

# Your Right to Reasonable Accommodations at Work

## What are “Reasonable Accommodations”?

Under Irish law, every employee with a disability – including a mental health difficulty – has the right to reasonable accommodations at work.

These are practical changes or supports that make it possible to do your job safely and effectively, without being disadvantaged because of a health condition.

This right is protected by:

- The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015
- The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD)

## Why are they important?

- Reasonable accommodations help level the playing field, not give anyone an unfair advantage.
- They ensure equal access to work and opportunity, a legal and human right.
- They help you stay in work, manage stress, and thrive rather than just cope.
- They create workplaces that are healthier, fairer, and more inclusive for everyone.

## What can reasonable accommodations look like?

Each situation is different. What’s reasonable depends on your job, your needs, and your workplace.

Some common examples include:

### Work Environment

- Flexible start or finish times
- Quiet workspace or noise-reducing tools
- Option to work remotely or hybrid when possible

### Workload & Structure

- Adjusting or redistributing non-essential tasks
- Breaking larger projects into smaller steps
- Allowing short breaks during stressful periods

### Supervision & Communication

- More regular check-ins with your manager
- Clear written instructions and expectations
- Supportive feedback and collaborative planning

### Leave & Flexibility

- Time off for medical or therapy appointments
- Phased return after time off due to illness

### Support & Development

- Access to Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs)
- Mental health awareness training for staff and managers

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## Is this fair to others?

Sometimes, people worry that accommodations are unfair. Here's the truth:

**Fair doesn't mean identical.** Equity means giving people what they need to succeed, not treating everyone exactly the same.

**Confidentiality protects everyone.** Your personal details don't need to be shared with others.

**Inclusive workplaces benefit all.** When workplaces make space for difference, everyone gains, through trust, flexibility, and stronger teams.

**It is not asking for "special treatment."** You're asking for fair conditions to perform your role. That's your right.

## How to request a reasonable accommodation

If you think an accommodation might help you, here's how to go about it:

**1**

Talk to your line manager, HR department, or wellbeing officer. You don't need to share personal medical details, just what support would help.

**2**

Together, explore options that are practical for your role.

**3**

Agree on a plan and check in regularly to see how it's working.

You can bring a union rep, colleague, or support person to discussions if you'd like.

Employers are expected to make accommodations unless doing so would cause a "disproportionate burden" (major financial or operational difficulty). Most adjustments, however, are low-cost and easy to implement.



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## The Legal Framework

- Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 (Section 16)
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014
- UNCRPD Article 27