

Chapter 29

Managing Disability in the work place

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Version

The table below shows the history of the document and the changes that were made at each version.

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	13/08/2012	First issue
1.2	9 th August 2013	Review

1. Introduction

All employers owe a duty of care to everyone that is affected by the work that is carried out by the employer; however there is a higher standard of care to more vulnerable people. Vulnerable people include children, expecting mothers, and disabled people either physically or mentally.

The Disability Discrimination Act puts responsibilities upon employers to make reasonable adjustments, so that disabled people have the same opportunities as non-disabled people. A reasonable adjustment need not be carried out if it results in an increased risk to the disabled person or others, or if it significantly disadvantages the education of others.

2. Definitions

Disability is a physical, mental or medical impairment which has a substantial long or short term affect on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

A **reasonable adjustment** is a change you need to make in order to make the workplace usable to all persons of all abilities.

Accessible workplace is a work place that is user friendly to a wide range of people taking in to consideration the physical features of the building such as toilets, ramps, steps, and lighting to name a few.

3. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment must be conducted before the new employee starts; this must take in to consideration the employees disabilities, and limits. This may also mean changing parts of the job description and the role in order to accommodate the disabled person.

4. Workplace changes

Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment depends on the individual circumstance. Factors to consider include:

- How important is the adjustment.
- How practical the adjustment is.
- The finance and /or other resources of the institution

While looking at financial resources, consideration must be made for the institution as a whole, not as individual department or teams.

Accessible workplaces

Where it is understood that large scale change cannot be achieved until a refurbishment has taken place, there are things that can be considered with little financial implications. Things to consider in making your work place more accessible to a wider range of people include:

- Housekeeping in corridors / walkways
- Lighting
- Alarm display systems to cater for all people
- Display consistent correct signage
- Evacuation plans
- Highlighting hazards areas
- Highlighting slopes and stairs

5. Specific Issues

Hearing impediment

Management action	Physical Adjustments
Staff trained in sign language	Audio-visual fire alarms or vibrating pagers Induction loop systems (permanent or portable) videos with sign language interpretation and/or subtitles

Visual Impediment

Management action	Physical Adjustments
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documents in large clear print, Moon or Braille Staff trained and available to explain visual materials such as maps Provision of a Reader	Touch facilities Increase lighting Adaption software Highlighted traffic areas Slopes and step edges must be clearly marked
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Mobility

Management action	Physical Adjustments
Information should be given to all staff Training should be given to selected staff members	Widths of walkways and corridors Adjustments on the workstation Other equipment positioning Slopes instead of steps

Medical

Management action	Physical Adjustments
Staff training in the relevant medical condition Information to all staff on the condition Arrangements for the safe disposal of sharps and clinical waste	Storage of medication Medical room/ location where medication can be administered in private

6. Planning an evacuation

The following issues need to be considered when planning an evacuation procedure for disabled people:

- Identify the number of disabled staff and students and where they will be in the building
- Devise and Implement Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)
- Consult with relevant staff and students
- The evacuation plan should not rely upon the intervention of the Fire and Rescue Services to make it work.
- Consider the characteristics of the building
- Assess the evacuation equipment disabled people will need
- Train your staff to deal with emergency evacuations

- Determine what needs to happen when the alarm goes off
- Identify what needs to be done when it is not possible to evacuate disabled people

7. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

The purpose of a PEEP is firstly to secure the safety of the named individual in the event of a building evacuation. The PEEP will also record the safety plan e.g. routes, corridors, stairs or refuges etc, identify those persons who will assist carrying out the evacuation and training or practice needs.

Schools are advised to develop a PEEP when aware that staff, students or visitors may experience difficulties in responding to the building emergency evacuation alarm.

The development of the PEEP can be undertaken with the active participation of the following:

- Line Managers,
- Supervisors,
- The disabled person
- Learning Support staff / Teaching assistance.

The London Borough of Hackney's Health and Safety Team (Education) can also supply advice and support.

If identified within the PEEP that specialist equipment training (evacuation chair, emergency exit routes etc) is required to ensure the PEEP is undertaken safely, it will be the responsibility of the school to ensure that this training has been undertaken.

All staff and students who could be expected to aid the evacuation of a disabled person should receive a copy of the relevant PEEP.

8. Further help and advice

Further information and advice can be found by contacting the following:

Royal National Institute for the Blind

Contact number: 0303 123 9999

Web site: <http://www.rnib.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

Help available: Offer training, consultancy services and practical online support for professionals at work

Mencap

Contact number: 020 7454 0454

Web site: <http://www.mencap.org.uk/>

Help Available: Provides information of specialist services on a wide range of disabilities

Department for Work and Pensions

Contact number: 0800 321 3135

Web site:

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?=-en&topicId=1084024968&=-en&topicId=1084024968>

Help Available: Access to work, a government- run program which gives advice and can offer some financial help with some refurbishments, however this has to be applied for by the employee.

9. Appendix A – A standard PEEP

Name: _____

Location: _____

Alternative working positions (if appropriate): _____

Location: _____

Indicate the number of separate plans that have been provided for each building and room visited.

Building name

Room numbers

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Part 2: Awareness of procedure

I have received the evacuation procedure in the following format:

- Braille
- Electronic format
- Tape
- Large print
- It has been explained in BSL
- I have been shown the evacuation routes

Alarm system

I am informed of the emergency by:

- The existing alarm system
- Pager device
- Visual alarm system

- Members of my work team (*each of these people require a copy of this sheet*)
- The fire wardens on my floor (*the fire wardens require a copy of this sheet*)

Names: _____

Part 3: Getting out

I require ___ people to assist me.

Names: _____

Back-up: _____

Each of these people requires a copy of this sheet.

The following is a record of my escape plan:

Each of these people requires a copy of this sheet.

My specialist equipment to assist my escape is:

My practice diary is:

Year 1											Year 2	
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan

Date: _____

Comments

Example of evacuation procedure

This is a step-by-step account of what will happen during the escape.

EXAMPLE

*John and Gale will meet me at my desk. Reserve volunteers are **Maria and Mike** They will help me by taking hold of one arm each side. We will walk to the nearest escape route and wait in the space at the head of the stairs for other people to escape. When it is safe to do so, we will move slowly down the stairs. The fire warden will advise the Fire and Rescue Service which route we took.*

Specialist Equipment

Specialist training required

Name	Training required