



Working as an Employee Using a Wheelchair

Employers are not required to make existing facilities accessible until a particular applicant or employee with a disability needs accommodation, according to Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Modifications are then made to meet that individual's work needs, not to provide access to places in the facility not used by that individual for employment related activities or benefits (EEOC, 1992).

Accommodations to Consider:

- Activities of Daily Living (toileting/grooming/eating)
- Workstation Access (furniture height/electronic aids)
- Work Site Access (flexible schedule if using public transportation)
- Travel for Work (transportation/lodging/meeting site accessibility)
- Wheelchair Etiquette (interaction with other employees)



The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the U.S. Department of Labor. The *Accommodations and Compliance Series: Employees Who Use Wheelchairs* offers practical solutions to enable workplace success. Their free download offers excellent accommodation ideas and includes an excellent resource section.

Wheelchair Etiquette:

People with disabilities are individuals with families, jobs, hobbies, likes and dislikes. While the disability is an integral part of who they are, it alone does not define them. People in wheelchairs are individuals, not equipment.

- A wheelchair is part of personal space – do not push it or touch it.
- Be aware of the person's reach limits.

- Use signage to direct through the building's different accessible routes.
- Keep ramps and doors unblocked.

The *Disability Etiquette: Tips on Interacting with People with Disabilities* listed below is a great resource. It could be emailed to a colleague who is totally clueless after several hints.

Additional Resources:

- Job Accommodation Network (JAN):
http://askjan.org/cgi-win/search.cgi?zoom_query=employees+who+use+wheelchairs&x=0&y=0
- Employee and Applicant Accommodation Under ADA:
<http://humanresources.about.com/od/legalissues/qt/accommodation.htm>
- Disability Etiquette: Tips On Interacting With People With Disabilities
<http://www.unitedspinal.org/disability-etiquette/>
- Agency for Persons with Disabilities
The agency supports persons with developmental disabilities in living, learning and working in their communities.
District 7 services Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole
850-488-4257 (Tallahassee)
<http://www.apd.myflorida.com>
Orlando 407-245-0440
- Agency for Workforce Innovation
850-245-7265 (Tallahassee)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information Hotline
800-949-4232
Department of Justice 800-514-0301
ADA Publications 800-669-3362
- Employment and Training (Disabilities) AbleTrust 850-224-4493
Agency for Workforce Innovation
850-488-7228/850-245-7105
State Vocational Rehabilitation
800-451-4327
Central FL Contract Industries
407-660-8330
- Workforce and Employment Opportunities
407-531-1227, ext. 4033
Orange County 407-531-1227
Osceola County 407-705-1555
One Stop Central FL 407-531-1200