

JAN

Job Accommodation Network

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Accommodation and Compliance Series

Ideas for Writing an Accommodation Request Letter

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IDEAS FOR WRITING AN ACCOMMODATION REQUEST LETTER

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified employees and applicants with disabilities, unless such accommodations would pose an undue hardship (e.g., too costly, too extensive, too substantial, too disruptive). In general, the applicant or employee with a disability is responsible for letting the employer know that an accommodation is needed to participate in the application process, to perform essential job functions, or to receive equal benefits and privileges of employment. Employers are not required to provide accommodations if they are not aware of the need.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency charged with enforcing the ADA, an accommodation request does not have to be in writing. However, the EEOC suggests that individuals with disabilities might find it useful to document accommodation requests in the event there is a dispute about whether or when they requested accommodation. One way to document an accommodation request is to make a written request.

The ADA does not include specific guidelines or forms for requesting reasonable accommodation. However, some employers have developed in-house forms. If so, employees should use the employer's forms for requesting accommodation. Otherwise, individuals with disabilities can use any method that is effective; the ADA does not require specific language or format. The following information provides an example of an accommodation request letter. Please note that the information is to be used as a guide only and is not legal advice. If legal advice is needed, contact a legal service.

For additional information regarding the ADA and reasonable accommodation, contact JAN.

This publication was written by Linda Carter Batiste, JD. Updated 12/12/12.

Sample Accommodation Request Letter

The following is an example of what can be included in an accommodation request letter and is not intended to be legal advice.

Date of Letter

Your name
Your address

Employer's name
Employer's address

Dear (e.g. Supervisor, Manager, Human Resources, Personnel):

Content to consider in body of letter:

- Identify yourself as a person with a disability
- State that you are requesting accommodations under the ADA (or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if you are a federal employee)
- Identify your specific problematic job tasks
- Identify your accommodation ideas
- Request your employer's accommodation ideas
- Refer to attached medical documentation if appropriate*
- Ask that your employer respond to your request in a reasonable amount of time

Sincerely,

Your signature
Your printed name

Cc: to appropriate individuals

* You may want to attach medical information to your letter to help establish that you are a person with a disability and to document the need for accommodation.

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