

# JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

## Accommodation and Compliance Series

# Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees with Vertigo

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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 Vertigo**

Vertigo is the sensation of spinning, whirling, or dizziness caused by a disturbance in balance. Vertigo can be described as either subjective or objective. An individual who experiences objective vertigo may feel like things in her environment are moving, while an individual with subjective vertigo feels as if she is moving. Vertigo can be caused by Meniere's Disease, viral infections, central nervous system disorders such as stroke, migraines, multiple sclerosis, head trauma, acoustic neuroma (tumor), cardiovascular disorders, and sharp changes in blood pressure.

Vertigo can impact a person's ability to work. Individuals with vertigo may be limited in activities such as getting out of bed; walking; traveling; working around moving objects, under bright or fluorescent lights, or at heights; climbing ladders; viewing a computer monitor; or working in an environment that has many colors or patterns (e.g., a patterned carpet).

### **Vertigo 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 Vertigo**

People with limitations from vertigo 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 who are aging 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**

##### Effect of/Receive Medical Treatment

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

##### Stress Intolerance

- Apps for Anxiety and Stress
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy

- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person

### **Work-Related Functions**

#### Commute

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

#### Light

- Alternative Lighting
- Anti-Glare Filters for Fluorescent Lights
- Flexible Schedule
- Fluorescent Light Tube Covers
- Full Spectrum or Natural Lighting Products
- LED Light Filters
- LED Lighting
- Lighting Gel Filters
- Modified Lighting
- Non-Fluorescent Lighting
- Personal Visors
- Simulated Skylights and Windows
- Sun/UV Protective Clothing
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely

- Transparent Window Shades
- UV Protection Shelters
- Vehicle Window Tinting and Shades

#### 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 Industrial Settings
- 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:

**An employee with vertigo mentions that their dizziness makes it difficult for them to climb ladders but does not have this issue while climbing stairs.**

The employer allows the individual to use a rolling safety ladder as climbing it is more akin to climbing stairs and it also provides the benefit of a hand railing for additional balance support.

**A potential employee discloses that she has vertigo while being given a tour of the office and shown to a prospective workstation.**

She states that the fluorescent lighting in the area is a trigger for her vertigo. The employer agrees to provide full spectrum lighting sources for the work area should she be hired for the position.

**An applicant with vertigo is required to take a pre-employment screening test to be considered for the position.**

The test is normally performed on a computer, but the applicant states that prolonged computer use causes her vertigo to flare up. To accommodate this need, the employer allowed the individual to take a written version of the test instead.

**An employee with vertigo occasionally cannot make it into work due to her severe flare ups.**

The employer has been allowing the employee to use paid sick leave during these occasions, but the employee requested that some other form of accommodation be reviewed to help her so that she may not need to use her sick leave on these occasions. After exploring the options, the employer allows the individual to work from home on these days as an accommodation.

**An employee discloses that because of his vertigo, it is difficult for him to make it to work on time in the morning, as the vertigo is more likely to flare up when he gets out of bed.**

The employer allows the individual to have a flexible start time and make up the time at the end of the shift.

## 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 Hearing Research Foundation**

8 South Michigan Avenue, Suite #814  
Chicago, IL 60603-4539  
Direct: (312) 726-9670  
Fax: (312) 726-9695  
lkoch@american-hearing.org  
<http://www.american-hearing.org>

To promote, conduct, and furnish financial assistance for medical research into the causes, prevention, and cure of deafness, impaired hearing, and balance disorders; encourage the collaboration of clinical and laboratory research; encourage and improve teaching in the medical aspect of hearing problems; and disseminate the latest and most reliable scientific knowledge to physicians, hearing professionals, and the public.

**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 Speech-Language-Hearing Association**

2200 Research Blvd  
Rockville, MD 20850-3289  
Toll Free: (800) 638-8255  
Direct: (301) 296-5700  
Fax: (301) 296-8580  
<http://www.asha.org>

ASHA promotes the interests of, and provide the highest quality services for, professions in audiology, speech-language pathology, and speech and hearing science; and an advocate for people with communication disabilities.

**Hearing Health Foundation**

363 Seventh Avenue,  
10th Floor  
New York, NY 10001-3904  
Toll Free: (866) 454-3924  
Direct: (212) 257-6140  
[info@hearinghealthfoundation.org](mailto:info@hearinghealthfoundation.org)  
<http://hearinghealthfoundation.org>

**Our Mission:**

To prevent and cure hearing loss and tinnitus through groundbreaking research and to promote hearing health.

**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://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 Center for Biotechnology Information**

8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20894  
[pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](mailto:pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

MISSION: IMS brings together an international community of health care professionals, researchers, educators, and others to improve care and transform delivery of treatment to those suffering from soft tissue pain through the promotion and exchange of globally recognized research, education, and innovation in patient care.

**National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders**

31 Center Drive  
MSC 2320  
Bethesda, MD 20892  
Toll Free: (800) 241-1044  
nidcdinfo@nidcd.nih.gov  
<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

National Resource center for health information about hearing, balance, smell, taste, voice, speech, and language for health professionals, patients, industry, and the public.

**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.

**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.

**Vestibular Disorders Association**

5018 NE 15th Ave

Portland, OR 97211

Toll Free: (800) 837-8428

Fax: (503) 229-8064

info@vestibular.org

<http://www.vestibular.org>

Our mission is to inform, support, and advocate for the vestibular community. We envision a global community where vestibular disorders are widely recognized, rapidly diagnosed, and effectively treated.

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