

Americans with Disabilities Act Reasonable Accommodations A Guide for Supervisors

If an employee in your department is having difficulty performing his or her job due to a disability of chronic medical condition or if they have exhausted their FML and still need to be off work, you will need to consider whether a reasonable accommodation can be made. A reasonable accommodation is any change or modification to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables a qualified individual with a disability to apply for the job, perform the duties of the job, and enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those without disabilities, without causing significant difficulty or disruption in the workplace or posing a health or safety threat.

As a supervisor, it is important for you to know how to recognize and respond to a potential accommodation requests and to know what to do with confidential medical information. The Department of Human Resources has designated an ADA Coordinator to manage reasonable accommodations and medical leave for UA Faculty and Staff.

Recognizing a Request

Watch for an employee making a link between having difficulties in the workplace and a disability or medical issue. For example:

- An employee says she's been late for work because of her medical appointments.
- During a performance review, an employee states that severe migraines are preventing him from meeting deadlines.
- You receive a medical note indicating that your employee cannot lift over 10 pounds.
- Your employee has exhausted FML, but needs three additional weeks to recover from an illness/disease.

Consult the ADA Coordinator when an employee:

- is using a lot of leave
- gives you a doctor's note
- states he or she cannot do a task because of a medical condition
- exhausts his or her FML, but still needs additional time off
- has made a Worker's Comp claim
- needs time off for a medical condition but does not qualify for FML

All medical information is confidential.

- You cannot ask if an employee has a disability or medical condition.
- You cannot disclose that an employee has a disability accommodation.
- Any medical information that you receive (verbal or written) should be forwarded to the ADA Coordinator and not shared with others.
- Supervisors should not keep copies of documents containing medical information.

Contact Information:
HR Service Center
1001 HR Administration Building
(205) 348-7732
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The Department of Human Resources - www.hr.ua.edu/ADA
Disability Accommodation