

JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

Accommodation and Compliance Series

Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees with Brain Injury

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AskJAN.org



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Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

Preface

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is funded by a contract with 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 <http://askjan.org/soar>.

Information about Brain Injury

The brain can incur several different types of injuries depending on the type, amount, and position of force impacting the head. The impact may affect one functional area of the brain, several areas, or all areas of the brain. These factors determine what types of accommodations are effective. JAN's [Effective Accommodation Practices \(EAP\) Series: Executive Functioning Deficit](#) is a publication detailing accommodations for individuals with limitations related to executive functioning. These ideas may be helpful in determining accommodations.

Brain Injury and the Americans with Disabilities Act

The ADA does not contain a list of medical conditions that constitute disabilities. Instead, the ADA has a general definition of disability that each person must meet. A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having 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 Brain Injury

People with brain injuries 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 brain injuries 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. Has the employee been consulted regarding possible accommodations?
6. 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?
7. Do supervisory personnel and employees need training?

Accommodation Ideas:

Limitations

Attentiveness/Concentration

- Applications (apps)
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Cubicle Doors, Shields, and Shades
- Electronic Organizers
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Coaches
- Modified Break Schedule

- Noise Canceling Headsets
- Sound Absorption and Sound Proof Panels
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Timers and Watches
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace
- Written Instructions

Decreased Stamina/Fatigue

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

Executive Functioning Deficits

- Apps for Concentration
- Checklists
- Color Coded System
- Cubicle Doors, Shields, and Shades
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Form Generating Software
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring

- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Noise Canceling Headsets
- Recorded Directives, Messages, Materials
- Sound Absorption and Sound Proof Panels
- Speech Recognition Software
- Timers and Watches
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

Memory Loss

- Additional Training Time / Training Refreshers
- Apps for Memory
- Electronic Organizers
- Memory Software
- Recorded Directives, Messages, Materials
- Reminders
- Support Person
- Verbal Cues
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

Organizing/Planning/Prioritizing

- Applications (apps)
- Apps for Organization/ Time Management
- Color-coded Manuals, Outlines, and Maps
- Electronic Organizers
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Job Coaches
- Job Restructuring
- On-site Mentoring
- Organization Software

- Professional Organizers
- Reminders
- Supervisory Methods
- Timers and Watches
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Written Instructions

Photosensitivity

- Alternative Lighting
- Anti-Glare Filters for Fluorescent Lights
- Cubicle Doors, Shields, and Shades
- Fluorescent Light Tube Covers
- Full Spectrum or Natural Lighting Products
- LED Light Filters
- Lighting Gel Filters
- Sun/UV Protective Clothing
- Vehicle Window Tinting and Shades

Seizure Activity

- Designated Responders
- Disability Awareness/Etiquette Training
- Electronic Organizers
- Fall Protection
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Restructuring
- Modified Break Schedule
- Modified Lighting
- Padded Edging
- Plan of Action
- Policy Modification
- Protective Eyewear
- Rest Area/Private Space

- Rolling Safety Ladders
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Timers and Watches
- Transportation Assistance
- Voice Recorders
- Wall Calendars and Planners
- Workplace Safety
- Written Instructions

Walking

- Scooters
- Walkers
- Wheelchairs

Work-Related Functions

Communicate

- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- On-site Mentoring
- Scribe/Notetaker
- Service Animal
- Verbal Responses
- Word Prediction/Completion and Macro Software
- Writing/Editing Software

Commute

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

Parking

- Flexible Schedule
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely

- Wheelchairs

Policies

- Additional Training Time / Training Refreshers
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Flexible Schedule
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Policy Modification
- Reassignment
- Service Animal
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely

Stress

- Apps for Anxiety and Stress
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Monitor Mirrors
- On-site Mentoring
- Service Animal
- Simulated Skylights and Windows
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely

- Uninterrupted Work Time

Work Site Access

- Accessible Toilets and Toilet Seats
- Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings
- Alternative Locks
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Braille and/or ADA Signage
- Building Accessibility Products
- Door Knob Grips and Handles
- Flexible Schedule
- Portable Ramps
- Ramps
- Scooters
- Service Animal
- Support Animal
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Wheelchair Lifts
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

Situations and Solutions:

A police officer was returning to work following surgery for a brain aneurysm.

He had partial paralysis to the left side and could no longer use both hands for word processing. Accommodation suggestions included: transferring the individual to a vacant position that involved computer research and providing a one-handed keyboard.

A professional whose work required the use of a computer returned to work following a brain injury.

As a result of his injury he was unable to read past the midline when reading from left to right. Accommodation suggestions included: changing the margin settings of his word processing program for 80 to 40 to limit right side reading or purchasing software that can split the computer screen left to right and black out the right side, redesigning his workstation to place equipment on the left, and providing task lighting.

A therapist who had short-term memory deficits had difficulty writing case notes from counseling sessions.

Accommodation suggestions included: allowing the therapist to tape record sessions and replay them before dictating notes, scheduling 15 minutes at the end of each session to write up hand written notes, and scheduling fewer counseling sessions per day.

A wounded service member was returning to his civilian office job in a manufacturing plant.

He had a traumatic brain injury (TBI), which caused seizures. He had to periodically travel through the plant and his employer was concerned about him having a seizure and getting hurt by machinery or industrial vehicles. The employer established a route of travel for all employees walking through the plant, away from machinery and separate from the industrial vehicle route of travel.

A veteran who recently returned to the workforce after spending several years overseas has Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which causes difficulty with memory and mood regulation.

He was recently hired as a customer service representative. After disclosing his disability and requesting reasonable accommodations, his employer provided him with a cubicle close to an exit, with his back facing a wall. This helped to alleviate some of his stress, but he still had difficulty with memory and emotional outbursts. The employer obtained a job coach through the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist the employee with adjusting to his new position. The job coach worked with the employer and employee to develop a customized form for taking notes from customers and a system for organizing the employee's workspace. The job coach also suggested the employee e-mail his supervisor when he has questions so he will have responses in written form that he can refer to later if he forgets something. Finally, the job coach helped the employee incorporate breaks into his day to walk and do breathing exercises to help reduce the likelihood of emotional outbursts. After the job coach comes in twice a week

for three weeks, the employee is able to incorporate the job coach's suggestions into his regular routine and perform his job duties without assistance.

A court employee was having difficulty with emotions after returning to work following an acquired brain injury due to a stroke.

She was diagnosed with pseudo-bulbar affect (PBA) that caused outbursts of uncontrollable laughter at seemingly inappropriate times. The employee asked that her co-workers be educated on PBA so they would better understand what could be viewed as inappropriate behavior. The employee agreed to talk to her neurologist about the training. She was also accommodated with extra breaks to help manage her stress, a temporary lightening of her workload, and a flexible schedule to allow her time for counseling and doctor appointments.

A laborer working in a noisy factory had difficulty concentrating on job tasks.

Accommodation suggestions included: erecting sound absorbing barriers around his workstation, moving unnecessary equipment from the area to reduce traffic, and allowing the employee to wear a headset or ear plugs.

Products

There are numerous products that can be used to accommodate people with limitations. JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource at <http://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
<http://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
<http://dol.gov/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.

American Brain Tumor Association

8550 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

Ste 550

Chicago, IL 60631

Toll Free: (800) 886-2282

Direct: (773) 577-8750

Fax: (773) 577-8738

info@abta.org

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

The mission of the American Brain Tumor Association is to advance the understanding and treatment of brain tumors with the goals of improving, extending and, ultimately, saving the lives of those impacted by a brain tumor diagnosis.

American Physical Therapy Association

<http://www.moveforwardpt.com/Default.aspx>

MoveForwardPT.com is the official consumer information website of the American Physical Therapy Association.

American Stroke Association

7272 Greenville Avenue

Dallas, TX 75231

Toll Free: (888) 478-7653

<http://www.strokeassociation.org>

The American Stroke Association mission is to build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Brain Injury Association of America

1608 Spring Hill Road
Suite 110
Vienna, VA 22182
Toll Free: (800) 444-6443
Direct: (703) 761-0750
Fax: (703) 761-0755
info@biausa.org
<http://www.biausa.org/>

The Brain Injury Association creates a better future through brain injury prevention, research, education, and advocacy.

BrainandSpinalCord.org

Toll Free: (877) 357-8423
<http://www.brainandspinalcord.org/>

Our mission is to be the most reliable, timely and complete resource on the internet for brain injury and spinal cord injury survivors. Our hope is that this site will become relied upon as a trustworthy resource for the community and for those who are searching for information.

BrainLine.org

WETA
2775 South Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22206
Direct: (703) 998-2020
info@brainline.org
<http://www.brainline.org/>

BrainLine is a national multimedia project offering information and resources about preventing, treating, and living with TBI. BrainLine includes a series of webcasts, an electronic newsletter, and an extensive outreach campaign in partnership with national organizations concerned about traumatic brain injury. BrainLine serves anyone whose life has been affected by TBI. That includes people with brain injury, their families, professionals in the field, and anyone else in a position to help prevent or ameliorate the toll of TBI.

Center for Parent Information and Resources

35 Halsey St.
Fourth Floor
Newark, NJ 07102
malizo@spannj.org
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

The Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR) serves as a central resource of information and products to the community of Parent Training Information (PTI) Centers and the Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs), so that they can focus their efforts on serving families of children with disabilities.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Rd
Atlanta, GA 30333
Toll Free: (800) 232-4636
<http://www.cdc.gov>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are dedicated to protecting the health and safety of people - at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships.

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

636 Morris Turnpike
Suite 3A
Short Hills, NJ 07078
Toll Free: (800) 225-0292
Direct: (973) 379-2690
TeamReeve@ChristopherReeve.org
http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ddJFKRNoFiG/b.4048063/k.67BA/The_Christopher_amp_Dana_Reeve_Foundation__Paralysis_amp_Spinal_Cord_Injury.htm

The Reeve Foundation is dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by funding innovative research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis through grants, information and advocacy.

Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

1335 East-West Highway 9th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Toll Free: (866) 966-1020
Direct: (301) 295-3257
resources@dcoeoutreach.org
<http://www.dcoe.mil/>

DCoE assesses, validates, oversees and facilitates prevention, resilience, identification, treatment, outreach, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs for psychological health (PH) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) to ensure the Department of Defense meets the needs of the nation's military communities, warriors and families.

MedlinePlus

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

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.

Created by the U.S. National Library of Medicine

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 Rehabilitation Information Center

8400 Corporate Drive
Suite 500
Landover, MD 20785
Toll Free: (800) 346-2742
Fax: (301) 459-4263
<http://www.naric.com>

The National Rehabilitation Information Center is a library and information center focusing on disability and rehabilitation research. Specialists can provide quick information and referrals, customized database searching, and document delivery.

National Resource Center for Traumatic Brain Injury

P.O. Box 980542
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Richmond, VA 23298-0542
Direct: (804) 828-9055
Fax: (804) 828-2378
jhmarwit@vcu.edu
<http://www.tbinc.com/>

The National Resource Center for Traumatic Brain Injury provides relevant, practical information for professionals, persons with brain injury, and family members.

Ohio Valley Center for Brain Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation

480 W. 9th Avenue, 1166 Dodd Hall

480 Medical Center Drive

Columbus, OH 43210-1245

Direct: (614) 293-3802

Fax: (614) 293-8886

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

The Ohio Valley Center for Head Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation provides education and develops programs to improve the quality of life of persons who experience traumatic brain injury.

Pediatric Brain Foundation

2144 E. Republic Rd.

Building B, Suite 202

Springfield, MO 65804

Direct: (417) 887-4242

info@pediatricbrainfoundation.org

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

Pediatric Brain Foundation's Mission is Three-fold:

- Expedite scientific research to find treatments and cures for the more than 14 million children living with some form of neurological disorder
- Provide families and health care professionals with up-to-date information and resources on the latest discoveries in pediatric neurology
- Educate the public and public officials on the critical importance of funding pediatric neurological research

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.

Society for Neuroscience

1121 14th Street, NW
Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20005
Direct: (202) 962-4000
<http://www.sfn.org/>

The Society for Neuroscience promotes the exchange of information among researchers.

Veterans Crisis Line

Toll Free: (800) 273-8255
<http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text.

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