



Disability discrimination: obligations for employers

Disability discrimination is a large and complicated area for employers to find time to understand, especially for smaller employers. This document outlines some of the key obligations employers have in this area. Remember, how these obligations are handled is often just as important as making sure they happen:

1. **Make reasonable adjustments**, keeping in mind that many adjustments are simple and inexpensive to make and will benefit employees and employers.
2. Make sure employees are **not discriminated against because they are disabled**, because they are associated with someone who is disabled or because they are thought to be disabled.
3. Make sure that **policies and practices** in the workplace don't put disabled employees at a disadvantage. Often this is unintentional.
4. Be vigilant and **take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment** related to disability occurring.
5. If employees make, support or give evidence about disability discrimination complaints, make sure they **don't suffer harm or loss** for doing so.
6. Avoid questions about **employee health or reasonable adjustments** until managers and recruiters understand the law in these areas.
7. Ensure absence policies and absence management are able to distinguish between **disability-related absence** and other types of absence.
8. Any employee can be dismissed for the correct reasons and with the correct process, but **make sure that dismissals are not influenced by disability**.
9. Make sure that when an employee tells their employer in confidence about their disability that it is **kept confidential** other than for health and safety purposes, or unless the employee makes it clear what information they are willing to share and who should be told.
10. Only make use of **exceptions and exemptions** in law (like taking 'positive action' or relying on 'core occupational requirements') when managers fully understand the law in these areas. Remember, there are often easier and better ways to address issues than relying on complicated legal provisions.

Want to learn about these areas and more? Download the free Acas guide **Disability discrimination: key points for the workplace** from:

www.acas.org.uk/disability