



## Accommodations for People with Mental Health Considerations

[www.mentalhealthworks.ca](http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca)

There is no comprehensive list of accommodations for people who are dealing with mental health issues. Accommodations tend to be based on the individual needs of Employees as well as on the resources available to the Employer. In some instances, a small Employer will be unable to provide the same type of accommodation as a larger Employer. In most cases, accommodations are inexpensive and involve workplace flexibility rather than capital expenditures.

It is important to note that the following are suggested examples only. Given the scope and diversity of psychiatric disorders, limitations may affect cognitive, emotional and social functioning. These limitations may be temporary or intermittent, and, in some cases, may require long-term accommodation. Consequently, each Employee's situation must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The most commonly used accommodations for people with mental health problems include the following.

### **Flexible scheduling**

- Flexibility in the start or end of working hours to accommodate effects of medication or for medical appointments.
- Part-time work (which may be used to return a worker to full-time employment).
- More frequent breaks.

### **Changes in supervision**

- Modifying the way instructions and feedback are given. For example, written instructions may help an Employee focus on tasks.
- Having weekly meetings between the supervisor and Employee may help to deal with problems before they become serious.

### **Modifying job duties**

- Exchanging minor tasks with other Employees.

### **Changes in training**

- Allowing the person to attend training courses that are individualized.
- Allowing extra time to learn tasks.

### **Using technology**

- Providing the Employee with a tape recorder to tape instructions from a supervisor, training programs and meetings, if they have difficulty with memory.
- Allowing an Employee to use headphones to protect them from loud noises.

### **Modifying work space or changing location**

- Allowing an Employee to relocate to a quieter area where they will be free from distractions.
- Allowing an Employee to work at home.

**More than anyone else, an Employee will know what accommodation they need to allow them to work productively. By talking directly with the Employee, you will be able to come up with solutions that meet the needs of the individual as well as the organization.**

## Part 4: Supporting Success Conversation

This page is intended as a guide for a discussion with the employee on workplace strategies. It helps support exploration of possible solutions and accommodations. It can be used by anyone the employee feels comfortable with, including a healthcare professional or another trusted advisor, manager, human resources professional, occupational health professional or union representative.

The following questions are offered to help guide the discussion and are based on the premise that the relevant Job Expectations have been completed and the employee is ready to return to or is staying at work.

The ultimate goal is to contribute to a plan that supports the employee to do his or her job while maintaining well-being.

1. What will allow you to be successful at your job and still have energy at the end of the day?

2. What can you do to successfully manage your return to work and maintain your well-being?

3. What can your workplace/supervisor do to support a successful and sustainable return to work for you?

4. Are there current tasks that you would like additional training/re-training on?

5. How can feedback be provided to you in a positive and constructive way?

6. How should future issues be managed in a way that is positive and healthy for you?

Based on the conversation, please include any other potential concerns or comments.