

Manager's Recruitment Guide: Supporting Job Applicants with Disabilities



The Employment Standard of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) requires employers to make their workplace practices accessible to potential or current workers with disabilities. The University is committed to making accessibility a regular part of the recruitment and hiring process.



What if an applicant requests an accommodation?

If an applicant seeks an accommodation, there needs to be a discussion initiated in order to find out what type of accommodation is required. The applicant knows what accommodations are best suited for their individual needs.

An internal or external job applicant seeks to attain, in a confidential manner, accommodation that respects their dignity. A manager's goal is to seek to accommodate those with disabilities in a fair and reasonable manner and in accordance with legal obligations.

What is an accommodation?

Accommodations are adjustments, which are made at any point throughout the recruitment process and may continue along the path of the employment life cycle if the candidate is offered the position. Workplace accommodations enable a person with a disability to apply for a job and fully participate in the recruitment and hiring process by removing barriers.

What is a barrier?

A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of the recruitment and hiring process because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

What does disability mean?

The AODA uses the same definition of disability in comparison to the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC): A disability is a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses or activities.

What are the goals of an accommodation?

- meet the disability related needs of the job applicant.
- assist the job applicant with demonstrating how their skills and abilities will support them in fulfilling the essential duties of the available position
- have the job applicant enjoy the same benefits and privileges as experienced by others
- provide support throughout the employment life cycle and the cycle begins at the onset of the job application process
- identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities up to the point of undue hardship
- respect the dignity of the disabled job applicant and ensure that the accommodation provided does not stigmatize or devalue the individual or the contributions they could bring to the position
- abide by policies concerning the sharing and storage of confidential information

What is the Hiring Managers role and responsibilities in the accommodation process?

Hiring managers play a key role setting the tone and promoting a positive culture within the workplace. A job applicant's engagement with the University can be significantly impacted by a supportive environment that encourages open communication and applies policies, procedures and practices with fairness, consistency, and transparency.

A hiring manager must accept requests for accommodation in good faith and are encouraged to contact HR (Health

and Disability Management Specialist) when in need of assistance. It is also critical for a hiring manager to maintain confidentiality and provide input as needed throughout the accommodation including information pertaining to job demands, team structures, etc.

When a request for accommodation is put forth, although there may be a preferred accommodation being sought but all parties should keep an open mind and be willing to explore potential options. When supporting those requesting accommodation, the focus should be placed on the functional limitations that are impacting the job applicant's ability to participate in the recruitment and hiring process.

What is Undue Hardship?

The duty to accommodate does not create an endless obligation to the University. Circumstances of the job applicant, the co-operation of the job applicant and the success of accommodation attempts will all be relevant to determining where the duty to accommodate ends.

The University is not obligated to accommodate job applicants in cases where it can demonstrate undue hardship. The OHRC sets out three elements to be considered in assessing whether an accommodation would cause undue hardship and they include costs, outside sources of funding and health and safety. For further information refer to [OHRC Fact Sheet](#).

What types of accommodations can be considered?

Accommodations are specific to each individual and may include, but are not limited to:

- human support services such as sign language interpreters, readers
- assistance obtaining notes
- materials in an accessible format
- test and exam accommodations (e.g., extra time, technology, software)
- access to specialized software, such as text-to-speech or speech-to-text

What are some further points to take into consideration?

- Accommodation does not require making substantial changes to the recruitment process or removing essential components such that the recruitment process becomes substantially different.
- The University must be able to demonstrate that the accommodation process was undertaken in good faith.
- Job applicants should be prepared to answer questions about their functional limitations when seeking accommodation but are not required to provide any details on diagnosis or treatment programs.
- A job applicant receiving accommodation is not necessarily entitled to receive the accommodation for an indefinite time period and must accept a reasonable accommodation.
- The preferred accommodation measure will be considered but if there is an equally effective accommodation solution, the University may choose to proceed with the one that is the least costly, easiest to provide and/or a better fit with department/faculties operations where it can demonstrate that it meets the need(s) of the job applicant.

Need further support? Contact [Julie Day](#), Health and Disability Management Specialist, Human Resources

Looking for more resources?

[Accessibility Policy](#)

[Accommodation Policy](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)

[Accommodation for Employees and Job Applicants with Disabilities](#)