



## Disability in the Workplace

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to supporting disabled staff and helping staff to progress regardless of their disability.
- 1.2 We will make sure that our policies, procedures and the working environment are as inclusive and accessible as possible but if employees have a disability we recommend that they talk to us about this and tell us of any special requirements that they may have.

### 2 What is a Disability?

- 2.1 A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Equality Act we will consider and make 'reasonable adjustments' to working arrangements and the environment. When deciding if a change is reasonable we will consider factors such as practicality, the effect on other staff, the effectiveness of the adjustment, cost, the potential disruption to activities and any health and safety implications.

### 3 Our Commitment to Disability Awareness

- 3.1 Our commitment to promoting disability awareness in the workplace includes:
  - Our accreditation as a Disability Confident Employer
  - Our pledge to the [Mindful Employer Scheme](#) committing to support people with mental health problems in the workplace.
  - Our pledge to the [Time to Change](#) Scheme helping to change the way we all think and act about mental health.
  - Our membership of [Inclusive Employers](#) who work with us on building our inclusive culture.
- 3.2 Our in-house staff development provision specifically incorporates promoting disability awareness to our employees and ensuring that managers understand their personal responsibilities in making sure unfair discrimination does not occur.

### 4 Recruitment of Staff with Disabilities

- 4.1 We encourage applications for employment with us from those with a disability in a number of ways:
  - We promote our commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion on our [website](#).
  - We offer a Job Interview Guarantee Scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria.

- We ask applicants to contact us if they have any difficulty in using our website to apply for vacancies.

4.2 We provide advice, training and support to members of selection panels to ensure that:

- Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements are inclusive.
- Reasonable adjustments are made where necessary to accommodate the needs of a disabled applicant.
- Unfair bias does not take place during the selection process.

4.3 We will do the following for disabled applicants who have been shortlisted:

- When arranging the selection process we will ask applicants if they have any special requirements and facilitate any reasonable adjustments that may be required. This may include ensuring the room is physically accessible or providing a hearing loop enabled room.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that elements of the job or the working environment do not prevent applicants from taking up a job with us.

4.4 We ask our Occupational Health provider to tell us whether we should consider making adjustments to help an applicant starting in the job.

## **5 Employment of Staff with Disabilities**

5.1 We will consider whether we can make reasonable adjustments to the premises or the job so employees are not at a substantial disadvantage. Examples of adjustments could include:

- Adjustments to job descriptions and person specifications
- Re-arranging seating or furniture
- Amendments to the role
- Flexibility in working practice e.g. working times, breaks, working from home
- Allowing extra time for certain work or travel time
- Additional/modified equipment
- Provision of a reader, interpreter or signer
- Adjustments to systems/processes e.g. colour coding a filing system
- Appropriate communication methods e.g. large print manuals

The Access to Work scheme, managed by Jobcentre Plus, may be able to provide financial support where extra costs are incurred in making reasonable adjustments.

5.2 All employees are entitled to time off with pay for medical appointments when these can't be made outside normal working hours.

5.3 Up to five days paid disability leave (pro rata for part-time staff) may be granted for a disability related reason where it is not possible to make arrangements outside of working hours. Examples of possible reasons could include:

- Assessment for conditions such as dyspraxia/dyslexia
- Training with a guide or hearing dog or in the use of specialist equipment
- Counselling/therapeutic treatment
- Physiotherapy

Employees should discuss and agree any request for time off with their line manager. We recognise that not all disability leave can be planned in advance, and that flexibility will be needed on the part of managers.

Time spent on disability leave will be counted as continuous service for all contractual benefits.

5.4 If an employee's disability means that they are unable to continue in their current job, we will meet with them to discuss the options available. This may include considering redeployment into a different role.

5.5 We are committed to treating all employees, including disabled employees, fairly and we will consider their particular circumstances when making decisions about their employment.

## **6 Support**

6.1 Our [Workplace Health](#) website provides further details of specialist organisations employees can contact for support and advice.

6.2 Our employee support helpline is available for employees to discuss any concerns relating to their work and personal circumstances. Further details are available at [HR Online \(Staff Area\)](#).

6.3 Employees can contact [Access to Work](#) who can carry out a workplace assessment to establish whether any workplace adaptations and/or equipment are required.

6.4 Employees can get information on disability issues on the [gov.uk](#) website.

## **7 Monitoring and Review**

7.1 We will collect and analyse equality data to identify trends and take appropriate action.

7.2 We will review this guidance on a regular basis and in any case no later than three years from the date of the last review

**Approved by the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group**

28 February 2017

**Approved by CMT**

9 March 2017