

# Accommodation for Employees with a Disability

## 1 PURPOSE

1. To provide personalized accommodation for employees with disabilities.
2. To outline the roles and responsibilities of individuals in the accommodation process.
3. To outline the steps involved in developing personalized accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

**Disability:** is defined by the *Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19* as follows:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** for the purpose of this process, which is considered to the point of undue hardship, reasonable accommodation is the removal or alleviation of barriers that prevent an otherwise capable individual from participating equally in the workplace because of a disability. For the purpose of this document, “reasonable accommodation” and “accommodation” are used interchangeably.

**Undue Hardship:** The point at which, having regard to all of the relevant circumstances, providing an employee with accommodation is outweighed by financial and/or institutional costs, the impact on the employees, health and safety considerations and/or other relevant factors involved in providing the accommodation.

### 3 COMMITMENT

Matrix is committed to ensuring equal access and participation, and treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility, cooperatively engaging in an accommodation process, and meeting accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. It is our firm conviction that our culture values diversity and inclusivity, as it is critical to the success of our business. Our commitment involves creating and sustaining an environment wherein unique differences are valued, and employees are empowered to contribute to their full potential in achieving superior business results. Our philosophy extends to all stakeholders including employees, partners, suppliers, and customers.

### 4 APPROACH

#### General Considerations

- Each employee who requires workplace accommodation for a disability will be considered individually and on a case-by-case basis, when determining reasonable accommodation measures. In order to ensure that requests are effectively responded to, there may be some variation in the extent to which each step is outlined and applied throughout this procedure.
- The principles of dignity, independence, integration, individualization, equal opportunity, inclusion, and full participation will be applied throughout the entire accommodation process. All parties share in the responsibility to engage in meaningful dialogue and to work together respectfully towards accommodation solutions.

#### Step 1: Recognize the Need for Accommodation

The need for accommodation can be identified in a number of ways, including, but not limited to the following:

- As requested by the Employee through notification to his or her Leader or Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP).
- For an Employee returning to work after illness or injury
- As identified by a Health Care Provider or another qualified party

#### Step 2: Gather Relevant Information and Assess Needs

The Employee is an active participant in this step:

- The Employee, Leader, HRBP, Health Care Provider, and Disability Provider (where applicable), cooperatively and actively engage in the process as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.
- A Health Care Provider must complete a *Functional Abilities Form (FAF)* at Matrix's expense. While Matrix does not require details about the nature of the Employee's disability, in order to

provide an accommodation, we need to know the Employee's functional abilities, limitations, restrictions, and capabilities as they pertain to the need for accommodation, and what specific equipment may be required to enable the Employee to perform their work.

- The Employee and their Leader evaluate potential options to find the most appropriate measure(s), and the Employee must be an active participant in the accommodation process, including accepting reasonable accommodation and following through on individual commitments related to the accommodation.
- An external expert may be involved, at Matrix's expense.
- Human Resources and/or the Health & Safety team may be required to provide input, information, support and assistance as required throughout the accommodation process.
- Matrix will determine the most appropriate accommodation that meets the Employee's needs.

### **Step 3: Agree to a Formal, Individual Accommodation Plan**

Once the most appropriate accommodation has been identified, the accommodation details are written in a formal Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP), including:

- Accessible formats and communication supports, if requested.
- Workplace emergency response information, if required.
- Any other accommodation that is to be provided.

The Employee's personal information will be kept private and be protected at all times.

If Matrix denies an accommodation, the reasons for the denial will be provided to the Employee in writing.

### **Step 4: Implement, Monitor, and Review Accommodation Plan**

The Employee and his or her Leader will monitor the accommodation to ensure that it has effectively resolved the barrier to full employment.

- Formal reviews will occur on a regular schedule, annually at a minimum.
- An updated FAF will be required to assist in the review process.
- The accommodation plan will be reviewed if the Employee's work location or position change.
- The accommodation plan will be reviewed if the Employee's capabilities or restrictions change.
- Human Resources may request updated medical information on a periodic basis to assist with accommodation plan review and/or to support ongoing accommodations.

If the accommodation is no longer necessary, documentation clearing the Employee to return to pre-disability job duties and schedule is required from the Health Care Provider prior to changing an accommodation plan and returning to full duties. If alternate accommodation is required, the process will return to Step 2 to gather information and reassess the Employee's needs in order to determine appropriate accommodation measures.

## **5 MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION**

A request for accommodation must be supported by appropriate medical documentation. Such documentation must confirm that the Employee has a disability that limits their ability to do their job or otherwise participate fully in the workplace; outline the Employee's functional abilities, limitations, restrictions, and capabilities as they pertain to the need for accommodation; and the expected duration of the accommodation. It is recognized that there may be some clear cases where medical documentation would not be required and Human Resources will assist with this determination.

## Appendix A - Workplace Emergency Response Information Plan

Employee's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rescue Assistance			
	Yes	No	N/A
Do you require evacuation assistance to exit the building?			
If yes, identify what specific assistance will be required:			
Assistance (if required)			
Name	Phone Number	Email	
Service Animal			
	Yes	No	N/A
Do you use a service animal?			
Other Types of Emergency Requirements			
	Yes	No	N/A
Are there any other measures that could be introduced in the event of an emergency?			
If yes, please identify:			

I consent to have my personalized emergency workplace response information shared with the person(s) identified above, so as to provide me with assistance in the event of an emergency.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader Signature

## Appendix B – Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP)

Employee's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations	Job-related tasks/activities affected by limitations	Is this an essential job requirement?

Comments or notes from Health Professional to support the personal accommodation plan:

Job-related tasks/activities affected by limitations	Accommodation strategies/tools

Review of this accommodation plan is required upon any change to medical restrictions. Employee is required to notify his/her Leader immediately if capabilities or restrictions change at any time.

The above accommodation measures will be implemented from: **DATE** and will be formally reviewed on **DATE**. Prior to modifying any of the above restrictions, or returning to full duties or schedule, a medical clearance note in the form of a revised *Functional Abilities Form* must be received and reviewed by Matrix.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date