

How to share personal information on your disability to an employer

Sharing your personal information is a choice you make about whether to tell another person or organisation about your disability. This guide provides step by step information on how to share information to your employer if you have made a decision to do so.

Step 1. Making a decision to share or not to share

There is no legal obligation for you to disclose a disability, unless it is likely to affect your performance or ability to meet the inherent requirements of the job. You also should disclose your disability if it affects your ability to work safely and ensure the safety of co-workers. When making your decision about to share your information, you should consider the following reasons for and against.

The reasons for include:

- generates trust and an open relationship with your employer and allows you to discuss the most effective workplace adjustment strategies
- if your disability is visible you can deal with misconceptions and show how working with a disability can be 'business as usual'
- if there is a crisis related to your disability it may be difficult to implement work related adjustments quickly unless you have share information on your disability
- if your disability impacts on your job, an employer may perceive this as poor work performance
- if your disability could reasonably be seen to cause a health and safety risk for other people in the workplace, failing to disclose that risk could be a breach of your obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The reasons for not include:

- your disability may have no effect on your ability to do the job and it is therefore not necessary to disclose
- it may provoke unnecessary curiosity, concern and insensitive questions.

Step 2. Determine what information to share personal information

If you choose to disclose your disability to your employer, determine exactly what information you will provide to your employer. When considering what information to share, remember that the only information you need to share about your disability relates to:

- adjustments required to ensure a fair and equitable selection process
- how your disability may impact on some aspects of the inherent requirements of a job and;
- adjustments that may be required to complete the inherent requirements of the job.

You do not need to share specific medical or personal information about a disability.

Step 3. Decide on when to disclose

There are many opportunities for you to share information on your disability to an employer. To assist you with this decision, we have outlined the benefits at different stages of your employment:

Prior to an interview:

- enable you to have a frank conversation with the employer about disability issues in relation to the inherent requirements of the job as this discussion can help determine whether work related adjustments are required and/or whether support services are needed
- allow the employer to make the necessary arrangements for access to the building, if mobility is an issue
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's employment equity strategies
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's support structures
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's workplace adjustment schemes
- eliminate any surprises or awkwardness when speaking with the employer.

At interview or after offer of employment:

- enable you to get workplace accommodations that are necessary to do the job
- provide the employer with evidence of your skills, abilities and ways for overcoming any implications of a disability
- increase access to appropriate employment supports
- provide access to appropriate supports increasing the likelihood of job retention
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's employment equity strategies
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's support structures
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's workplace adjustment schemes.

On job commencement:

- enable you to get workplace accommodations that are necessary for you to do the job
- increase the responsiveness of employers and co-workers to your needs
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's support structures
- enable you to obtain information about an organisation's workplace adjustment schemes.

Step 4. Talk to your employer

The final step is to talk to your employer about the information you have decided to share with them.

- be clear and matter of fact about why you are sharing your information and your desired outcomes from doing so
- be knowledgeable about your disability
- discuss the impact of possible symptoms and side effects of any medication on the workplace
- provide some options and strategies for workplace adjustment to make it easy for your employer.

If your disability is visible you may wish to anticipate concerns and answer those specifically. For example: "We have not discussed my disability or how it might impact on the job. I notice as a sales job, that this job involves some driving. I have my own car and have been driving for ten years so this will be no problem".

www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability/how-your-personal-information-protected

www.jobaccess.gov.au/videos/disclosing-disability-workplace