



If you attended our Inclusivity Works webinar on 'Making your workplace more accessible' with Ian Eggleton from Evans Jones Chartered Surveyors and Planning Consultants, you've hopefully already picked up some useful guidance. Here's our summary of key points and tips.

Legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act is no longer in place, the Equality Act 2010 is the current legislation organisations need to adhere to and requires you to make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids where needed.

To make adjustments for an employee is a reactive duty to be done as required, however to make adjustments for customers through the provision of services and public functions is a proactive duty – you must assume you will be required to provide this.

Definition of a disability

“A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

What is a reasonable adjustment?

A number of questions will be considered:

- Is it practical?
- What is the cost vs benefit?
- How disruptive will the adjustment be to the organisation or the building e.g. a listed building?
- What resources are available to the service provider e.g. unlikely to require a small business to spend large amounts of money to make an adjustment that would be more reasonable to expect of a large business.
- What is the availability of financial assistance?
- What resources have already been expended on making adjustments?



Workplace adjustment examples

- Creating a quiet space may be helpful to employees with hearing impairments, autism and other needs
- Specific equipment can be purchased such as keyboards, telephones, desks and chairs
- Adaptive software can also be purchased
- Moving your team to a more accessible location within a building, where this is possible
- Flexible working

What should employers do?

- Obligations start at recruitment, ensuring interview location is fully accessible and asking applicants if they have any access requirements
- Do talk to your employee about what they need
- Don't forget hidden disabilities
- Put a positive and confidential disclosure process in place
- Get an Access Audit (or do one yourself)
- If you are a leisure, tourism or care business serving members of the public regularly create an Accessibility Guide

Remember funding may be available through the Access to Work scheme

What service providers need to know:

- Accessibility is a proactive duty
- It applies to every aspect of your service not just your building
- Obligation to make reasonable adjustments fully in force since 2004
- First step is an Access Audit



Q&A's

What sort of adjustments might be covered by Access to Work and how do organisations find out if what they need to do is covered or apply for that?

It can cover a range of things including interpreters for hearing impairment, taxis to work, adjustments to desks etc. It will depend on the individual but covers a wide range of things and it well worth applying for.

What are the best low-cost changes that can have the most impact?

Disability awareness training for staff is very important. Complaints that have escalated are often down to employees not feeling they have been treated fairly. Accessible toilets can be another easy area to assess – pull cords to alarms are sometimes tied up, bins can be in the transferable area etc.

Further support and resources

[Subscribe to Inclusivity Works newsletter](#)

[Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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The GEM Project is jointly funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund.