

Workplace adjustments

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Effective workplace adjustments are an important enabler for people with disability, as they support people to:

- perform at their best
- work productively
- work in a safe environment
- feel included
- increase their engagement and motivation to improve performance.

Adjustments can range from changes to equipment, work practices and environment and may change as people's needs change.

Workplaces need to consider every possible option for adjustment for staff with disability to perform their role. Most adjustments are simple to arrange and involve little cost. What's most important is for people to have what they need and be able to participate in the workplace on an equal basis with others.

[There are multiple options for funding workplace adjustments, read more about your options here.](#)

[If you are an employee with disability looking to make an adjustment to your work, find out more here.](#)

Types of adjustments available

Workplace adjustments can range from changes to workplace practices and environments to assistive technology and equipment.

Workplace practice adjustments

Here are some options for adjusting the way you engage with employees with disability to ensure they feel included and understand what is required of them:

- provide flexible working arrangements e.g. flexible start and finish times, working from home, working part-time, working in different locations
- change how information is communicated in the workplace
- provide a support person
- ensure workplace documents and web content are accessible
- provide information in requested formats
- modify the job requirements e.g. co-workers exchanging tasks or removing a non-essential job task
- adapt performance and development programs to meet individual needs.

Workplace environment adjustments

Some employees may require changes to their physical environment including:

- an occupational therapist assessment, ergonomic desk and chair assessment.
- Braille signage in communal work locations e.g. meeting rooms, photocopier area, kitchen.
- a parking space close to the work location for an employee who uses a wheelchair or has mobility issues.
- adaptive switches that enable people to use technology.
- modifications to an inaccessible building to enable access to a building or bathroom facilities.

Assistive technology

Some technology has in-built accessibility, however some employees may require additional assistive technology to perform their role.

Some examples of assistive technology include:

- screen readers
- screen enlargement applications
- voice recognition and transcription programs
- closed captioning
- keyboard and mouse alternatives and adaptations.

Recruitment adjustments

[Find out more about how to make adjustments to the recruitment process.](#) →

Manager responsibilities

If you are a manager of a staff member with a disability speak to your staff about their needs and what they may require to perform their role. Having the mindset of ‘How can we make this work for you and the organisation?’ is a positive way of looking for simple or creative ways to meet both individual and organisational needs.

Simply ask the person ‘What do you need?’ or ‘What will work for you?’

As a manager you must respect an individual’s right and choice – there is no legal obligation for the person to share information about their disability, unless it is likely to impact their performance, ability to do the job’s essential requirements or to work safely.

If a person shares their disability information with you, you cannot share this information with others unless the person gives their permission. A person’s disability and health information must be kept secure and confidential in line with *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*.

Legal responsibilities

Under the ***Disability Discrimination Act 1992***, workplaces must provide workplace adjustments if requested. This Act provides an exception if the cost or difficulties of providing access will place an unjustifiable hardship on a person or organisation. You can find out more about unjustifiable hardship by reading the ***Australian Human Rights Commission's online guide***.

Under the ***Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)***, organisations need to ensure that their workplace is healthy and safe. This includes managing risks and potential risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees.

Work Health and Safety legislation does not override disability anti-discrimination legislative responsibilities. Workplaces need to be able to manage both legal responsibilities. For example, if you are unable to participate safely in the workplace after all reasonable adjustments are taken it may be considered that you cannot meet the inherent requirements of the role.