

Possible Reasonable Accommodation Options

The following is a list of examples of potential reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and is not intended to be legal advice. For all of these, it is really important to keep in mind that the kinds of accommodations you might get really depend on two things: 1) *your work environment*—not all employers are alike and what might not be an “undue hardship” for one employer will definitely be one for another—and 2) *your own limitations at work*—you are only entitled to reasonable accommodations if you have or have had a disability and the accommodation helps you do your job.

Depending on your own limitations and the work environment you are a part of, here are some potential reasonable accommodations for employees with cancer or a history of cancer:

It may be possible to ask for one or more of the following changes to your job duties or physical workspace:

- **Lifting requirements:** it may be possible to have the lifting requirements for your job removed or decreased.
- **Alterations to the physical environment:** it may be possible to change the physical environment, including changes to where materials (i.e. files, documents, supplies) are kept, changes to proximity to restrooms or watercoolers, and changes to pathways to make it easier for people with physical limitations to access.

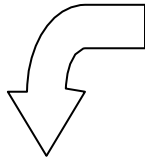
It may be possible to ask for one or more of the following changes to leave policies:

- **Revising schedules:** it may be possible to change your schedule so that you are still working your standard set of hours, but changing the times you work so that you can work around your medical appointments. For example, if your job makes you work 40 hours per week but you’re able to work 10 hours a day, Monday through Thursday, your employer may let you keep your job and go to chemotherapy on Fridays.
- **Extending leave:** it may be possible to extend leave beyond your employer’s baseline policy or the 12 workweeks of Family and Medical Leave Act leave—but remember, any request for extension of leave has to have a definite return date because an employer is always going to say that keeping a job open indefinitely is an “undue hardship” ... and if it is an undue hardship, the employer will not grant an accommodation!
- **Telecommuting:** it may be possible to use technology (i.e. Skype or conference calling) to work from home during recovery.

Reasonable Accommodation Sample Letter Template

[Name]
[Address]

To: [Employer's name]
[Employer's address]



Be sure to think about the person you would like to address this letter to. If you have a good relationship with your supervisor, they might be the best person to advocate for you at work; if you do not have a good relationship with your direct supervisor, it might be better to send this directly to the Human Resources department.

[Date]

Dear [e.g. Supervisor, Manager, Human Resources, Personnel Director]:

I currently work as [a/the position name] at [Employer's name]. I have a disability as defined under the Americans with Disabilities act. [Though I would be happy to provide any required medical information speaking to my current status, I would prefer to do that in a separate document, coordinated through a health professional./Please refer to the attached document from my health care professional.*]

In order to continue to perform the essential functions of my job, I need to have an accommodation put in place.

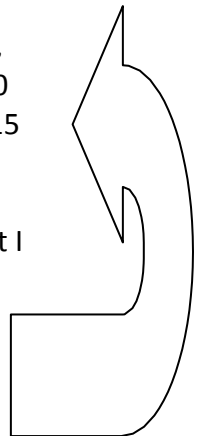
Because of my current status, I have difficulty [lifting, speaking for extended periods of time, working long periods without resting], so I would like to try to [move my workspace, work 10 hours per day four days a week to receive medical care on the fifth day, have an additional 15 minute break period each day, etc.]

I welcome any ideas that you may have as well. Please respond within the next week so that I have a sense of what we can do together. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

[Your signature]
[Your printed name]

Your specific accommodation is based on your needs and your job functions. These examples are here to help give you ideas, but ask the Job Accommodation Network for more suggestions and information: www.askjan.org. For another sample letter, go to: <http://askjan.org/media/accommrequestltr.html>



[*Include attached documents if you would like to include them—whether you want to enclose supplemental information here is your choice, but employers *are* allowed to ask for some limited information. Please refer to the CLRC's Medical Certification handout for more information.]

Next steps: Your request for reasonable accommodation begins an “interactive process” with your employer. After getting your request, the employer might grant your accommodation. But even if your employer says “no” to your first accommodation request because it is an undue hardship, that does not mean the process ends there. An employer should to work with you to find some kind of solution that might be effective. If you get stuck and need more information, call the Cancer Legal Resource Center: (866)THE-CLRC.