

FREE  
EDITION



**med** Better people.  
Better outcomes.

## ADA ACCOMMODATION OVERVIEW AND ADA ADMINISTRATION STEP-BY-STEP

---

# CAN YOU ACCURATELY DEFINE A “DISABILITY”? ARE YOU FULLY VERSED IN “REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION”?

---

**IF YOU ANSWERED “NO” TO ONE OR BOTH OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, THE COMPLETE VERSION OF THIS GUIDE IS FOR YOU.**

Learn what constitutes a reasonable accommodation and when employers must provide one, along with what may or may not be considered a disability. Using natural language, we present you with detailed information and plans of action in an easy-to-understand, step-by-step format.

As an MEA Member, should you still have questions about how to proceed after reading our complete guide, we would encourage you to call our [Employers' Hotline](#). This exclusive service—available at no additional charge—is staffed by our HR experts and backed by an in-house attorney.

We have prepared this free resource to demonstrate the depth and quality to which we publish our Member Guides. Its primary purpose, however, is to help you decide whether MEA Membership—and assets like our complete guides—will add value to your organization's HR efforts.

**Please read on to learn what topics we cover in the complete MEA Member Guide.**

mea

Disclaimer: We offer this abridged MEA Guide as a free resource for those interested in learning about the benefits of MEA Membership. It is neither a substitute for the full MEA Member's Guide nor thorough knowledge and understanding of the applicable law and its application to the particular facts and circumstances of each case, including application of relevant case law which may apply. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is complete, accurate and up-to-date as of the time of publication, and any revisions thereof. This resource is offered for informational purposes only, does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as a substitute for legal advice.

# PROVIDING A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: STEP-BY-STEP

---

## 1. RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FOR A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

### a. Triggering Events

A “triggering event” is typically the first step leading to an employer’s response to a request for a reasonable accommodation. How you respond will depend on a number of factors.

For instance, did the employee or someone else—such as a spouse—make the request? Was the request written or oral? Do employer obligations remain when no specific request has been made (i.e., is the burden the employee’s alone)? Find detailed answers to these questions and more in the complete guide.

### b. Begin the Interactive Process

It is essential that you be familiar with the “interactive process,” a term specified by the ADA. Employers should promptly engage in this process as soon as the need for accommodation has been recognized.

The steps in the interactive process allow both employer and employee to meet their obligations of determining the precise limitations created by the disability and how best to accommodate. Additionally, they help you ensure all necessary documentation is generated and obtained.

MEA designs our guides to make our members’ HR efforts easier and more effective. For example, you will find links to download the following three forms:

- Communication to Employee in Response to Request for Accommodation
- Authorization for Release of Medical Information for ADA
- Accommodation Medical Certification - Letter to Physician

### c. Document the Entire Process and the Final Determination

Properly documenting each step of the interactive process is, in fact, part of the process. The complete guide ensures you know what, how, and when to document. This information is especially important should your employee’s disability or circumstances change over time.

#### QUICK TIP

**At this point in the guide, we present you with a progression of clear steps for providing reasonable accommodation. The following text in this free resource includes a sampling of those steps, along with the scenarios which may lead you to invoke them. In the complete guide, you would also find thorough overviews, definitions and compliance recommendations.**



## 2. DEFINITION OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION; COMMON ACCOMMODATIONS

### a. Definition of Reasonable Accommodation

A “reasonable accommodation” is “any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities.”

While the above definition is simple enough to source from the internet, a comprehensive understanding of “reasonable accommodation” and all that it entails is not so readily available. The complete guide lays this out in simple English. Our goal with every guide is to ensure your understandings are thorough so you can facilitate compliance with confidence.

### b. Accommodation Examples

Find more than 20 of the most common examples of reasonable accommodation presented in a structured, bulleted format that uses clear language to describe straightforward process flows.

The following excerpt is taken from the complete Member’s Guide.

Examples of accommodations include:

- Reassigning an employee to a vacant position, **however:**
  - this accommodation is not available for job applicants;
  - reassignment to a lower graded position is acceptable if there are no accommodations that would keep the employee in the current position, and there is no available equivalent vacant position; and
  - promotions are not required as reasonable accommodations.
- Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices.
- Adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials or policies.

#### QUICK TIP

The above examples should give you a taste of what to expect in the complete guide: the information you need at your fingertips to help you ensure compliance and feel empowered to direct the process.

## WHAT ELSE WILL YOU LEARN IN THE COMPLETE MEMBER GUIDE?

**MEA MEMBER GUIDES ARE PUBLISHED NOT ONLY TO EDUCATE, BUT ALSO ACT AS AT-A-GLANCE REFERENCES.**

The complete guide covers topics including what reasonable accommodations do not include, “Undue Hardships,” “Direct Threats” and much more.



Imagine having a list of the seven most common accommodation scenarios, along with when you should and should not use them. When your next accommodation request arises, you would be able to proceed with confidence.



Would you be interested in best-practice strategies for providing accommodations and responding to requests? In the complete guide, we present members with nine practices they can immediately implement.



## ONE OF MANY BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO MEA MEMBERS

The complete “ADA Accommodation Overview and ADA Administration Step-by-Step” is just one of several practical reference guides available to MEA Members. Moreover, the guides we publish make up a small portion of the full suite of services we bring our members. From talent acquisition and behavioral assessments to legal services, management training workshops and more, the benefits of MEA Membership are numerous and profound.

**[To learn more about MEA Membership and schedule a free consultation, please contact us today.](#)**