



**Job Accommodation Network**

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

## Accommodation and Compliance Series

# Accommodation and Compliance Series: Bladder Impairments

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Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

## 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 Bladder Impairment**

Bladder impairments tend to be caused by neurologic conditions, including spinal cord injuries, disease, cerebrovascular accidents, brain injuries, multiple sclerosis, and dementia. However, other conditions can also trigger bladder impairments, such as pregnancy, childbirth, weight, and medications. Some of the most common symptoms of a bladder impairment can be an inability to hold urine (functional incontinence), a strong need to urinate (urge incontinence), and leakage due to activity (stress incontinence). These can also lead to infections, stones, or renal damage. Interstitial cystitis is a specific bladder condition that can cause pressure and pain in the bladder. It also has symptoms similar to other bladder disorders, such as frequent urination, pain during sex, and waking at night to urinate.

### **Bladder Impairment 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 Bladder Impairment**

People with bladder impairments 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 bladder impairments 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
- Job Restructuring
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

##### **Effect of/Receive Medical Treatment**

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Device
- Flexible Schedule
- Outgoing Voice Amplification - Telephone
- Personal On-Site Paging Devices

- Protective Eyewear
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Voice Amplification

## Lifting

- Agriculture/Farm
  - Animal Lift Tables
  - Carts
  - Compact Mobile Cranes
- Industrial
  - Aerial Lifts
  - Ball Transfer Tables
  - Battery Powered Lift Tables
  - Drum Handling
  - Engine Lifts and Lift Plates
  - Lift Gates
  - Lift Tables
  - Rolling Safety Ladders
  - Stairclimbing Handtrucks
  - Truck Mounted Cranes
  - Vacuum Lifts
  - Vehicle Lifts and Manipulators
  - Winches and Chain Hoists
  - Work Platforms
- Office or Retail Goods
  - Carts
  - Compact Material Handling
  - Ergonomic Assessments
  - Ergonomic Equipment
  - Height Adjustable Table Legs
  - Low Task Chair
  - Stairclimbing Handtrucks

- Other
  - Drywall and Wallboard Lifts
  - Ergonomic Equipment
  - Independent Living Aids
  - Job Restructuring
  - Lifting Aids
  - Lifters and Carriers for Mobility Aids
  - Manhole Cover Lifts
  - Periodic Rest Breaks
  - Power Lift IV Stands
  - Proper Lifting Techniques
- People
  - Accessible Baby Changing Stations
  - Adjustable Exam Tables
  - Adult Changing Tables
  - Bath Chairs
  - Evacuation Devices
  - Large-Rated Wheelchair Lifts
  - Pool Lifts
  - Patient Lifts (General)
  - Powered Bath Lifts
  - Toileting Aids
  - Transfer Aids
  - Transfer Sheets
  - Walk-up Changing Tables
  - Wheelchair Lifts

#### Toileting/Grooming Issue

- Accessible Toilets and Toilet Seats
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Flexible Schedule
- Grab Bars - Toilet Hinged Arm Support

- Grooming and Dressing Aids
- Independent Living Aids
- Modified Break Schedule
- Swing Away Grab Bars
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Toileting Aids
- Transfer Aids
- Transfer Sheets
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

### **Work-Related Functions**

#### **Commute**

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

## 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 employee who experienced incontinence requested accommodations because he was having accidents at work.**

The employer allowed the employee to keep a change of clothes at the office and additional restroom breaks.

**An employee recently had surgery, which was needed as a result of a bladder condition.**

She was not able to commute to work so she asked to telework. The telework policy was extended to only senior employees. The employer agreed to modify the telework policy for the employee, who was considered a new employee, on a temporary basis, to see how the accommodation works.

**An employee with a bladder condition requested leave in order to go to doctors' appointments.**

The employer offered a modified schedule instead, so that the employee could make up the time missed without needing to use accrued leave.

**Because of medications being taken for a bladder condition, and employee experienced fatigue in the afternoon.**

The employer modified the employees break time and provided a space for the employee to rest during the afternoon.

**An employee with interstitial cystitis needed to use the restroom once every hour.**

The employer modified the company break policy, just for the employee, so that frequent restroom breaks could be taken.

## 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.

### **Office of Disability Employment Policy**

200 Constitution Avenue,  
NW, Room S-1303  
Washington, DC 20210  
Toll Free: (866) 633-7365  
[odep@dol.gov](mailto: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.

### **Bladder and Bowel Foundation**

SATRA Innovation Park  
Rockingham Road  
Kettering, Northants NN16 - 9JH  
[info@bladderandbowelfoundation.org](mailto:info@bladderandbowelfoundation.org)  
<https://www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org/>

The Bladder and Bowel Foundation (B&BF) is the UK wide charity for people with bladder and bowel control problems. B&BF provides information and support services, including a confidential helpline, for anyone affected by these conditions as well as their families, careers and healthcare professionals.

### **Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network**

4915 St. Elmo Avenue,  
Suite 202  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
Toll Free: (888) 901-2226  
Direct: (301) 215-9099  
[info@bcan.org](mailto:info@bcan.org)  
<http://www.bcan.org/>

Each year, BCAN provides thousands of patients, caregivers and the medical community with the educational resources and support services they need to navigate their bladder cancer journey. BCAN works collaboratively with the medical and research professionals who are dedicated to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of bladder cancer and empowers the patient community by allowing them to share experiences with others, and to participate in building awareness of the need for a cure.

### **International Paruresis Association**

P.O. Box 21237  
Catonsville, MD 21237  
Toll Free: (800) 247-3864  
Direct: (443) 315-5250  
Fax: (443) 315-5251  
[info@shybladder.org](mailto:info@shybladder.org)  
<http://www.paruresis.org>

Welcome to the official IPA (International Paruresis Association) website. This site is provided as a resource for people who find it difficult or impossible to urinate in the presence of others, either in their own home or in public facilities. Also, for people who have difficulty under the stress of time pressure, when being observed, when others are close by and might hear them, or when traveling on moving vehicles.

**International Paruresis Association**

P.O. Box 21237

Catonsville, MD 21237

Toll Free: (800) 247-3864

Direct: (443) 315-5250

Fax: (443) 315-5251

[info@paruresis.org](mailto:info@paruresis.org)

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**Interstitial Cystitis Association**

7918 Jones Branch Drive

Suite 300

McLean, VA 22102

Direct: (703) 442-2070

Fax: (703) 506-3266

[ICAmail@ichelp.org](mailto:ICAmail@ichelp.org)

<http://www.ichelp.org>

The Interstitial Cystitis Association (ICA) advocates for interstitial cystitis (IC) research dedicated to discovery of a cure and better treatments, raises awareness, and serves as a central hub for the healthcare providers, researchers and millions of patients who suffer with constant urinary urgency and frequency and extreme bladder pain called IC. (IC is also referred to as painful bladder syndrome, bladder pain syndrome, and chronic pelvic pain.)

**Interstitial Cystitis Network**

PO Box 2159

Healdsburg, CA 95448

Toll Free: (800) 928-7496

Fax: (707) 538-9444

[info@ic-network.com](mailto:info@ic-network.com)

<http://www.ic-network.org/>

Founded in 1994 by IC patient Jill Osborne, the Interstitial Cystitis Network is a health education company dedicated to IC and chronic pelvic pain syndrome. Home of the largest IC support group in the world, we work with patients in more than 90 countries! The ICN has been rated the top patient website dedicated to IC in peer reviewed studies by Harvard Medical School (2011) and the University of London (2013). Our goal? To give patients the best information to empower, educate and encourage! You are NOT alone! We're HERE and We CARE!

**Kidney & Urology Foundation of America**

104 West 40th Street,

Suite 500

New York, NY 10018

Toll Free: (800) 633-6628

<http://www.kidneyurology.org/>

Kidney & Urology Foundation of America (KUFA) is a national, 501 c(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping people with kidney and urologic diseases and individuals waiting for organ and tissue transplants.

**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.

**MedlinePlus**

8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20894  
[custserv@nlm.nih.gov](mailto:custserv@nlm.nih.gov)  
<https://medlineplus.gov>

MedlinePlus is the National Institutes of Health's Web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, the world's largest medical library, it brings you information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues in language you can understand. MedlinePlus offers reliable, up-to-date health information, anytime, anywhere, for free.

**National Association for Continence**

PO Box 1019  
Charleston, SC 29402  
Toll Free: (800) 252-3337  
<http://www.nafc.org/>

The focus of the National Association for Continence is to provide quality continence care through education, collaboration, and advocacy. We offer up many different avenues so you can start to have important and meaningful conversation about your experience with incontinence. Here you can read in-depth explanations and get straight talk about every type of continence from medical experts. We can even help you connect with physicians local to you who specialize in dealing with this life-altering condition.

**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 Institute on Aging**

31 Center Drive  
MSC 2292  
Bethesda, MD 20892  
Toll Free: (800) 222-2225  
[niaic@nia.nih.gov](mailto:niaic@nia.nih.gov)  
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/>

At NIA, our mission is to discover what may contribute to a healthy old age as well as to understand and address the disease and disability sometimes associated with growing older. In pursuit of these goals, our research program covers a broad range of areas, from the study of basic cellular changes that occur with age to the examination of the biomedical, social, and behavioral aspects of age-related conditions, including Alzheimer's disease.

**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 Communités**

<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.

### **Urology Care Foundation**

1000 Corporate Boulevard

Linthicum, MD 21090

Toll Free: (800) 828-7866

Direct: (410) 689-3700

Fax: (410) 689-3998

[info@UrologyCareFoundation.org](mailto:info@UrologyCareFoundation.org)

<http://www.urologyhealth.org/>

The Urology Care Foundation advances urologic research and education. We work with health care providers, researchers, patients and caregivers to improve patients' lives. The Urology Care Foundation is the official foundation of the American Urological Association.

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