

## Talking About Inclusion@Work

# Ensure Productivity: Reasonable Accommodations



## WHAT ARE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS?

All employees need the right tools and work environment to effectively perform their jobs. Similarly, individuals with disabilities may need workplace adjustments—or accommodations—to maximize their productivity. Under disability nondiscrimination laws, a reasonable accommodation is considered any modification or adjustment to a job or work environment that enables a qualified person with a disability to apply for or perform a job. According to the Job Accommodation Network, more than half of all accommodations cost nothing.

## EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES

Examples of best practices for providing reasonable accommodations include, but certainly are not limited to:

- ➔ Adopting and communicating written reasonable accommodations policies and procedures for processing requests;
- ➔ Establishing an administrative mechanism for minimizing the cost of an accommodation being assigned to a line manager's budget (often called a "centralized accommodation fund"); and
- ➔ Having a central source of expertise (individual or office) for assessing, evaluating and providing reasonable accommodations.

## DISCUSSING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Use the following questions to spark conversation about this topic in a group setting, for example, with human resource professionals, diversity and inclusion professionals, employee assistance professionals, business executives and supervisors/managers. This is a great opportunity to use these questions to complement EARN's training, *Ensure Productivity: Reasonable Accommodations*, available at [AskEARN.org/inclusion-work](https://www.earn.gov/inclusion-work).

- ➔ What are some examples of accommodations your company has made for employees with disabilities, whether to the work environment or logistics of the job? How are these accommodations funded, if they incur a cost?
- ➔ Do you have a standard policy in place for how employees can request accommodations? If so, how is this policy communicated to employees?
- ➔ What are the tools, resources and/or flexible work arrangements that help you be effective on the job, whether you have a disability or not?

The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) is a resource for employers seeking to recruit, hire, retain and advance qualified employees with disabilities. This discussion guide is one in a series of seven, each of which explores a different component of EARN's Inclusion@Work employer policy framework. To access others, visit [AskEARN.org/inclusion-work](https://www.earn.gov/inclusion-work).