



Willing and Able

A Job Hunting Guide for Idahoans with Disabilities



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Idaho Department of Labor helps people find the training, support and guidance they need to go to work. Career planners in each local office strive to help people with disabilities navigate the diverse programs that affect their ability to obtain or retain employment.

THIS PUBLICATION

Willing and Able: A Job Hunting Guide for Idahoans with Disabilities is a resource for job seekers with disabilities and is available in print form and online at labor.idaho.gov. If you need alternative formats, please contact your local Labor Department office. Although this booklet does not address every issue regarding disability and work, it does contain valuable information on how to connect to the people, services and resources needed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, seek and secure employment. It is full of useful tips for job seekers and contains general information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accommodations in the workplace, but does not provide legal advice about the ADA or state laws about work.

Special Thanks:

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State of Montana Career Resource Network

Permission is granted to reprint any part of this document.
Credit, where appropriate, is appreciated.

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Idaho Department of Labor

labor.idaho.gov



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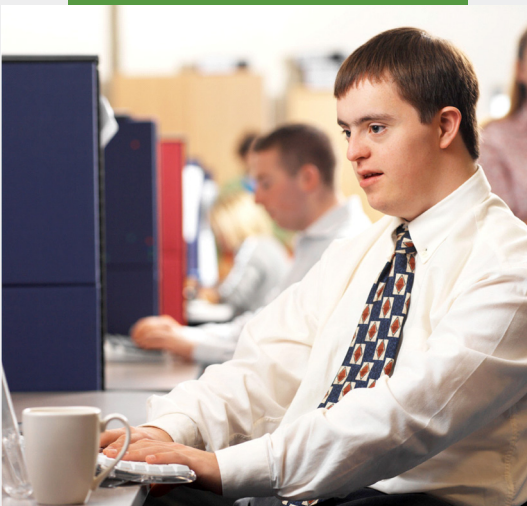
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SECTION ONE



Disabilities and Employment



DISABILITIES ARE MORE COMMON THAN MANY PEOPLE REALIZE

One in every five Americans has some level of disability and that number is expected to double in the next 20 years. Disability affects individuals of all ethnicities, religions, social and financial backgrounds. The National Safety Council reports that nearly 500 Americans become a person with a disability every 10 minutes. Given these statistics, it is easy to understand why **people with disabilities represent the single largest minority group seeking employment in today's marketplace**. In fact, just over one in four of today's 20-year-olds will acquire some form of disability before they retire.

UNEMPLOYMENT HIGH AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The U.S. Department of Labor reports there are close to 100,000 working-age Idahoans with disabilities, yet only 39 percent of them are working compared with 76 percent of the population without disabilities. High unemployment is prevalent among people with disabilities even though **two-thirds of those who are unemployed would rather be working** (Source: Center for Workforce Preparation). Myths and misconceptions about disability in the workplace continue to form a significant barrier to employment for people with disabilities. While some employers go out of their way to hire employees with disabilities, others are reluctant.

OPPORTUNITIES ARE IMPROVING

However, things are changing and now more than ever before, competitive employment and economic self-sufficiency are realistic goals for people with disabilities. Many companies value the loyalty and unique skill sets people with disabilities bring to the workplace. Today, employers seek to initiate or improve disability-friendly practices to create a more inclusive workplace.

FACTS ABOUT DISABILITY & EMPLOYMENT

FACT

JOB ACCOMMODATIONS BRING JOBS WITHIN REACH

Everyone needs the right tools and work environment in order to do their job effectively. While many workers with disabilities perform their job functions without supports or assistance, sometimes a person with a disability might need an accommodation to make more jobs attainable. “Reasonable accommodations” enable employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their job. Technology is making it possible for many people with disabilities to reach their full potential in the workplace. For examples of assistive devices, visit the website at nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/rehabtech/conditioninfo/Pages/device.aspx.

FACT

HIRING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IS A SMART BUSINESS DECISION

In today’s fast-paced, ever-changing marketplace, employers need people with a demonstrated ability to adapt to different situations and circumstances. More than any other group, people with disabilities have learned to overcome adversity and prevail through challenging times. On a daily basis, people with disabilities must think creatively about how to solve problems and accomplish tasks. In the workplace, this resourcefulness translates into innovative thinking, fresh ideas and varied approaches to confronting business challenges and achieving success.

Many companies are looking for creative ways to increase job opportunities and recruit talented people with disabilities. Walgreens, for example, invested in new technology and created innovative systems, machines and processes for their new distribution centers to increase opportunities for people with disabilities and ensure an inclusive workplace. Walgreens has become a model that others are now embracing. Lowes, Procter & Gamble and Best Buy are just some of the companies that either have opened or plan to open similar facilities to attract and recruit people with disabilities.

FACT

MANY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WORRY THEY'LL LOSE THEIR HEALTH CARE COVERAGE AND DISABILITY BENEFITS IF THEY GO TO WORK

You CAN work and still maintain your financial and/or medical insurance.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) actively encourages individuals with disabilities to begin, or return, to work through a variety of work incentives, allowing them to keep cash resources and medical benefits as they become self-supporting. Learn as much as you can to understand your options, take control of your benefits, plan your future and learn how to increase your income through work. To learn more about work incentive programs, see page 54 or visit Social Security's web page at [chooseworkttw.net/about/index.html](https://www.chooseworkttw.net/about/index.html).

FACT

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT IMPROVE TRAINING AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB SEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES

Public employment programs, such as the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Idaho Department of Labor, work hard to interact with businesses and industry to build strategic partnerships, find innovative workforce solutions, provide employer supports and create career opportunities for job seekers with disabilities. To bridge the gap between the growing demand for an educated and skilled workforce and the supply of workers with the necessary skills, these agencies assist employers by providing the consultation and support services businesses need to recruit, hire, train, advance and retrain employees with disabilities.

When public workforce entities effectively engage with a wide variety of businesses and cultivate long-term relationships that are interactive and dynamic rather than purely advisory, the resulting outcomes are mutually beneficial for both employers and job seekers. Some of the support these agencies can provide to employers include:

- Access to a new talent pool of qualified candidates for employment.
- Access to a team of employment specialists and vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors with knowledge and expertise regarding the employment needs of people with disabilities.

- Guidance and consultation regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accommodations and accessibility.
- Disability awareness training.
- Consultation regarding Section 503 compliance and tax incentives.
- Creation and funding of a range of work experiences including on-the-job training and internships.
- Opportunities for collaboration with community colleges, community rehabilitation programs and other organizations responsive to the workforce needs of businesses.

For people with disabilities, some of the advantages of robust business engagement include:

- Access to accurate, timely labor market information for use in career decision-making and planning.
- Increased opportunities for competitive, integrated work experiences prior to being hired.
- High-quality job matching services.
- Increased personal interaction with hiring personnel.
- Access to job openings customized to individual needs and abilities.
- Higher-quality outcomes (wages, hours, benefits).

“At BJC we recognize that embracing our differences leads to a culture of innovation and passion, which translates into providing exceptional care to our patients, families and the communities we serve. We are thrilled to partner with Vocational Rehabilitation to continue developing our efforts of hiring talented individuals with disabilities.”

—Rhonda Brandon, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
BJC HealthCare

AGENCIES THAT CAN HELP

Job seekers with disabilities have many job search resources

As an individual with a disability, you may be uncertain of your vocational future and looking for work can be a challenge. There are a variety of resources and many people who can help you achieve your goal of becoming successfully employed. The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Idaho Department of Labor administer employment programs that offer individualized and specialized job seeker services. Any of these agencies can help you understand and/or access the resources and programs that may be available to help you find employment.



There is no wrong door or wrong place to start as you seek the resources needed to help you prepare for and secure employment. For the most part, individuals with disabilities use the same resources as other job seekers. If you have a disability that makes employment hard for you, then a vocational rehabilitation program may be a good starting point. If you have a disability and you believe you are ready to go to work, then an Idaho Department of Labor office is a great place to seek assistance.

In Idaho, there are two vocational rehabilitation programs:

- **Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**
- **Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Vocational rehabilitation counselors at both agencies are experts at providing personalized services to people with disabilities to help them prepare and plan for entry or re-entry into the workplace.

ARE THESE SERVICES FREE?

You may be responsible for some costs. Costs are based on your individual financial need. However, no one is ever turned away because of inability to pay.

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) helps individuals with disabilities take their place in the workforce and in the community. If you have a disability that prevents you from working, you may be eligible for services.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

A vocational rehabilitation counselor will assess your situation and determine whether you are eligible for services. To qualify for vocational rehabilitation services, you must:

- Have a physical or mental impairment (disability) which constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment.
- Require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.
- Benefit in terms of an employment outcome OR are a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) recipient who intends to achieve an employment outcome.

WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM IDVR?

First, the vocational rehabilitation counselor will spend time helping you to choose an appropriate job goal. If you both decide more information is needed, the counselor will help you find more information or get an evaluation of your skills and your disability needs. Once you and your vocational rehabilitation counselor determine what type of job or career you would like, together you will look at the types of services that may be needed to succeed in that job or career. You will work together to choose the services needed and decide who will provide them and how they will be provided. Examples of the types of services available include:

- **Vocational guidance and counseling** for adjustment to disability, vocational exploration and planning for entry or re-entry into the world of work.
- **Assessment** to determine vocational strengths and weaknesses to plan for services required to reach the employment outcome.
- **Training** for those who need a career change because of disability. This can involve higher education, on-the-job training or vocational-technical training.
- **Tools and licenses** needed to enter a specific trade or profession.
- **Medical assistance** needed to secure or maintain employment.
- **Job development and placement** involving you and your counselor working together to secure employment.
- **Rehabilitation technology** to assist you in preparing for or placement on the job site.
- **Follow-along** to ensure your job is successful. This follow-along can assist in resolving any job problems that occur.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES

In addition to traditional individual plan-based services, IDVR collaborates with high schools to provide pre-employment transition services to students to help them navigate the transition from school to independent living, continuing education and employment.

Pre-employment transition services are designed to help students with disabilities by increasing access and opportunities for employment, education, training and support services needed to succeed in the labor market. IDVR provides students the opportunities to learn the skills employers expect through interactive experiences in the community. Pre-employment transition services include:

- **Job exploration counseling** to explore the world of work, explore interests and abilities, work with a job mentor, shadow a job and investigate careers.
- **Work-based learning experiences** to get valuable work experiences through volunteering, paid or unpaid work, complete an internship or begin the steps of an apprenticeship.
- **Counseling opportunities** for those students seeking further education after high school.
- **Workplace readiness training** services to help students get ready for the challenges of work. This may include training in soft skills and workplace communication as well as peer mentoring, independent living skills and accessing transportation.
- **Instruction in self-advocacy** to help students understand more about themselves and how to interact with the world.

To be eligible for pre-employment transition services, students must be:

- At least 15 years of age, but not older than 21.
and
- Receiving special education or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
or
- Receiving services under what is commonly referred to as Section 504 of IDEA.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME FOR STUDENTS TO APPLY?

IDVR can begin working with students when they are ready to start planning life after high school; usually before the start of their junior year.

To apply for vocational rehabilitation services, you can visit IDVR's website at vr.idaho.gov or contact the local office nearest you to schedule an appointment. For a directory of local vocational rehabilitation offices, turn to page 64.

Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The mission of the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) is to promote choices and empowerment for people who are legally blind, functionally blind or in danger of becoming legally blind. If you have a visual impairment that prevents you from working, you may be eligible for services.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

A vocational rehabilitation counselor will assess your situation and determine whether you are eligible for services. To qualify for vocational rehabilitation services, you must:

- Have a visual impairment involving both eyes, which constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment.
- Require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.
- Benefit in terms of an employment outcome OR are a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) recipient who intends to achieve an employment outcome.

WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE COMMISSION?



The primary goal of the commission's vocational rehabilitation services is to help people with visual impairments prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment. Since no two visually impaired persons face the same challenges, services are individualized. Vocational rehabilitation counselors will explain the program and help you complete an application. Once eligible, you and your counselor work together to identify the steps needed to achieve and maintain employment. Examples of available services include low vision assessment, adaptive technology and training services, medical assistance, vocational skills assessments, job search assistance and a variety of other services deemed essential to help you achieve or maintain employment.

For more information about ICBVI, or to learn more about their services and eligibility requirements, visit the website at icbvi.idaho.gov or call (800) 542-8688 to schedule an appointment. See page 65 for a listing of local offices.

Idaho Department of Labor

The Idaho Department of Labor provides free, comprehensive, integrated and personalized job seeker services to all Idahoans.

Although the department's career planners do not specialize in disability, they do specialize in helping people find the training, support and guidance needed to secure employment. Idaho Labor office staff:

- Help people with disabilities navigate the complex programs that affect their ability to obtain or retain employment.
- Serve as a resource for Social Security work incentive programs and employment support programs, providing referrals and information about services available.
- Connect job seekers with services that support them in meeting their employment goals.
- Serve as one-stop centers to ensure access to the full range of services and coordinate an array of employment and training programs.

Whether your disability is visible or not, a new life change or a long-term condition; a career planner can assist you with your job search and connect you with employers, job seeker resources or specialized employment programs. They can help you:

- Register for work
- Search for a job
- Access job listings
- Access the Internet
- Create an employment plan
- Find community resources
- Get information about training and education in Idaho
- Write and print résumés
- Fill out applications and prepare for interviews
- Access phones, faxes and copiers
- Find labor market information
- Schedule workshops and interest testing
- Obtain a referral to unemployment insurance benefits. Under certain circumstances, you may qualify for a total temporary disability claim for unemployment insurance.

The department's website at labor.idaho.gov is a great resource for Idahoans who are exploring career, training and job opportunities. You can access an extensive resource library and find a directory of local offices, workshop and event calendars, job openings, career information and labor news. A career planner stationed in your local office can help you navigate the website, register and create a job seeker account, develop an online profile, post résumés and sign up for job alerts.

SECTION TWO



The Job Search Process



LET'S GET STARTED

Learn How to Maximize Your Job Search

Looking for work can be a lot of work. It can be especially difficult if you are a person with a disability who has not been in the job market for a while or you are making a life change due to disability. Job searching is an invaluable and evolving lifetime skill that everyone should learn. It is estimated that American workers change jobs every four years. **Learning the techniques, strategies and processes that form the foundation of a productive job search is the key to securing employment.**



The Idaho Department of Labor has a great booklet for all job seekers called Maximize Your Job Search. This is a “must have” resource for anybody who is looking for work. It is loaded with valuable tips and information about the entire job search process from getting started to accepting the job offer. It also contains sample applications, résumés and cover letters. To download the Maximize Your Job Search workbook visit the website at labor.idaho.gov/jobseeker.

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) also offers an online resource called Finding a Job that is Right for You: A Practical Approach to Looking for a Job as a Person with a Disability. JAN is a free service provided by the U.S. Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). Visit askjan.org/job/Step1.htm to find many helpful resource links and a wealth of information about job accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

CareerOneStop, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, is another comprehensive website for job seekers. Visit careeronestop.org to find online tools for planning your job search, networking, writing résumés, interviewing and finding job openings.

Evaluate Your Attitudes and Skills

Entering the workforce can be challenging for anyone. Whether planning for your first job or re-entering the workforce, you will want to take some time to think through your situation and evaluate your attitude and willingness to embrace change.

Change can be difficult. Disability often forces both life and career changes. When facing such a change, focus on your abilities rather than your disability while evaluating your employment options. Think about your long-term goals and aspirations, the things that interest you most and take inventory of your talents and skills. Finding the right job for you takes careful self-evaluation and planning. It also requires optimism, confidence and energy. Take time to

examine your attitude. You reveal your attitude by your willingness to do what it takes to move forward whether that means retraining, working in a new area or learning new skills. Your attitude is also revealed by your willingness to define yourself in light of your unique talents, gifts and abilities rather than limitations.

ATTITUDE MATTERS

The key attributes hiring managers look for in a candidate are attitude, enthusiasm, excitement and stellar work habits. The ability to triumph over adversity and persevere in challenging circumstances shows strength and determination — valuable assets in today’s workplace.

Attitude is 80 percent of what employers look for when making hiring decisions.

IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS AND TALENTS

Employers want to know what you have to offer. As you prepare to begin your job search, think about all of your past jobs, experiences, training and hobbies and begin to identify the skills you’ve gained along the way. Career planners with the Idaho Department of Labor can help you assess your skills. Evaluating your skills helps you pinpoint what you are good at, what you enjoy and what your gifts are so you can better decide which job would be the best fit for you.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Transferable skills are skills that can be used in a variety of jobs. These skills are learned over time through education or work experience, but what sets them apart is that they are adaptable and can be used in many different situations and types of careers. For example, if you were a stay-at-home parent, you have skills budgeting, cooking and problem solving. These same skills can be used in many types of jobs from day care to office management. Remember, different types of work use similar job skills. Think about the things you are naturally good at and chances are they are transferable skills.

Identifying your transferable skills is one of the first things you should do when looking for work in a new field.

SOFT SKILLS

The term “soft skills,” sometimes called “work ethic,” refers to a combination of qualities, attitudes and abilities that enable a person to work well with others, perform well and achieve their goals. Soft skills include personal traits such as common sense and the ability to communicate effectively and deal with people. Work ethic is extremely important to employers because it directly affects the quality of the work environment and success of the business. Many employers would rather hire someone with great soft skills who then can be taught job specific skills. Employers want to hire people who understand what it takes to be successful on the job and who are ready to go to work. Being a successful employee isn’t just about performing tasks, it’s about exhibiting intangible qualities or soft skills such as being a good listener, being a team player, keeping a positive attitude, being professional in appearance,

demonstrating positive behaviors, being dedicated to getting the job done and treating everyone with respect. Evaluate your soft skills. Ask friends, family members and maybe even previous employers about your soft skills and where you might be able to improve.

Choose Your Options

Now that you have spent time examining your strengths, skills and talents it's time to identify the best job or career options for you. You possess a unique set of skills, values and characteristics. The following questions will help you identify where to start focusing your job search efforts:

- How much do I need to earn?
- What kind of work am I able to do?
- What kind of work do I want to do?
- What occupations require my skills?
- Do I need training?
- Do I need workplace accommodations?

Although these questions require introspection and a little research, they will help you begin to establish goals that put you on the best path to pursue the job that is right for you. Vocational rehabilitation counselors with either the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired can help eligible job seekers with disabilities choose an employment goal and develop an action plan to help them achieve meaningful and productive employment. Career planners with the Idaho Department of Labor can help job seekers consider their options and access the tools and resources needed to maximize their job search.

Build Your Network

DON'T OVERLOOK FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Networking is simply connecting to and talking with the people you know. Family, friends and previous coworkers can give you valuable information about employers and job openings. Not all jobs are advertised or posted on job search sites. These unadvertised jobs are referred to as the hidden job market. The best way to tap into the hidden job market is to tell as many people as possible you are looking for work.



INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

One great way to learn about the job market is to set up informational interviews with businesses that do work in your career of interest. Many employers love to talk about what they do and are willing to offer you a tour of their workplace. A career planner with the Idaho Department of Labor can guide you with helpful tips for setting up and preparing for informational interviews. Don't forget to send a thank-you note after every informational interview. It may put you in the running for the next job opportunity.

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Another way to expand your network and increase your job opportunities is to attend hiring events and employment workshops coordinated by the Idaho Department of Labor. Find a listing of events, workshops and networking opportunities on the department's calendar page located on its website at labor.idaho.gov.

VOLUNTEER

Volunteering for an organization that has some connection to the type of work you are interested in is a good way to expand your network, meet new people and build up your list of references. The website at serveidaho.gov is a great place to learn about volunteer opportunities and service programs in Idaho.



IDAHO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (ICHR)

The ICHR is an agency that you may want to add to your network of contacts if you have questions or concerns about disability discrimination in hiring or employment. The commission also has the latest information on how to ask for the job accommodations you may need to do your job.

See pages 41 and 59 for more information about the ICHR.

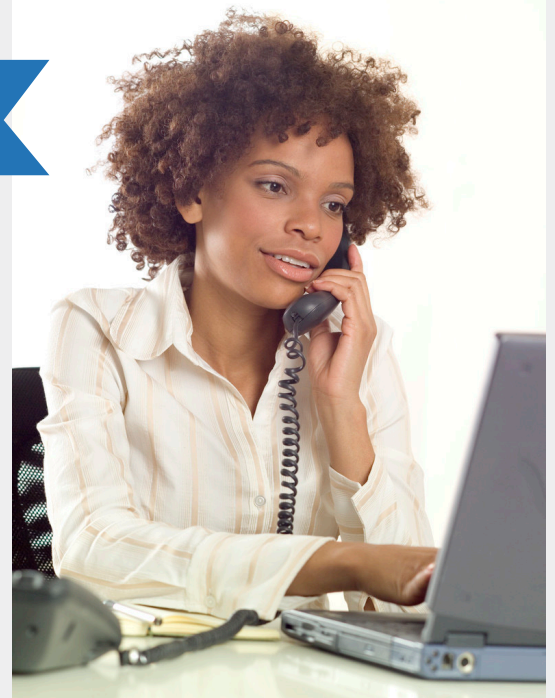
LET'S RESEARCH

Learn About Job Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified employees and applicants with disabilities unless it would create an undue hardship such as cost, disruption or demands on the workplace.

Reasonable accommodation, or job accommodation, is any change or adjustment that may be needed in the work setting, in the way the job is usually done or in company policies to allow a qualified person with a disability to experience the same employment as someone without a disability. Job accommodations vary based on the type of job and a person's unique needs. Here are some examples:

- Restructuring the job by changing when or how tasks are performed.
- Modifying work schedules. This may allow an employee with a disability to handle medical appointments, medication schedules or get needed rest.
- Acquiring or modifying existing equipment or devices. Examples include adjusting a desk height for wheelchair access or providing an employee a mouth stick device to type on a computer.
- Providing assistive technology or devices. Examples include computer screen readers for employees with visual impairments or a telephone compatible with an employee's hearing aid.
- Adjusting or modifying tests and training materials. Examples include providing materials in alternate formats, such as Braille, CD or large print.



A great resource for information about the ADA or workplace accommodations is the Job Accommodation Network (*JAN*). *JAN* provides free, expert and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues through its website at askjan.org. *JAN* helps people with disabilities enhance their employability and shows employers

how to capitalize on the value and talent people with disabilities bring to the workplace while working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee. See pages 41-53 to learn more about the ADA and workplace accommodations.

Explore Careers

The more you can learn about an employer, the better you can match your skills and abilities to their needs. Researching the job market enables you to plan and refine your job search and helps you make decisions that are based on facts rather than feelings. Study employers who have employees in the types of jobs that interest you. This exploration will help you discover which employers and/or industries can use your skills. Keep in mind, many industries have a large variety of positions to support their main function. For example, hospitals hire accountants, cooks, cashiers and a variety of office staff in addition to medical personnel.

There are many online tools available today that will help you choose which job is best for you. A career planner can help you access the Idaho Department of Labor website to create a job seeker account, look at trends in your chosen career, research the company you would like to work for and create your résumé. Each local Idaho Labor office is equipped with an ADA accessible computer loaded with screen reading software.

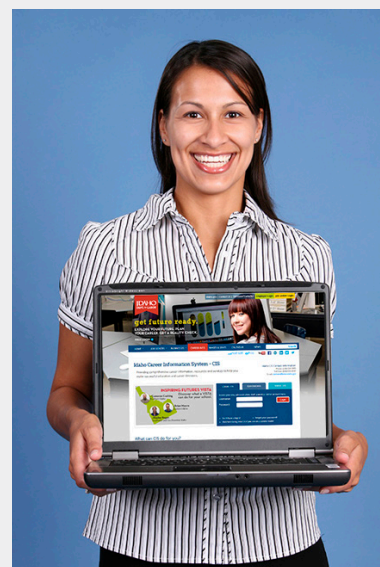
Useful labor market information is available at no cost from the Idaho Department of Labor website at lmi.idaho.gov. Here you can find wage information, employment and occupational projections, labor force statistics, economic trends and indicators along with a variety of data and tools you can use to develop your job search plan.

IDAHO CAREER INFORMATION SYSTEM (CIS)

Idahocis.org is a free career exploration website with features to help you make informed decisions about your goals and plans for the future. Career planners can help you create a CIS account to research employers, learn about specific careers and discover the educational requirements needed to pursue the career that interests you. You can also find facts on more than 500 specific occupations. When you sign up for CIS through your IdahoWorks account you will have quick access to your assessment results and the ability to develop a job search plan, collect information, write résumés and cover letters, practice for interviews and keep records about your employment search.

JOBSCAPE

JobScape is an easy-to-use online tool designed to help job seekers and students make informed career and educational decisions. You will find occupation details such as job descriptions, typical wages, annual job openings, programs of study and training services, as well as information about the types of degrees and certificates individuals are earning related to the specific occupation you are inquiring about. Go online to idaho.labor.gov/jobscape.



Register with Us – Idaho Department of Labor - IdahoWorks



CREATE A PLUS ACCOUNT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL THE BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO YOU.

Registering with the Idaho Department of Labor and creating a Plus Account with IdahoWorks is your first step, whether you are looking for that perfect job, job search resources or comprehensive career information. Some of the benefits of registering and creating a Plus Account and online résumé with IdahoWorks include the following:

- You can be considered for enhanced job seeking services and other specialized employment programs based upon eligibility.
- You can receive personal assistance with your job search on IdahoWorks.
- You can receive automatic referrals for your selected job.
- You can upload your résumé as a Word document.
- You can create experience and skill profiles (résumés) for multiple job titles in order to reach more employers.

To set up an account, go online to idahoworks.gov.

DISCLOSING YOUR DISABILITY

When registering with IdahoWorks you have the opportunity to disclose your disability voluntarily. Doing so may be in your best interest because this enables career planners to determine your eligibility for additional services and help you access specialized employment programs. This is an **invitation** to self-identify, not a requirement. Your disclosure is never shared with employers unless you authorize a release of information. For more information about disability disclosure and employment, see pages 38-53.

Remember to check and update your account often to keep your status **ACTIVE**. Checking your account regularly ensures you'll receive emails about new job listings, upcoming hiring events and maintain your visibility to employers who are hiring.

Expand Your Search



Registering online and creating a profile for employers is a time consuming process. Be prepared to sit at a computer for a few hours. Get comfortable and have all of your employment information ready BEFORE you start the registration process. A career planner with the Idaho Department of Labor can help you set up a quality profile.

Many employers list openings with the Idaho Department of Labor while others list with employment agencies and job search engines such as Careerbuilder.com, Monster.com or Indeed.com. A business also may post its openings on websites tailored to specific professions and industries such as Dice.com, a site devoted to careers in technology. These sites generally require you to set up a profile, which contains basic information about yourself, your skills and the types of jobs you are looking for. Using multiple sites and organizations, including social media, to help you find jobs is necessary in today's job market. The following are some things to consider when choosing:

- When registering with the Idaho Department of Labor, disclosure of disability is never shared publicly and never shared with employers unless you authorize a release of information. As discussed on page 18, disclosing your disability when registering with IdahoWorks enables career planners to help you understand and/or access the resources and programs that may be available to help you find employment.
- It is important to note the difference between registering with the Department of Labor and registering with other websites. When creating a profile on other job search sites such as Careerbuilder.com, Monster.com, Indeed.com or an employer-sponsored site, any disclosure of disability may become public information and available for many employers to see. Consider this carefully and choose sites that allow you to control whether or not your information is publicly shared.
- Remember, the objective of applying online is to get an interview. You are under no obligation to disclose any disability-related information to an employer unless you need a reasonable accommodation. If job-related limitations require you to request a reasonable accommodation covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), save the disclosure for the interview.

The following lists some agencies and organizations you can register with online when conducting your search.

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR provides free job seeker services and helps people with career and life transitions. labor.idaho.gov

Businesses often need to fill positions quickly so job advertisements may be listed one day and gone the next. Make it part of your routine to check job sites and look for work daily. If you see a job you are interested in, apply immediately!

IDAHO DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES lists current state job openings. dhr.idaho.gov/JobSeekers/StateJobOpenings.html

USA JOBS RESOURCE CENTER lists federal jobs that are actively recruiting candidates with disabilities. usajobs.gov

JOB ACCESS and **abilityJOBS** is the country's largest job bank specifically for job seekers with disabilities. abilityjobs.com

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PUBLICATIONS is a career-guidance and recruitment magazine for people with disabilities. Post your résumé and find articles, job postings and lists of companies recruiting now. eop.com/mags-CD.php

NIB CAREERS WITH VISION serves people who are blind and seeking employment with National Institute for the Blind-associated nonprofit agencies. afb.org/careerconnect/careerswithvision.asp

RECRUIT DISABILITY is a no-fee board connecting job seekers, employment programs and employers. recruitdisability.org

THINK BEYOND THE LABEL is a cross-sector partnership powered by Health & Disability Advocates. This job board is prioritized to first list companies that are actively recruiting candidates with disabilities. thinkbeyondthelabel.com

disABLED Person is a job board for people with disabilities, with more than 250,000 active USA jobs with hundreds and even thousands of new jobs posted every day. disabledperson.com

GETTINGHIRED is a social networking and job search site for people with disabilities. gettinghired.com

MONSTER is a global online employment service for people seeking jobs and employers who need great people. monster.com

CAREERBUILDER is an online employment service where you can browse jobs, explore careers, search resources and add résumés. careerbuilder.com

LET'S GET TO WORK

Applications

Most employers, from small businesses to large corporations, require an application. The application is an opportunity to make a good impression. The following are some general guidelines for completing applications:

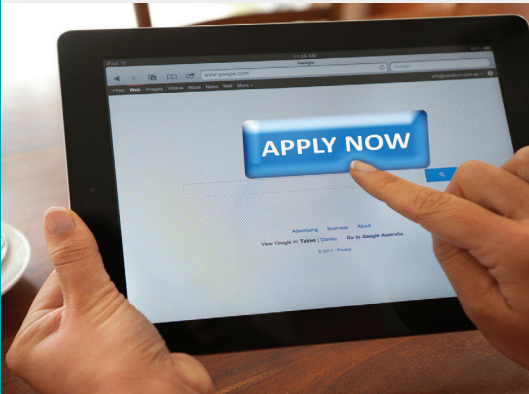
- Read the entire application before you complete it. Ask questions if you do not understand something on the form.
- Pay close attention to what is being asked and how you are expected to respond. Fill out the application neatly with no errors in grammar or spelling. Print clearly, avoid abbreviations, use black ink and answer every question. Write N/A if the question does not apply to you.
- If you include a résumé, you will still need to fill out an application form completely. Do not write “see résumé” on any part of the application.
- Never leave a blank space unless the application includes medical or disability related questions. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits employers from asking medical or disability related questions on job applications. Exceptions exist, including applying with a federal agency. See pages 38-39 for more information. Otherwise, if you encounter specific questions about your disability, leave them blank. For advice or assistance, call the Idaho Commission on Human Rights at 888-249-7025.
- Present a positive, honest picture of yourself. Avoid any negative information. Look for ways to show you are the right person for the job. Think of what you would look for in an employee if you were an employer.
- The information you provide may become part of your permanent employment record. Provide only the information the employer is seeking or is necessary to sell your qualifications. False information can become the basis for dismissal.
- Since applications have limited space, enter only your most relevant skills, experience and accomplishments. To increase your chances of landing an interview, show them you meet their needs.
- Be specific — identify the position you want. Responses like “open” or “any” imply desperation or lack of focus.
- Try to make your reasons for separating from previous employment positive or neutral. Choose your words carefully when responding to this question. Using words like “quit” or “fired” may affect the employer’s decision. Some examples you might use include reorganization or merger, returned to school, contract ended, lack of work, not enough hours, promotional opportunity, new job, raised a family, career change, work was seasonal, better opportunity or relocated.



ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

Prepare a personal data sheet — your cheat sheet. Use it as a reference when completing applications or writing résumés. Collect data that might be requested such as dates you started and ended jobs, managers' names, business addresses and telephone numbers.

Whenever possible, take the application home and get more than one copy in case you make a mistake. Fill it out where you are most comfortable and are able to take your time. Use a separate sheet of paper to write out your responses before writing them on the application. Have someone review and proof your application before you submit it.



APPLYING ONLINE

Many companies require job seekers to apply online at their company website. The online application process can be intimidating at first, but will become easier with each application. A career planner at the Idaho Department of Labor can help you with online searches and applications. Each local Idaho Labor office is equipped with an ADA accessible computer loaded with screen reading software.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when completing an online application:

- **Have all of your work history, employment dates and contact information available before you begin.**
- Read all the instructions thoroughly before you begin.
- Whenever possible, print the application out and create a rough draft of your application **before** you enter the data onto the company website.
- Proofread everything thoroughly before you submit your application.

Résumés

YOUR RÉSUMÉ IS DESIGNED TO DO ONE THING — GET YOU AN INTERVIEW!

A well-written résumé will give you a competitive edge and is often your first shot at selling yourself to an employer. A compelling résumé is not just a listing of all the jobs you've ever had, but rather it is a marketing tool about you.

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Take time to identify all of your skills, knowledge and abilities. It will be well worth the effort.
- Start with a master résumé. This résumé contains a complete list of your work history that you can use to build and customize all of your other résumés. List all of your skills, training, education and accomplishments during your entire career so far.
- When writing a résumé for a specific job listing, review the job requirements and use your “master” résumé to identify your skills, knowledge and accomplishments that correspond with the employer’s needs. The employer wants to know why you are the best candidate for this position, so write your résumé in a way to make it relevant to the specific job for which you are applying.
- Be sure to write your résumé in a way that accurately represents you and how you normally communicate.
- With an Idaho Career Information System (CIS) portfolio, you can use the Résumé Creator to write different résumés for each type of job you are applying for. A career planner can help you sign up for CIS through your IdahoWorks account at idahoworks.gov.
- Pay close attention to the wording in the description of the job you are applying for and use the same words when they reflect your skills and abilities. For example, if the employer is looking for someone with customer service and problem solving skills, your response could be something like “10 years excellent customer service experience while providing mutually beneficial solutions for both clients and employer.”
- Describe your accomplishments in simple, powerful action statements and describe how they benefited the employer. This means all statements describing what you have done need to start with an action verb. Results speak louder than a list of responsibilities. Instead of writing, “worked as a sales person,” write “increased company sales by 12 percent in one year.”



An effective résumé must be action/achievement oriented. Below is list of action verbs to use for résumés and cover letters.

ACTION VERBS FOR RÉSUMÉS

Achieved	Directed	Increased	Prepared
Acquired	Discovered	Initiated	Presided
Adjusted	Displayed	Inspected	Procured
Administrated	Doubled	Inspired	Produced
Advised	Earned	Installed	Programmed
Analyzed	Educated	Instructed	Promoted
Applied	Effected	Insured	Prompted
Arranged	Employed	Integrated	Proposed
Assembled	Enacted	Intensified	Proved
Assisted	Encouraged	Interpreted	Provided
Attained	Engineered	Interviewed	Recommended
Budgeted	Established	Invented	Reduced
Built	Estimated	Justified	Regulated
Chaired	Evaluated	Keynoted	Related
Clarified	Executed	Led	Reorganized
Commanded	Exhibited	Licensed	Reported
Compared	Expanded	Located	Researched
Composed	Expedited	Maintained	Reviewed
Conceived	Facilitated	Managed	Revised
Conducted	Financed	Manufactured	Satisfied
Constructed	Forecasted	Mastered	Scheduled
Consulted	Formalized	Mediated	Secured
Contributed	Formed	Motivated	Served
Controlled	Formulated	Negotiated	Serviced
Converted	Founded	Nominated	Solved
Coordinated	Functioned	Obtained	Stimulated
Correlated	Generated	Officiated	Structured
Counseled	Governed	Operated	Supervised
Created	Graduated	Ordered	Succeeded
Decided	Halved	Organized	Summarized
Defined	Handled	Originated	Trained
Delegated	Headed	Participated	Transferred
Demonstrated	Identified	Perfected	Transformed
Designed	Implemented	Performed	Unified
Detained	Improvised	Persuaded	Updated

TYPES OF RÉSUMÉS

Résumés can be created using different formats, different styles and with different focuses depending on your needs. No matter what format you choose, every résumé needs to be specific to the position you apply for. Your résumé must show how you meet the needs of the employer. There are many types of résumés. The following describes three types.

Master

ADVANTAGES

- Contains a complete list of your entire work history.
- Lists all of your skills, training, education and accomplishments during your career so far.
- Use it as a reference when completing applications or writing résumés.

DISADVANTAGES

- None

BEST FOR:

- Your eyes only.
- A reference to build your targeted résumés.

Functional

ADVANTAGES

- Highlights skills and accomplishments relevant to the position for which you are applying.
- Combines skills from a variety of jobs.
- Emphasizes skills, not work history.
- De-emphasizes less relevant jobs.
- Disguises gaps in work record and minimizes absence of directly related experience.

DISADVANTAGES

- Confusing if not well organized.
- Requires more effort and creativity to prepare.
- De-emphasizes growth / job titles.

BEST IF YOU:

- Are in transition or re-entering the job market after some absence.
- Have frequent changes or gaps in employment.
- Have developed relatable skills from unrelated work or life experience.

Chronological

ADVANTAGES

- Most widely used format.
- Targets accomplishments to employer's needs.
- Logical and easy to read.
- Highlights growth in skills and responsibility.
- Shows promotions and impressive titles.
- Shows loyalty if you have long-term jobs listed.

DISADVANTAGES

- Emphasizes gaps in employment.
- Focuses on job history, not skill development.
- Points out frequent job changes / demotions.

BEST IF YOU:

- Have steady work experience.
- Are pursuing jobs similar to those you've had in the past.
- Have directly relatable work experience.



No matter which format you choose, **PROOFREADING** is the most important part of writing a résumé. Ask someone else to proofread it as well. It may take only one spelling, grammar or punctuation error for an employer to set your résumé aside. Put your best foot forward and create the perfect résumé.

SHOULD I DISCLOSE MY DISABILITY?

Not on Your Résumé. Most employment experts advise against revealing a disability on a résumé. Remember, the objective of the résumé is to get an interview. Your résumé should showcase your qualifications and be absent of any concerns that might give the employer a reason to set your résumé aside. Disclosing a disability on your résumé could work against you as hiring managers sort through large piles of applications to narrow the field before selecting candidates to interview. If job-related limitations require you to request a reasonable accommodation covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), save the disclosure for the interview. For more information about disclosure and ADA requirements, see pages 38-53.

WHAT IF I HAVE GAPS IN MY WORK HISTORY?

As a general rule, it is not advised to disclose your disability as the reason for the gap. Instead, include other constructive activities you performed during your time away from the workplace such as volunteer work, workshops or coursework or consulting and freelance work. Gaps that lasted for a few months or occurred a long time ago do not need to be mentioned. This is best handled by providing the years worked rather than the year and the month. For example, if you were unemployed for four months due to illness before your current job, you might list your positions as “Assistant Manager, 2007 - 2008,” followed by “Customer Service Representative, 2008 - present.”



HOW CAN I AVOID AGE DISCRIMINATION?

Avoid using dates such as your high school or college graduation date. Remember, you do not have to use your entire work history. Pick the relevant parts and label it “Recent work history” or “Relevant work history.” Even if you have an entire career’s worth of experience, avoid using terms such as “35+ years of experience.”

Résumé Checklist

- Tailor your résumé to each job.
- Address all requirements in the job description.
- Highlight accomplishments, not functions.
- Use action words.
- Demonstrate how you solved problems.
- Identify results/accomplishments of your work.
- Quantify results where possible.
- Use industry terminology when appropriate.
- Include volunteer experience.
- Put education at the bottom of the page.
- Ask someone else to proofread for errors.
- Leave salary range and references off unless requested.

But Avoid....

- Using the same résumé for every job.
- Including personal interests unless they are related to the job.
- Focusing on unrelated work history.
- Describing your jobs using general terms.
- Sending out your résumé before you get a second opinion.

A career planner at the Idaho Department of Labor can offer guidance to help you write an effective résumé that will get attention. Résumé writing assistance is also available online through your IdahoWorks account at idahoworks.gov.



Lindsey Lucas

329 Edgewood Avenue • Boise, Idaho • (208) 555-8989 • LCL512@aol.com

Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint (2013)
- Work well with others
- Excellent leadership

Work Experience

Child Caretaker

- CPR and First Aid certified
- Played games, read stories, put puzzles together with children to keep them entertained
- Monitored children's behavior and reported to parents
- Fed and cooked meals for children

Landscaper

- Mowed lawns
- Used a weed eater along fence lines and curbing
- Weeded flower beds and gave them proper nourishment
- Raked and shoveled dirt and debris
- Collected payments

Education

Timberline High School – Boise, Idaho

Expect to graduate June 2017

- General Studies
- Spanish 1 and 2
- Web Design
- Basic Photography
- Yearbook Club
- Marching Band

Thomas Keaton

Emmett, Idaho 83617

818-555-6984

email@yahoo.com

OBJECTIVE

Sales/Marketing Director for XYZ Corporation

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Proven experience as sales and marketing professional with extensive and progressively responsible experience with multi-outlet retailers.
- Demonstrated ability to motivate sales force and increase annual sales.
- Expertise in building strong and lasting business relationships.
- Skilled in the development of advertising and sales campaigns and promotions.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant to the Marketing Director (2005 to Present)

Colonial Kitchens Inc. • Boise, Idaho

- Covered operations in three states by managing a staff of 10.
- Implemented new marketing techniques by establishing training programs for key staff.
- Spearheaded promotional campaign that included yearly contest to name new products.
- Increased annual sales 30 percent in all market territories.

Sales Director (2002 to 2005)

Pots and Pans Inc. • Meridian, Idaho

- Supervised sales staff in 15 outlets statewide.
- Increased sales 22 percent and profits 9 percent.
- Presented motivational sales training programs to statewide sales team.
- Developed and was held accountable for yearly goals for outlet managers.
- Staffed trade shows and promotional events.

Sales Manager (2001 to 2002)

Nickel and Dime's Department Store • Meridian, Idaho

- Managed hardware and kitchenware departments while supervising 3 sales personnel.
- Ensured suitable display of merchandise on selling floor.
- Analyzed marketing trends and ensured availability of best-selling items.
- Controlled inventory for two departments.
- Directed changeover from manual to computer billing and inventory control.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bachelor of Arts in Marketing

Idaho State University • Idaho Falls, Idaho

Marketing Internship

Acme Inc. • Boise, Idaho

- Increased annual sales and decreased advertising expenditures by developing strategic sales and marketing plan for company.

Captivating Cover Letters

A COVER LETTER GIVES YOU ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO MARKET YOUR SKILLS.



While not all employers request a cover letter, it is a good idea to include one with your résumé for several reasons. A cover letter is an additional opportunity to market your skills and abilities to the employer and present a complete picture of yourself. It allows you to address unique situations that are difficult to include in your résumé such as relocation, gaps in work history and career changes.

Make sure your cover letter is unique and specific to you — not one that any applicant could have written. Remember these tips when writing your cover letters:

- Make it compelling, personal and brief.
- Keep it specifically related to the position.
- **Be positive! Be positive! Be positive!**
- Avoid references to salary or benefits.
- If it is not an online letter, use 8 ½" - 11" paper — identical in color and font style to your résumé paper.
- Include contact information as shown on your résumé.
- Proofread it and ask another person to proofread it, too.
- Remember to sign it!

Make an appointment with a career planner at your local Department of Labor office for assistance in writing your cover letter. Sample cover letters and books on writing cover letters are also available. See page 67 for contact information.

COVER LETTER BASICS

DATE

Contact Person's Name or Human Resources Director
Street Address
City, State ZIP

Dear (Person's Name):

Do not use a first name only. Use the entire name or last name such as "Dear Mr. Wilson." Otherwise, address the letter as "Dear Hiring Manager."

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH:

Tell the employer your reason for writing and remember to include the position title. Capture the employer's attention. Mention how you heard about the company or the job opening. Name someone you and the employer know in common or someone in the company who knows you, if applicable. Show you have done some research on the company by mentioning projects they are involved with, their management philosophy or something that you have read about them.

BODY:

In this section, you want to build a connection between your background and the company's needs. If you have any directly related experience or education, summarize it here so the reader can look for it in your résumé. Tell the employer what you can do for them, not what they can do for you. If you have skills or accomplishments that relate to the job, mention them here. Be sure to write this in a confident manner.

CONCLUDING INFORMATION:

Indicate your interest in working for the company and hearing from the reader. You can also include that you will make follow-up contact within a specific period, such as a week, 10 days or two weeks. Then make sure to follow up. Thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

CLOSING AND SIGNATURE:

May use Sincerely, Cordially, Respectfully. Don't forget to sign it!

Your Name
Your Street Address
Your City, State ZIPcode
Your Phone Number

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Lyndsay Smith
Middleville, Idaho 83700
208-555-1640
LES374@yahoo.com

Sept. 1, 2014

Mr. Phillip Moore
Production Manager
ABC Corporation
21 Industry Lane
Lakeview, ID 55555

Dear Mr. Moore:

I am applying for the position of Production Assistant that was listed with the Idaho Department of Labor. With a high-tech background in Fortune 100 companies, I am well qualified to represent your company in this position. I am accustomed to a fast-paced environment where deadlines are a priority and handling multiple jobs simultaneously is the norm.

With five years' experience in production, I supervised up to 35 personnel, often making decisions quickly and effectively. Constant negotiations with all levels of management and employees have strengthened my interpersonal skills.

Please consider my qualifications for this position. I look forward to hearing from you to discuss how I could provide value to your organization. I can be reached during the day at (208) 555-5555 or in the evening at (208) 555-xxxx. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lyndsay Smith

The Interview

Every part of the job search process thus far, including the application, the résumé and the cover letter, has been designed to accomplish one thing — to get you an interview. For most job seekers, the interview is the “make it or break it” point. Remember that you only have about one minute to make a good first impression, and first impressions mean everything during this stage of the employment process. The interview is your chance to sell your skills, abilities and convince the employer that you are the best person for the job.



BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Research the Company. Find out everything you can about the business. If it has a website, study it. Read company literature, talk to people familiar with the company and observe workplace dress, attitudes and company culture.

Write Down Important Information. Write down the date of your appointment as well as the name, address and phone number of the company. If you know the name of the person you will be interviewing with, write that down as well. Keep the information with you.

Navigate. Find out where the company is located and how to get there. If you know the location is not accessible to you, disclosure of your disability is critical at this point. Contact the person who will be interviewing you and request an alternative location. Have a location in mind if the interviewer needs some suggestions. If you don't know if the location is accessible, call and ask whether there are accessible parking spaces available or if the building has an elevator. It's better to deal with these issues ahead of time than 15 minutes before your interview, and it shows your prospective employer that you are able to deal with these situations effectively. Use a mapping app and print out directions. Allow extra travel time in case you are delayed beyond your control. If possible, make a trial run to give you an idea of what kind of traffic and parking to expect.

Take Your Portfolio. Your portfolio contains extra copies of your résumé and cover letter, certificates, letters of recommendation, references and samples of your work. A portfolio can be as simple as a new dark-colored plain folder. Bring a pen and a notebook.

Dress for Success. Double-check your appearance. Your clothes should be clean, pressed and appropriate for the interview. The rule is to wear “one step above” what others in the company are wearing. Neutral colors such as black, brown, gray or navy are best. Appropriate shoes are important. Make sure your hands, nails and hair are clean and your perfume or aftershave isn't too strong.

Be Punctual. Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early. Cordially let the receptionist know who you are and whom you wish to see. It's your interview so go alone.

SHOULD I PLAN TO DISCLOSE MY DISABILITY?

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you are under no obligation to disclose disability-related information to an employer unless you need a reasonable accommodation. The decision to disclose your disability is a very personal one. Ultimately, disclosure is your choice. Keep in mind when deciding whether to disclose, if your disability is noticeable to the interviewer it may be a factor in your hiring. Realize that even if you do not require an accommodation, you may want to address your disability at your interview. If the employer would have doubts or concerns about how you will perform your major job duties, you should bring up the subject and explain how you are able to perform them, with or without accommodation.

Your own attitude will have a great deal to do with the interviewer's attitude. A smile and a pleasant demeanor will go a long way toward relaxing the interviewer. Be prepared to explain if you have physical problems that make common interview etiquette difficult such as shaking hands, maintaining eye contact or good posture. Be open, honest and reassuring. Focus on your abilities and skills, not the disability.

TIPS FOR DISCLOSURE — WRITE A SCRIPT

- Plan what you are going to say ahead of time and write a script.
- Make sure your explanation is short and concise and practice your presentation.
- Focus on your strengths and transferable skills. Stress the ways you have overcome obstacles to succeed. Some examples include:

“Because of my hearing loss, I have developed excellent levels of concentration. This is demonstrated in my ability to analyze spreadsheets and make profitability forecasts.”

“Due to my disability I am very independent, a good organizer and I always put 110 percent into any task that I am given. I am a quick thinker and a strong team player.”

“To overcome my dyslexia, I have developed a range of strategies in the collection and processing of information and in structuring my work. In addition, I make full use of a variety of computer software to assist my written work.”

Finally, remember that positive presentation is key. When you write your script, avoid detailed explanations of your disability, minimize medical terms and words like unpredictable, chronic condition or permanently debilitated, and never give a history of your surgeries and



hospitalizations.

DON'T ALLOW TOUGH QUESTIONS TO BECOME ROAD BLOCKS

The best way to handle difficult questions during the interview is to be prepared for them ahead of time. Make a list of the questions you know you are going to have trouble with and prepare an answer. Practice your delivery of these answers so you will be ready for them. Sample interview questions include:

Tell me about yourself. This is an opportunity to let the interview team know more about you, your work style and other interests like hobbies, volunteer work and involvement in civic and community organizations. Make sure your answers relate to the position you're applying for. Don't ramble on about things that are not relevant to the job.

I see there is a two-year gap in your work history. What have you been doing during this time? This is an opportunity to talk about what you have been doing, not what you have not been doing. Think about valuable life experiences you have gained during this time. Have you been taking care of children or a parent, going to school, taking art classes or volunteering?

This question may prompt you to disclose your disability if you have not already done so. Be sure to do it in a way that shows how you have dealt with a difficult situation in a positive manner. Remember to keep the past in the past, stating that you are ready to move forward and are qualified and able to do the job you want.

Why did you leave your previous job? Were you looking for more challenges, a pay increase or a chance to learn new skills? Let the interviewers know.



What do you consider your most significant strengths/weaknesses? Play up your strengths, but don't say you don't have any weaknesses. Turn any weakness into a positive. Let them know you're working on a weakness or tell them how you turned a weakness into a strength.

What do you know about our company? Go to the company's website and read up before the interview. If you know someone who currently works there, get some information from them.

Why should I hire you instead of someone else with equal qualifications? This is your

opportunity to reinforce your desire to work for this company and reiterate why you would be their best choice for the position.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Be Yourself. You got the interview because of your skills. Don't be afraid to laugh and be yourself during the interview. Employers hire people they like, not only those whom they think can do a good job for them. Let your personality and positive attitude show.

Be Friendly. Present yourself in a friendly, straightforward manner.

Demonstrate Your Ability. Show that you can help their business by using examples from previous experiences, stating results and quantifying when you can. For example, did you cut costs, increase sales, improve quality, reduce production time or save money? Tell your story.

Be Positive. You got the interview because you possess the skills to do the job. However, the number one reason people are hired is their attitude.

Ask for the Job! When the interview is ending, let the employer know that you want the job. For example, "Mr. Smith, after speaking with you, I am very interested in this position and I am confident that I would be an asset to your company. What is the next step in the process?"

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Send a Thank-You Note.

Really! Thank-you notes are a great way to get a competitive edge. A well-written note reveals your sincerity, attention to detail, manners and your desire to work for them.

- Thank-you notes can be either emailed or hand-written.
- Send your note no later than 24 hours after the interview.
- Be brief and to the point and address the note to the name and title of the person who interviewed you.
- Thank the interviewer for his or her time.
- Restate your interest in the position and the company.



ANALYZE WHAT YOU DID RIGHT AND WRONG.

A careful review of your interview performance can help you improve in the future. The more you interview, the more comfortable you will be with each following interview. Be prepared to be turned down many times before receiving an offer. Even if you are not chosen, remain polite and ask that they keep you in mind for any future openings. The person they chose may turn the position down or leave after a short time if it does not work out.

Remember that persistence pays. If you would really like to work for a particular employer, check back with them occasionally. **Keep trying!** If you thought your interview went really well and you did not get the job, consider contacting the interviewer to ask about areas where you could improve.

SECTION THREE



Disclosure



Accommodations



Americans with Disabilities Act

DO'S AND DON'TS OF DISCLOSURE

This section was adapted from the *JAN* Effective Accommodation Practices Series developed by the Job Accommodation Network (*JAN*) — located at askjan.org/topics/discl.htm.

Disclosing a disability may be a consideration when starting a new job or transitioning from school, another job, or unemployment; or retaining a job after acquiring a disability. For individuals who may still be working on accepting their medical condition, making the decision to disclose can be overwhelming. Because some disabilities are not visible, individuals may face such challenges as understanding their own condition and determining what types of accommodations are available. As with any new experience, preparation is vital. The following provides an overview of the do's and don'ts of disclosure. Note that disclosing is a very personal decision, but some of the following tips may be helpful in making that decision.



DO DISCLOSE WHEN YOU NEED AN ACCOMMODATION

Deciding when to disclose can be a difficult choice for a person with a disability. If you have a non-visible disability such as brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder, knowing when to disclose your condition can be a real dilemma.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you can request an accommodation at any time during the application process or even after you are employed. You can request an accommodation even if you did not ask for one when applying for a job or after receiving a job offer.

When is the best time to disclose you have a disability? In general, you should only disclose your disability when you need to request a reasonable accommodation — when you know that, due to a disability, there is a workplace barrier that is preventing you from competing for a job, performing a job or gaining equal access to a benefit of employment like an employee lunchroom or employee parking.

DO DISCLOSE WHEN APPLYING WITH A FEDERAL AGENCY OR FEDERAL CONTRACTOR

It may be in your best interest to disclose your disability on an application when you are applying with a federal agency or a federal contractor that has affirmative action responsibilities.

Changes to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act mandate that all federal contractors take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote and retain individuals with disabilities. The new rule, which went into effect in 2014:

- Establishes a 7 percent utilization goal for individuals with disabilities;
 - Requires covered contractors to invite applicants and current employees to voluntarily self-identify as an individual with a disability;
- and**
- Requires contractors to maintain several quantitative measurements and comparisons for the number of individuals with disabilities who apply for jobs and the number of individuals with disabilities they hire in order to create greater accountability for employment decisions and practices. For more information, visit the website at yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/section-503.

Recent changes to Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act require that federal agencies engage in affirmative action to enhance the employment, retention and promotion of qualified individuals with disabilities. The new rule, which goes into effect on Jan. 3, 2018:

- Requires each federal agency to set the goal of increasing the percentage of people with disabilities in their workforce to 12 percent and increasing the number of people with targeted disabilities to 2 percent.
- Does not require that job applicants reveal their disabilities or participate in affirmative action, but rather invites applicants to self-identify as persons with disabilities.

DO KNOW WHO TO DISCLOSE TO

This can be tricky. Many employers have their own in-house rules that explain how they handle accommodation requests. Check your employee handbook or your company's intranet for this information. In addition, if you have an equal employment opportunity office or a human resources department, they can assist you. Another option is to talk to your manager or supervisor directly.

DO KNOW HOW TO DISCLOSE

According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), you only have to let your employer know that you need an adjustment or change at work for a reason related to a medical condition. You can use "plain English" to make your request and you do not have to mention the ADA or use the phrase "reasonable accommodation." Once you disclose, then the interactive process should begin. At this point, your employer can ask for limited information about your disability and your need for accommodations.

DON'T DISCLOSE TOO SOON

Many people with non-visible disabilities may feel they are not being completely honest with an employer if they do not tell everything about their disability up front at the time of their interview. Just remember that you are not obligated to do so. If you disclose, just provide basic information about your condition, your limitations and what accommodations you may need.

DON'T DISCLOSE TOO LATE

Don't wait to disclose until after you begin to experience work performance problems. It is better to disclose your disability and request accommodations before job performance suffers or conduct problems occur. Employers do not have to rescind discipline that occurred before they knew about the disability nor do they have to lower performance standards as a reasonable accommodation. Remember, the purpose of an accommodation is to enable a qualified person with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job. So, disclose when you first realize you are having difficulties.

DON'T DISCLOSE TO EVERYONE

Remember that you have a right to keep information about your disability private. It is not necessary to inform coworkers and colleagues about your disability or your need for accommodations. While they may be aware of the accommodations, especially if you are allowed to take extra breaks or you have a flexible starting time, they are not entitled to know why. Your employer is required by the ADA to keep your disability and medical information confidential and to give it to managers and supervisors only on a need-to-know basis.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, DO YOUR HOMEWORK

No one knows more about your disability than you do, so tell your employer what you think you need, but also research other accommodation options such as a flexible start time or working from home part of the time. For additional information on the types of accommodations you could ask for, visit the website at askjan.org/media/atoz.htm.

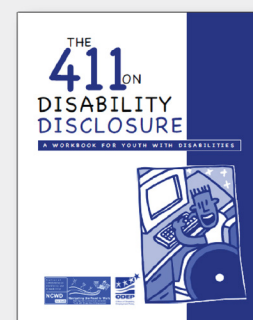
For additional information on requesting accommodations, see the "Employees' Practical Guide to Negotiating and Requesting Reasonable Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)" at askjan.org/EeGuide.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A workbook on disability disclosure, written for youth but an excellent resource for all ages.

ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure

Disability Disclosure and Employment – JAN Effective Accommodation Practices Series, askjan.org/topics/discl.htm.



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Americans with Disabilities Act

What should I know about the ADA?

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a qualified applicant or employee with a disability. The ADA applies to private employers with 15 or more employees and to state and local government employers. In Idaho, under the Idaho Human Rights Act, employers with as few as five employees are required to follow state and federal antidiscrimination laws.



The ADA defines an individual with a disability as a person who:

(1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, (2) has a record or history of a substantially limiting impairment or (3) is regarded or perceived by an employer as having a substantially limiting impairment.



An applicant with a disability, like all other applicants, must be able to meet the employer's requirements for the job, such as education, training, employment experience, skills or licenses. In addition, an applicant with a disability must be able to perform the "essential functions" of the job — the fundamental duties — either on her own or with the help of

"reasonable accommodation." However, an employer does not have to provide a reasonable accommodation that will cause "undue hardship" for the employer such as causing significant difficulty or expense.

Idaho Commission on Human Rights

Who can help me with my questions about disability protections in Idaho?

The Idaho Commission on Human Rights (ICHR) is a "one-stop shop" for all your questions about disability protections in employment. The commission works with employees and employers to resolve charges of discrimination based on disability, and trained mediators help to resolve discrimination complaints. The commission provides information about protections under the Idaho Human Rights Act, the ADA, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes. The ICHR also enforces state and federal



laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination. You can find more information about the commission and disability protections in Idaho on the commission's website at humanrights.idaho.gov.

If you would like to speak with the commission's investigative staff, call (888) 249-7025 and talk with an investigator or submit an online inquiry at humanrights.idaho.gov/IHRCQ.

The following section is based on the fact sheet — Job Applicants and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — located on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's website at eeoc.gov/facts/jobapplicant.html.

Reasonable Accommodation for the Application Process

I have a disability and will need an accommodation for the job interview. Does the ADA require an employer to provide me with one?

Yes. Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodation — appropriate changes and adjustments — to enable you to be considered for a job opening. Reasonable accommodation also may be required to enable you to perform a job, gain access to the workplace and enjoy the “benefits and privileges” of employment available to employees without disabilities. An employer cannot refuse to consider you because you require a reasonable accommodation to compete for or perform a job.

Can an employer refuse to provide me with an accommodation because it is too difficult or too expensive?

An employer does not have to provide a specific accommodation if it would cause an “undue hardship” for the employer such as causing significant difficulty or expense. However, an employer cannot refuse to provide an accommodation solely because it entails some costs, either financial or administrative.

If the requested accommodation causes an undue hardship, the employer still would be required to provide another accommodation that does not.

***Example:** A trucking company conducts job interviews in a second floor office. There is no elevator. The company calls Tanya to arrange for an interview for a secretarial position. She requests a reasonable accommodation because she uses a wheelchair. Installing an elevator would be an undue hardship, but the employer could conduct the interview in a first floor office. The employer must move the location of the interview as a reasonable accommodation.*

What are some examples of “reasonable accommodations” that may be needed during the hiring process?

Reasonable accommodation can take many forms. Ones that may be needed during the hiring process include (but are not limited to):

- Providing written materials in accessible formats, such as large print, Braille or audiotape.
- Providing readers or sign language interpreters.
- Ensuring that recruitment, interviews, tests and other components of the application process are held in accessible locations.
- Providing or modifying equipment or devices.
- Adjusting or modifying application policies and procedures.



***Example:** John is blind and applies for a job as a customer service representative. John could perform this job with assistive technology, such as a program that reads information on the screen. If the company wishes to have John demonstrate his ability to use the computer, it must provide appropriate assistive technology as a reasonable accommodation.*

***Example:** An employer requires job applicants to line up outside its facility to apply for a job, a process that could take several hours. Tara has multiple sclerosis and that makes her unable to tolerate prolonged exposure to temperatures in the 90's. Tara therefore requests that she be allowed to wait indoors where it is air conditioned until the human resources department is ready to take her application. The employer would need to modify its hiring procedure to accommodate Tara.*

Because of my learning disability, I need extra time to complete a written test. Does the ADA require an employer to modify the way a test is given to me?

Yes. An employer may have to provide testing materials in alternative formats or make other adjustments to tests as an accommodation for you. The format and manner in which a test is given may pose problems for persons with impaired sensory, speaking or manual skills, as well as for those with certain learning disabilities. For example, an applicant who is blind will not be able to read a written test, but can take the test if it is provided in Braille or the questions are tape-recorded. A deaf person will not understand oral instructions, but these could be provided in a written format or through the use of a sign language interpreter. A 30-minute timed written test may pose a problem for a person whose learning disability requires additional time. **Thus, the ADA requires employers give application tests in a format or manner that does not require the use of your impaired skill unless the test is designed to measure that skill.**

Example: An employer gives a written test for a proofreading position. The employer does not have to offer this test in a different format (e.g., orally) to an applicant who has dyslexia because the job itself requires an ability to read.

Example: An employer gives a written test to learn about an applicant's knowledge of marketing trends. Maria is blind and requests that the test be given to her in Braille. An individual's knowledge of marketing trends is critical to this job, but the employer can test Maria's knowledge by giving her the test in Braille. Alternatively, the employer could explore other testing formats with Maria to determine if they would be effective, for example, providing a reader or a computer version of the test.

When do I have to tell an employer that I need an accommodation for the hiring process?

It is best to **let an employer know as soon as you realize that you will need a reasonable accommodation** for some aspect of the hiring process. An employer needs advance notice to provide many accommodations, such as sign language interpreters, alternative formats for written documents and adjusting the time allowed for taking a written test. An employer also may need advance notice to arrange an accessible location for a test or interview.



Requesting an Accommodation

How do I request a reasonable accommodation?

You must inform the employer that you need some sort of change or adjustment to the application/interviewing process because of your medical condition. You can make this request **orally** or in **writing**, or someone else might make a request for you (e.g., a family member, friend, health professional or other representative such as a job coach).

What happens after I request an accommodation?

The employer may need to discuss your request more fully to understand your disability and why you need an accommodation. You should respond to the employer's questions as quickly as possible and be sure to explain how a proposed accommodation would enable you to participate fully in all aspects of the application/interviewing process. If your disability and need for accommodation are not obvious, the employer may ask you for reasonable documentation explaining the disability and why an accommodation is needed.

Example: A department store requires applicants to take a written test. Rodney has dyslexia and requests the test be read to him as a reasonable accommodation. The human resources associate is unfamiliar with dyslexia and requests information about the condition and why the accommodation is necessary. Rodney must provide this information.

I asked for a specific accommodation, but the employer offered me a different one instead. Do I have to accept it?

An employer has to offer an accommodation that will meet your needs. If more than one accommodation meets your needs, then the employer may choose which one to provide. You cannot insist on a specific accommodation only because it is a personal preference. **If the employer's proposal does not meet your needs, then you need to explain why.**

***Example:** Charles is blind and asks that a written test be read to him as a reasonable accommodation. The employer proposes to provide Charles with a Braille version of the test, but Charles explains that he cannot read Braille. Thus, a Braille version would not be an effective accommodation. The employer then proposes to provide Charles with an audiotope version of the test. While Charles preferred to have someone read the questions to him, the audiotope version meets his needs and thus is acceptable as a reasonable accommodation.*

Discussing Disability with the Potential Employer

The ADA prohibits employers from asking questions that are likely to reveal the existence of a disability before making a job offer — the pre-offer period. This prohibition covers written questionnaires and inquiries made during interviews, as well as medical examinations. However, such questions and medical examinations are permitted after extending a job offer, but before the individual begins work — the post-offer period.

What are examples of interview questions that an employer can ask a job applicant who has a visible disability?

The ADA allows employers to ask questions about specific job functions such as the following:

- Can you operate a computer?
- Can you drive a company truck?
- Can you arrive at and begin work at 6 a.m.?
- Can you work a typical 40-hour workweek?

What are examples of questions that an employer cannot ask on an application or during an interview?

Examples of prohibited questions during the pre-offer period include:

- Do you have a heart condition? Do you have asthma or any other difficulties breathing?
- Do you have a disability that would interfere with your ability to perform the job?
- How many days were you sick last year?

- Have you ever filed for workers' compensation? Have you ever been injured on the job?
- Have you ever seen a psychiatrist? Have you been treated for mental health problems?
- What prescription drugs are you currently taking?
- How much alcohol do you drink on a daily basis?
- How much exercise do you do on a daily basis?
- Will you require time off from work for medical appointments?

May the employer ask me these questions after making a job offer?

Yes. An employer can ask all of the questions listed above, and others that are likely to reveal the existence of a disability, after it extends you a job offer as long as other applicants offered the same type of job are asked the same questions. **In other words, an employer cannot ask such questions only of those who have obvious disabilities.** Similarly, an employer may require a medical examination after making a job offer as long as other applicants offered the same type of job are required to have the same medical examination.

May an employer ask me whether I will need a reasonable accommodation for the hiring process?

Yes. An employer may tell all applicants what the hiring process involves (for example, an interview, timed written test, or job demonstration), and then ask whether they will need a reasonable accommodation for this process.

I have an obvious disability. Can an employer ask me medical questions during an interview?

No. Except as explained in the question below, an employer cannot ask questions about an applicant's disability because it is visible or because the applicant has voluntarily disclosed a non-visible disability.

After I got a job offer, the employer had me take a medical examination in which I revealed I have epilepsy. Can the employer withdraw my job offer?

While the employer had the right to require a post-offer medical examination, he cannot withdraw the job offer solely because you revealed you have a disability. Instead, the employer can withdraw the job offer only if the employer can show that you are unable to perform the essential functions of the job (with or without reasonable accommodation), or that you pose a significant risk of causing substantial harm to yourself or others.

Example: Darla receives a job offer to be a cook at a hotel resort, and during the medical examination she discloses that she has epilepsy. The hotel doctor expresses concern about Darla working around stoves and using sharp utensils. Darla tells the doctor that her seizures are controlled with medication and offers to bring information from her neurologist to answer the doctor's concerns. Darla also points out that she has worked as a cook for seven years without any incidents. The hotel will violate the ADA if it withdraws Darla's job offer based on her epilepsy.

During the hiring process, I gave the employer medical information that I do not want anyone else to know about. Must the employer keep this information confidential?

Yes. **The ADA contains strict confidentiality requirements.** Medical information revealed during the hiring process (pre- or post-offer) must be kept confidential, with certain exceptions. The confidentiality requirements protect both information voluntarily revealed as well as information revealed in response to an employer's written or oral questions or during a medical examination.

An employer may share medical information with other decision-makers involved in the hiring process who need it so they can make employment decisions consistent with the ADA. The ADA also permits an employer to share medical information with the following individuals:

- Supervisors and managers may be told about necessary restrictions on the work or duties of an employee and about reasonable accommodations.
- First aid and safety personnel may be told if the disability might require emergency treatment.
- Government officials investigating compliance with the ADA.
- State workers' compensation offices, state second injury funds or workers' compensation insurance carriers. An employer may also use the information for insurance purposes.

Discussing Accommodation to Perform the Job

May an employer ask applicants on an application form or during an interview whether they will need reasonable accommodation to perform the job?

Generally, no. An employer cannot ask all applicants whether they would need reasonable accommodation to perform a job because the answer to this question is likely to reveal whether an applicant has a disability.

However, if the employer knows that an applicant has a disability, and it is reasonable to question whether the disability might pose difficulties for the individual in performing a specific job task, then the employer may ask whether she would need reasonable accommodation to perform that task. An employer might know that an applicant has a disability because it is obvious or she has voluntarily revealed the existence of one. If the applicant indicates that accommodation will be necessary, then the employer may ask what accommodation is needed.

Example: *Carl has a severe limp and uses a cane because of his prosthetic leg. He applies for an assembly line job that does not require employees to move around, but does require they stand for long periods of time. The employer asks Carl about his ability to stand and whether he will need reasonable accommodation to perform the job. Carl replies that he will need accommodation. The employer asks Carl for examples of accommodations and Carl suggests two possibilities: a tall stool so he can sit down but still reach the conveyor belt, or a “sit-stand” chair that will provide support and enable him to do the job.*

In addition, if the employer believes an applicant with an obvious disability will need a reasonable accommodation to do the job, the employer may ask the applicant to describe or demonstrate how she would perform the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

Example: *Alberto uses a wheelchair and applies for a job that involves retrieval of files that would seem to be beyond his reach. The employer can show him the files and ask him to explain or demonstrate how he would perform this task.*

Do I have to tell the employer during the application process that I might need an accommodation to perform the job?

No. The ADA does not require an applicant to inform an employer about the need for a reasonable accommodation at any particular time, so this information does not need to be volunteered on an application form or in an interview.

Determining the best moment to tell a prospective employer about the need for reasonable accommodation on the job is a personal decision. Sometimes, applicants are not aware they may need a reasonable accommodation until they have more information about the job, its requirements and the work environment. Some applicants choose to inform an employer during the application process after they understand the job better and its requirements. Others choose to wait until they have a job offer.

What responsibilities do employees and employers have when discussing reasonable accommodations?

If an accommodation is desired or requested by the employee, the employee AND the employer are required to participate in what the ADA calls the “interactive process.” This is an informal conversation about the requested accommodation and what the employee believes she or he needs to be able to perform the essential functions of his or her job. Keep in mind that not all requests are automatically accepted by the employer; the purpose of the interactive process is to figure out what will work for both the employee and the employer. Whether or not a request for accommodation is “reasonable” will depend on many different factors. The point of the interactive process is figuring out what the employee needs and what the employer is willing and able to provide as an accommodation.

Is my employer allowed to ask for a doctor’s note or other medical records if I ask for an accommodation?

Many people think it is illegal or inappropriate for an employer to ask for medical documentation or other medical records related to a disability. Under the ADA, an employer may ask for medical information if it is “job-related and consistent with business necessity.”¹ This may be a part of the interactive process when you request a reasonable accommodation. This means that the employer must have a reasonable belief based on objective evidence that: (1) an employee will be unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job because of a medical condition; or (2) the employee will pose a direct threat because of a medical condition. If your disability or need for accommodation is not known or obvious, an employer is entitled to know that you are a person with a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation. If you or your employer have questions about what types of information requests are allowed under the ADA Act and other state and federal laws, please contact the Idaho Commission on Human Rights at (888) 249-7025 to speak with an investigator or visit the website at humanrights.idaho.gov.

To learn more about the do’s and don’ts of disclosure, turn to pages 38-40.

Being “Qualified” for the Job

What if my disability prevents me from performing some job duties?

An employer does not have to hire you if you are unable to perform all of the essential functions of the job, even with reasonable accommodation. However, **an employer cannot reject you only because the disability prevents you from performing minor duties that are not essential to the job.**

¹ Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. “Enforcement Guidance: Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees Under The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).” Web. Available <https://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/guidance-inquiries.html>

Example: Wei is deaf and applies for a file clerk position. The essential functions of this job are to file and retrieve written materials. While the job description states that the clerk must also answer the phone, in practice the clerk rarely does this because other employees have responsibility for this duty. The employer cannot reject Wei solely because she is unable to answer the phone since that is not an essential part of performing this job.

If an employer has several qualified applicants for a job, is the employer required to select a qualified applicant with a disability over other applicants without a disability?

No. The ADA does not require that an employer hire an applicant with a disability over other applicants because the person has a disability. The ADA only prohibits discrimination because of disability. It makes it unlawful to refuse to hire a qualified applicant because he has a disability or because a reasonable accommodation is required to make it possible for this person to perform essential job functions.

Can an employer refuse to hire me because she believes that my disability makes it unsafe for me to perform a job?

An employer can refuse to hire you if your disability poses a significant risk of substantial harm to you or others. If an employer has such concerns, he must seek appropriate information to assess the level of risk and the nature of the harm. This can include asking questions about prior work experience and requesting specific information from your doctor related to health and safety.

An employer cannot refuse to hire you based on a slightly increased risk, speculation about future risk or generalizations about your disability. The employer must also consider whether a risk can be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level with a reasonable accommodation.

Example: An employer learns during a post-offer medical examination that Simone has major depression. She has been offered a high-level managerial position, but the employer is concerned the job will be too stressful, causing Simone's illness to worsen. Simone's depression is well controlled with medication and she has been working for two years in a similar position with no effect on her depression or her performance. Based on this information, Simone's disability would not pose a high level of risk of harm and therefore the employer could not refuse to hire her based on fears she will experience an increased number of depressive episodes or that she would be unable to perform the job.

Alcohol and Drugs

Is alcoholism covered by the ADA?

Yes, alcoholism is considered a disability and is protected by the ADA if the person is qualified to perform the essential functions of the job. An employer may be required to provide an accommodation to a person experiencing alcoholism. However, an employer can discipline, discharge or deny employment to people whose use of alcohol adversely affects job performance or conduct.

What can an employer prohibit about alcohol use in the workplace?

The employer can prohibit the use of alcohol and require that employees not be under the influence of alcohol at the workplace.

Is a person using illegal drugs protected by the ADA?

A person currently using illegal drugs is NOT protected by the ADA. However, the ADA indicates that the **exclusion of illegal drug use from ADA protection does not apply to:**

- An individual who has successfully completed or who is participating in a supervised drug program and is no longer using illegal drugs.
- An individual who is mistakenly regarded as engaging in illegal drug use.

Is testing for the illegal use of drugs permissible under the ADA?

Yes, employers can maintain drug testing programs to test for the illegal use of drugs without violating the ADA. Testing for illegal drug use is not considered a medical examination under the ADA. Many employers are concerned about the effects of illicit drug use on safety, productivity and related issues. As a matter of policy, some companies test job applicants and current employees for drug use. Some application forms will include statements, information or questions about alcohol and drug use. Applicants are often advised during the interview process that drug screening is required, but some employers offer no information about drug testing in advance. Refusal to submit to a drug test may be used by the employer as grounds to reject your application. You may be asked to pay for your drug testing.

Issues Concerning Workers' Compensation

How does the ADA affect workers' compensation programs?

Only injured workers who meet the ADA's definition of an "individual with a disability" will be considered covered under the ADA, regardless of whether they satisfy criteria for receiving benefits under workers' compensation or other disability laws. Important points to remember include:

- A worker must be qualified, with or without reasonable accommodation, to be protected by the ADA.
- Work-related injuries do not always cause physical or mental impairments severe enough to substantially limit a major life activity.
- Many on-the-job injuries cause temporary impairments that heal within a short period of time with little or no long-term or permanent impact. Therefore, many injured workers who qualify for benefits under workers' compensation or other disability benefits laws may not be protected by the ADA.
- An employer must consider work-related injuries on a case-by-case basis to know if a worker is protected by the ADA.
- An employer may not inquire into an applicant's workers' compensation history before making a conditional offer of employment.
- After making a conditional job offer, an employer may inquire about a person's workers' compensation history in a medical inquiry that is required of all applicants in the same job category. However, even after a conditional offer has been made, an employer cannot require a potential employee to have a medical examination because a response to a medical inquiry shows a previous on-the-job injury unless all applicants in the same job category are required to have an examination.
- An employer may not base an employment decision on the speculation that an applicant may cause increased workers' compensation costs in the future.
- An employer can refuse to hire or discharge an individual who is not currently able to perform a job without posing a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others and if the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.
- An employer can refuse to hire or can fire a person who knowingly provides a false answer to a lawful post-offer inquiry about his/her condition or workers' compensation history.

Actions for Addressing Discrimination

What actions can I take if I believe I am being discriminated against in my employment?

Suggest reasonable accommodations that will allow you to perform the essential functions of the job or provide equal access. Some employers might not be aware of their responsibilities regarding ADA.

If the situation is not resolved effectively and you think an employer has denied you a job or an equal opportunity to apply for a job based on your disability, refused your request for reasonable accommodation, or has asked you illegal medical inquiries or required you to take an illegal medical examination, you can file a discrimination complaint against the employer. However, it must be filed within 300 days of the incident.

You can file a complaint against the employer with the Idaho Commission on Human Rights (ICHR), the agency that investigates complaints concerning employment (see page 59). Discrimination complaints must be filed with the ICHR before you can bring a suit in state court. ICHR will file the charge under state law and, in most circumstances, under federal law with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Alternatively, you can file a complaint directly with the EEOC, but it must be filed within 180 days of the incident. You may also file a complaint with a local Idaho Department of Labor office near you (see page 67 for a list), which will be forwarded to the ICHR.

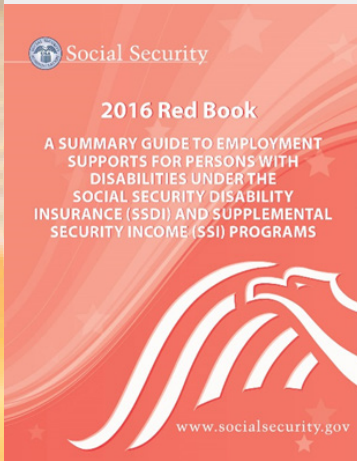
If you have been discriminated against, you are entitled to a remedy that will restore what you lost if the discrimination had never occurred. This means you may be entitled to hiring, back pay or reasonable accommodation. You may also be entitled to attorney's fees.

If you are an applicant for federal employment and believe your rights have been violated under the Rehabilitation Act, then you must initiate EEO counseling within 45 days of the alleged discrimination with the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity office.

Contact the Client Assistance Program of DisAbility Rights Idaho, which is designated as the Protection and Advocacy System for Idaho, if you feel you need advocacy support. See page 61 for contact information.



APPENDIX A: WORKING WHILE ON SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS



The Social Security Administration (SSA) encourages individuals with disabilities to begin or return to work through work incentives, which allow people to keep cash resources and medical benefits as they work to become self-supporting. You can learn more about work incentives in Social Security's Red Book, available online at ssa.gov/redbook.

Below is general information about the common incentives available to individuals receiving Social Security disability benefits. To learn more about the effect employment could have on your benefits, visit the website at choosework.net or contact the Helpline at 866-968-7842 or for TTY at 866-833-2967.

The SSA has two major programs that provide support to people with disabilities:

- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** with Medicare coverage.
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**.

The Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program is a no-cost service to help beneficiaries of SSI and SSDI make informed choices about going back to work or entering the workforce for the first time. There also are ways to fund vocational training, education or starting a business. If you are an SSI and/or SSDI beneficiary, there are ways to test your ability to work without losing your benefits such as Medicaid and Medicare. The WIPA program links you with an individual who will:

- Provide accurate, up-to-date information about federal work incentive programs.
- Provide work incentives planning and assistance to help reach your employment goals.
- Provide benefits analysis and planning to help you keep your cash resources and medical benefits as you work to become self-supporting.
- Assist in writing a PASS (Plan to Achieve Self Support) free of charge.
- Provide health care planning and counseling.

Each SSA program has its own work incentives and each work incentive helps people become self-supporting. The following pages provide brief explanations of common work incentives and how they work.

Common Incentives if You Receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI):

TRIAL WORK PERIOD

This is a time period when, while still receiving SSDI, you can test your ability to work without losing SSDI cash payments and Medicare coverage. During this time, you can earn any amount of money as long as you report the work activity while you continue to have a disabling condition. The trial work period continues until you accumulate nine months, not necessarily consecutive, in which you perform what the SSA calls “services” within a rolling 60-month period. The SSA considers your work to be services if you earn more than a certain amount in a month. For example, after nine service months the trial work period is complete, and SSA will evaluate you to determine if you continue to have a disability and are eligible for SSDI benefits. If SSA determines you are no longer eligible, you will receive an additional three-month grace period of SSDI payments before benefits stop.

EXTENDED PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY

For 36 consecutive months after the trial work period is completed and you continue to be medically disabled, you can receive an SSDI check for each month you earn below a certain amount. This automatic reintroduction of SSDI benefits does not require a new application.

MEDICARE CONTINUATION

Medicare can continue for seven years and nine months, sometimes longer, after a successful trial work period if you continue to be medically disabled.

IMPAIRMENT RELATED WORK EXPENSE

This is a documented disability-related expense that is absolutely necessary for you to perform a job. SSA deducts the cost of these expenses from gross earnings before determining if you are SSDI eligible. Examples of these types of expenses may include wheelchairs, assistive technology or other specialized work-related equipment and certain special transportation costs.

MEDICAL RECOVERY DURING VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Your SSDI eligibility may continue if you have medically recovered from your disability, but are actively participating in a vocational rehabilitation program that will likely lead to self-support.

TICKET TO WORK

While you are actively participating in the Ticket to Work program, you can get the help you need to find the job that is right for you and you can safely explore your work options without losing your SSDI benefits. For example:

- You can easily return to benefits if you have to stop working, known as “expedited reinstatement of benefits.”

- You can continue to receive health care benefits.
- You will not receive a continuing disability review while using your “ticket.”
- In addition, you will still be able to use other SSA programs and work incentives to help you transition into work.

Common Incentives if You Receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI):

TICKET TO WORK

Similar to the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) work incentive. See the description in the previous section.

1619A AND 1619B

Two different programs to help you keep Medicaid benefits while you try to become self-supporting.

STUDENT EARNED INCOME EXCLUSION

If you are a student up to 22 years of age who has a disability and regularly enrolled in school, this allows you to earn income that is not counted for SSI income purposes.

PLAN FOR ACHIEVING SELF-SUPPORT

This is a document that you write to set aside income or resources to reach a work goal. For example, you could set aside money to go to school, start a business or pay for work expenses such as transportation to and from work or attendant care. SSA does not count money set aside under this plan to determine your SSI payment amount.

IMPAIRMENT RELATED WORK EXPENSE

This is a documented disability-related expense that is absolutely necessary for you to perform a job. Examples may include wheelchairs, assistive technology or other specialized work-related equipment, and certain special transportation costs. As an SSI beneficiary, the cost of these expenses can be recovered through higher SSI payments. Additionally, this work incentive can also be used to establish eligibility for initial SSDI disability status.

BLIND WORK EXPENSE

If you have blindness, this is a documented expense you incur because of your disability and is absolutely necessary to perform a job. Examples may include adaptive devices or guide dogs. Like an impairment related work expense, you may be able to recover 100 percent of those expenses through increased SSI cash payments.



APPENDIX B: WORKING WHILE ON MEDICAID

Legislation took effect in 2007 creating a Medicaid for Workers with Disabilities program (sometimes known as Medicaid Buy-In) for Idahoans with disabilities. This program helps transition people to work by permitting them to receive Medicaid while working.

Many people on Medicaid want to work and recognize that employment is the way to end dependence. The Medicaid for Workers with Disabilities program helps them gradually leave or lessen their reliance on Medicaid while increasing their work hours and income. When they are eligible and go to work, they pay a premium based on a sliding scale that enables them to retain their coverage.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

In order to be eligible, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- Be at least 16 years of age, but under 65 years of age.
- Have a disability as defined by Social Security.
- Be employed, including self-employment, and have provided the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare with satisfactory written proof of employment.
- Have countable resources of \$10,000 or less (\$15,000 for married couples.) Your home, two vehicles, life insurance and retirement plan do not count toward the resource limit.
- Have countable income that does not exceed defined limits. Based on your income level, you may have to pay premiums.

HOW TO APPLY

Fill out a Health Coverage Assistance application either online at idalink.idaho.gov or download an application at healthandwelfare.idaho.gov.

At the top of your application write, “**MEDICAID FOR WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES.**” You may be asked to provide income and resource information such as bank statements, recent pay stubs, IRA or 401(k) statements and proof of other income sources. Keep a copy of all of these documents for your records.



APPENDIX C: SERVICES FOR VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES

The Idaho Department of Labor has dedicated career planners known as Veterans Representatives to assist in your employment and training needs.

Idaho employers know the value of military training and service and they want to benefit from your experience as skilled enlisted personnel, noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers. Translating your military skills into skills for working in a civilian economy will help you find the job you want. At the Idaho Department of Labor, the goal is to be the nation's best when providing information and resources for job-seeking veterans and their families.

Visit the website at labor.idaho.gov/Veterans to find information on a wide variety of services, including:

- Veterans' benefits.
- Veterans' representatives.
- Career, education, job training and consulting services.
- Local labor market information.
- Local resources and other services.



APPENDIX D: RESOURCES

This section lists contact information for agencies providing resources on employment for individuals with disabilities.

Idaho Commission on Human Rights (ICHR)

The Idaho Commission on Human Rights works with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to process and investigate all state and federal claims of employment discrimination on the basis of disability in Idaho. The Commission provides information and education, mediation and investigation of formal charges of disability discrimination. The ICHR enforces state and federal laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination.

Submit an online inquiry at humanrights.idaho.gov/IHRCQ

Find more information about disability protections at humanrights.idaho.gov

Contact information:
317 W. Main St.
Boise, ID 83735-0660
208-334-2873
Toll Free: 888-249-7025
FAX: 208-334-2664

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

The EEOC offers technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions applying to employment. It also provides information on how to file ADA complaints.

EEOC employment questions:
800-669-4000 Voice
800-669-6820 TTY
info@eoc.gov

EEOC employment documents:
800-669-3362 Voice
800-800-3302 TTY
eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division

Information and technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act
usdoj.gov

ADA Information Line:
800-514-0301 Voice
800-514-0383 TTY
ada.gov

Northwest ADA Center-Idaho

The Northwest ADA Center-Idaho is the Idaho affiliate of the Northwest ADA Center, with a purpose of promoting voluntary compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Northwest ADA Center-Idaho provides six services:

- Informal technical assistance, non-legal guidance and referrals through our State Resource Network.
- Public awareness about the benefits of compliance through various activities.
- Material dissemination of accurate and up-to-date information on the ADA.
- Training through customized workshops, seminars and presentations.
- Onsite reviews.
- Updates on web-based educational trainings available through the National ADA Regional Centers.

Contact information:

1878 W. Overland Road

Boise Idaho 83705

dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com

208-841-9422 Voice or Text

Idaho Relay Service 711



JAN is a free consulting service designed to increase the employability of people with disabilities by:

- Providing individualized worksite accommodation solutions.
- Providing technical assistance regarding the ADA and other disability-related legislation.
- Educating callers about self-employment options.

JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource system (SOAR) is designed to let Internet users explore various accommodation options for people with disabilities in work and educational settings.

JAN is a service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Job Accommodation Network:

800-526-7234 Voice/TDD

877-781-9403 TTY

Website: askjan.org

SOAR: askjan.org/soar



DISABILITY RIGHTS
IDAHO
Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities

DisAbility Rights Idaho assists people with disabilities to protect, promote and advance their legal and human rights through quality legal, individual and system advocacy.

Contact information:
1-866-262-3462 (TDD/Voice)
disabilityrightsidaho.org

Boise Office
4477 Emerald St, Ste. B-100
Boise, ID 83706-2066
208-336-5353 (TDD/Voice)
info@disabilityrightsidaho.org

Pocatello Office
1246 Yellowstone Avenue, Ste. A-3
Pocatello, ID 83201-4374
208-232-0922 (TDD/Voice)
info@disabilityrightsidaho.org

Idaho Industrial Commission

The Industrial Commission is Idaho's administrator of workers' compensation and offers rehabilitation services for injured workers.

Contact information:
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0041
208-334-6000
800-950-2110 Toll-free
iic.idaho.gov

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

The department offers programs that deal with complex social, economic and individual issues. Many are designed to help families in crisis situations. The programs are integrated to provide basics of food, health care, job training and other assistance.

Contact information:
healthandwelfare.idaho.gov
idalink.idaho.gov

- **Bureau of Developmental Disabilities**
450 W. State St.
Boise, ID 83720-0036
208-334-5512
- **Bureau of Mental Health**
450 W. State St.
Boise, ID 83720-0036
208-334-0808
- **Division of Family and Community Services**
450 W. State St.
Boise, ID 83720-0036
208-334-5700

Disability Determination Services (DDS)

DDS performs the medical adjudication for the Social Security Administration (SSA) of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability claims for citizens of the state of Idaho.

Contact information:
208-327-7333
800-626-2681 Toll-free
208-327-2230 Fax
800-377-3529 TDD
labor.idaho.gov/dds

Idaho Assistive Technology Project (IATP)

A federally funded program, IATP increases the availability of assistive technology devices and services for older persons and Idahoans with disabilities. Services include:

- Training and technical assistance
- Assistive Technology Resource Centers
- Information and assistance
- Used equipment exchange program
- Low-interest loan program

Contact Information:

Idaho Assistive Technology Project
Center on Disabilities and Human
Development-University of Idaho
1187 Alturas Drive
Moscow, ID 83843
800-432-8324 Toll-free
208-885-6102 Fax
idahoat.org

Assistive Technology for All (AT4ALL)

A program of the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Idaho AT4ALL has a variety of used equipment available including wheelchairs and scooters, walkers, personal care items, items for vision and hearing impairments, hospital beds, computers, adapted vehicles and more. Using Idaho AT4ALL is free!

idaho.at4all.com

Idaho State Independent Living Council (SILC)

The mission of the SILC is to promote the independent living philosophy for all Idahoans with disabilities: choice, self-determination and access for all. Independent living means people with disabilities make their own decisions and life choices to the greatest extent possible and that individuals live in the least restrictive environment with the same rights and privileges as any other citizen.

Contact information:

Idaho State Independent Living Council
380 S. 4th St, Suite 102
P.O. Box 83720
Boise ID, 83720-9601

208-334-3800 V/TDD
800-487-4866 Toll-free
208-334-3803 Fax

Visit the website at silc.idaho.gov to find the local addresses of the following centers for independent living:

- **Disability Action Center Northwest**
Moscow, Coeur d'Alene, Lewiston
- **Living Independence Network Corporation**
Boise, Caldwell, Twin Falls
- **Living Independently for Everyone**
Pocatello, Blackfoot, Burley, Idaho Falls

Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

The council's mission is to promote the capacity of people with developmental disabilities and their families to determine access and direct the services and/or support they need to live the lives they choose, and to build the community's ability to support their choices.

Contact information:

700 W. State St., Suite 119
Boise, ID 83720-5868
208-334-2178 or 800-544-2433
icdd.idaho.gov

Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The council's website is a valuable resource for issues pertaining to deafness, hearing loss, advocacy, accessibility, education and technology.

Contact Information:

1720 Westgate Drive, Suite A2
Boise, ID 83704
208-334-0879 V
208-473-2122 VP/V
208-334-0952 Fax
cdhh.idaho.gov

Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind (IESDB)

The goal of IESDB is to assist school districts and state agencies in providing accessibility, quality and equity to students in the state with sensory impairments.

Contact information:

1450 Main St.
Gooding, ID 83330
208-934-4457
iesdb.org

Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

AUCD's mission is to advance policies and practices that improve the health, education, social and economic well-being of all people with developmental and other disabilities, their families and their communities by supporting our members in research, education, health and service activities that achieve our vision.

Contact information:

1010 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-588-8252
audcinfo@aucd.org
aucd.org

Brain Injury Alliance of Idaho

The Brain Injury Alliance of Idaho promotes awareness, understanding and prevention of brain injury through support, advocacy and education based on the expressed needs of persons affected by brain injury.

Contact information:

208-367-2747
info@biaid.org
biaid.org

Consortium for Idahoans with Disabilities (CID)

CID is a coalition of Idaho agencies and organizations concerned with issues affecting people with disabilities. Their mission is to protect, promote and advance the rights and interests of people with disabilities of all ages.
idahocid.com

IDAHO DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION OFFICES

Northern Idaho

Coeur d'Alene Regional Office

2025 W. Park Place, #101
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814-2699
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-769-1441
Fax: 208-769-1440

Lewiston Regional Office

1118 F St.
P.O. Box 1164
Lewiston, ID 83501-1986
Telephone: 208-799-5070
TDD: 208-799-5072
Fax: 208-799-5073

Moscow

505 N. Main St.
Moscow, ID 83843-3064
Telephone/TDD: 208-882-8550
Fax: 208-882-9514

Orofino

416 Johnson Ave.
Orofino, ID 83544-1178
Telephone/TDD 208-476-5574
Fax: 888-981-1550

Sandpoint

102 S. Euclid Ave., Suite 211.
Sandpoint, ID 83864-1794
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-263-2911
Fax: 208-263-8423

Southwestern Idaho

Boise Regional Office

10200 W. Emerald St., Suite 101
Boise, ID 83704-8780
Telephone: 208-327-7411
TDD: 208-327-7040
Fax: 208-327-7417

Meridian

600 E. Watertower St., Suite B
Meridian, ID 83642
Telephone: 208-888-0648
Fax: 208-888-1257

Payette

29 N. Main
Payette, ID 83661
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-642-4762
Fax: 208-642-9040

Treasure Valley Correction Regional Offices

District IV Probation & Parole
10221 W. Emerald St.
Boise, ID 83704
Telephone: 208-327-7008 x 292
Fax: 208-327-7023

District III Probation & Parole
3110 E. Cleveland Boulevard, Building D
Caldwell, ID 83605
Telephone: 208-454-7601 x 258
Fax: 208-454-7624

Treasure Valley West Regional Office

1018 W. Sanetta St.
Nampa, ID 83651
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-465-8414
Fax: 208-465-8416

Central and Eastern Idaho

Blackfoot

490 N. Maple, Suite B
Blackfoot, ID 83221
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-785-6649
Fax: 208-785-7158

Burley

1600 Parke Ave., Suite A-13
Burley, ID 83318-2412
Telephone Voice/TDD: (208) 678-3838
Fax: 208-678-4124

Idaho Falls Regional Office

1825 Hoopes Ave.
Idaho Falls, ID 83404-8018
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-525-7149
Fax: 208-525-7104

Pocatello Regional Office

1070 Hilina, Ste. 200
Pocatello, ID 83201-2947
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-236-6333
Fax: 208-236-6304

Rexburg

155 W. Main St. #3
Rexburg, ID 83440-1859
Telephone/TDD: 208-356-4190
Fax: 208-356-4207

Salmon

1301 Main St., Suite 3A
Salmon, ID 83467-4511
Telephone Voice/TDD: 208-756-2114
Fax: 208-756-2369

Twin Falls Regional Office

650 Addison Ave. West, Suite 102
Twin Falls, ID 83301-6131
Telephone: 208-736-2156
Fax: 208-736-2168

IDAHO COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED OFFICES**Northern Idaho****Coeur d'Alene**

229 E. Locust Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-769-7077
Fax: 208-666-6737

Lewiston

1118 F. St.
Lewiston, ID 83501-1986
Phone: 208-799-5009
Fax: 208-799-5125

Southwestern Idaho**Boise**

341 W. Washington St.
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83702 (83720-0012)
Phone: 208-334-3220
Fax: 208-334-2963

Central and Eastern Idaho**Idaho Falls**

1920 East 17th Street, Suite 115
Idaho Falls, ID 83404
208-525-7028
Fax: 208-525-7012

Pocatello

427 N. Main, Ste K
Pocatello, ID 83204
Phone: 208-236-6392
Fax: 208-236-6409

Twin Falls

1201 Falls Ave. E., Ste 21
Twin Falls, ID 83301-3465
Phone: 208-736-2140
Fax: 208-736-2142