

Reasonable Adjustments

Our guide to making changes in the workplace

Employees who have a disability are protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. This guide can be used by employees and managers to understand what support is available and how employees managing disabilities at work are supported.

What is a reasonable adjustment?

Any steps NFDC can reasonably take to prevent any working arrangements, working practices or the workplace premises from putting an employee with a disability at a disadvantage in comparison to employees who do not have a disadvantage.

There is no fixed description of what a reasonable adjustment is, however NFDC will consider the full circumstances of your health condition, the impact on your role and:

- How much the adjustment will benefit you
- How practical it is to make the adjustment
- How much the adjustment costs
- Whether making the adjustment will affect NFDC's business, service or financial situation or the health and safety of you or other colleagues

Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

Each employee's circumstances are unique depending on their health condition, how it affects you and your role. A reasonable adjustment could involve making changes to:

- The workplace premises, for example an accessible car parking space
- Equipment or services provided, for example an appropriate keyboard for someone with arthritis
- The way things are done, including providing information in an accessible format.
- Working arrangements, for example a shift pattern or where someone works.

The below lists examples of adjustments:

- Providing the right type of headset for an employee who uses a hearing aid
- Arranging an interview to be held on the ground floor for a job applicant using a wheelchair
- Replacing a desk chair with one designed for an employee who has a disability affecting their back
- Giving one to one support to help prioritise the work of an employee suffering from anxiety
- A phased return to work for an employee who's been off long term sick because of their disability
- Allowing more frequent breaks for an employee with diabetes to get the right amount of food and drink throughout the day
- Temporarily removing some tasks that cause the employee problems because of their health condition whilst they are undergoing treatment

Process to agree Reasonable Adjustments

1. Talk to your line manager

If you feel you are at a disadvantage because of your disability, its best for you to talk to your line manager as soon as possible about what you feel you need.

You are not required to tell NFDC about your health, however we need to understand your needs so that we can provide you the right support.

Your line manager will listen and try to understand how your disability affects you. They will aim to understand your circumstances including your own coping strategies and ways of managing your health, talk to you about the support you need and ask how you would like your disability referred to or talked about.

If your disability is new, you might not feel ready for support or know what you need yet. You will likely be coming to terms with your diagnosis and possibly feeling worried about being treated differently. Your manager is there to support you through these experiences and will always encourage open communication.

2. Agree if Access to Work or Occupational Health advice is needed

[Access to Work](#) are a government organisation who help you get or stay in work through tailored support. This could be a grant to help pay for practical support or support managing your mental health at work.

Occupational Health is a type of medical service available to employers to help us understand your health condition, how it impacts you at work and any reasonable adjustments that might be beneficial to you.

To enable us to get the right support for you, we are likely to seek medically professional advice through an Access to Work or Occupational Health assessment. The aim of this will be to understand medically the impact of your health at work and guidance on possible adjustments. The HR Advisory team will support you and your manager through this process.

When the report is received your line manager will meet with you to discuss its content with you and what can be accommodated.

3. Agree Reasonable Adjustments

Using the medical information, a full review of the impact of your health and role will be discussed between you and management. They will discuss what adjustments can be agreed based on your health and the nature of your role. This will be a two-way conversation between you and your line manager. We will review your full health circumstances in conjunction with your role to ensure the right reasonable adjustments are made for you, where possible.

This may include:

- Adjustments to current role – temporary changes to duties, working hours, location, equipment etc
- Alternative role – only if you are no longer capable of performing your own job, there are no adjustments that can be made to enable you to so and there is a suitable vacancy available

All changes will be in consultation with you. Some health conditions fluctuate, affecting you differently at different times, weeks and months. We will agree if your health affects you in this way, and what those symptoms look like to enable us to recognise differences and provide the right support.

Information regarding your disability will be kept confidential and only shared where necessary and in agreement with you. In the first instance this will be with your line manager and HR. If sharing is necessary outside of your line management and HR we will agree:

- What you want to share
- Who to share it with
- Whether you want to tell people yourself or would like your line manager to do this.

Confidentiality may not always be possible when there are obvious signs of your disability, for example someone who requires using a crutch. Other reasons confidentiality may be limited are:

- If you need specific support – for example information presented in a certain way
- Health and safety reasons – for example is you cannot operate certain equipment
- People at work need to be aware – for example what to do if someone with epilepsy has seizure

4. Documenting your tailored support

All management discussions relating to your health condition, advice from Access to Work and Occupational Health and agreed reasonable adjustments will be recorded and kept on your online Employee record.

Agreed reasonable adjustments will be documented using the 'Reasonable Adjustments Employee Plan'. This will support the conversations with your line manager and form the basis for future discussions.

At the point of completing this plan a regular review interval will be agreed. This will depend on the circumstances of your health and agreed adjustments, but is likely to be between 3 – 12 months.

Employees managing a health condition at work who have a Reasonable Adjustments Employee Plan will record their health condition on the Councils HR Management system. This enables corporate reporting and monitoring.

Useful Organisations

- ACAS – provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law
www.acas.org.uk
0300 123 1100
- Citizens Advice – free advice to help find a way forward, whatever the problem
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
0800 144 8848
- Equality Advisory and Support Service – advice's and supports individuals relating to equality and human rights
www.equalityadvisoryservice.com
0808 800 0082
- Access to Work – www.gov.uk/access-to-work