



DISABILITY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

HR 26(b)

Why are we asking if you have a disability?

The statutory definition of disability is a lot broader than it used to be and so, for employment purposes, more people might be described as disabled than in the past under the old registered disabled scheme. We are asking the question so that we can more accurately quantify and then monitor the proportion of staff with disabilities in line with our overall commitment to diversity and as one of our commitments as a “positive about disabled people” Disability Symbol user. All monitoring is done on a confidential basis – names are not included as part of any reporting that we do.

<http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/HelpForDisabledPeople/DisabilitySymbol/index.html>

If I tell you that I have a disability will this adversely affect my employment prospects?

Our policy is to welcome people with disabilities to work at the channel. Like everyone else the only condition that we apply is that they have the right skills and experience to do the job. If you develop a disability during employment then we will do everything reasonably possible to support you in continuing in your existing job. In most cases minor adjustments to the work environment or modifications to the way the job is done are sufficient, but if that were not possible then we would seek to find a suitable alternative role and offer retraining where appropriate. Most disabilities are manageable and do not require any special changes for the individual to carry on in their role.

What if I don't tell you?

You don't have to tell us that you have a disability if it makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you don't identify yourself as a disabled person, but if you don't tell us then we can't help, and it could be that a relatively simple adjustment could make your working life easier.

What if I do tell you?

Your HR Business Partner will contact you and have a chat with you about the nature of your disability and discuss whether any adjustments are necessary. It may be that nothing needs doing at all other than us being aware. If adjustments would help you, then the options will be discussed with you. At this stage the conversation will be confidential between you and your HR Officer, but if adjustments were needed then we would need to consult with your line manager and possibly the Health and Safety Advisor, depending on the type of adjustments required. We may seek advice from a specialist or the channel's medical advisor, just to make sure that what we propose would be beneficial. The important thing is that we understand your disability and apply the right kind of adjustments.

What is a disability?

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) a disability is defined as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a

person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities". "Day to day activities" are broadly categorised as:

- mobility
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- speech
- hearing
- eyesight
- memory
- ability to understand, learn and concentrate
- the perception of risk of physical danger

There is no definitive list of what is, or is not, a disability as this will depend on how it affects each person and their ability to carry out the activities described above. Disabilities can however be physical or mental. Some will be more obvious than others – such as a person in a wheelchair - but the disability may be invisible, for example in the case of diabetes.

The effects of medications (including prosthetic limbs, insulin injections, cancer treatments) are generally ignored.

The act also covers people with fluctuating conditions (e.g. epilepsy or asthma) – where an individual episode might not last 12 months but is expected to recur, and progressive conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, cancer and multiple sclerosis.

People who experience restrictions because of social stigma and prejudice (for example because of facial disfigurement, HIV or a history of mental illness) are also protected.

The adverse effect must last or be expected to last for 12 months (or in the case of terminally ill people, for the rest of their life). If it is a past disability the effects must have been substantial and lasted for a period of 12 months.

Should you have any additional questions not covered here, please contact your HR Business Partner.

[Click here for the Channel's Disability Policy.](#)

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