll Free: (800) 267-8822

<http://www.thyroid.ca/>

The Thyroid Foundation of Canada is a non-profit registered volunteer organization whose mission is to support thyroid patients across Canada through awareness, education, and research.

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