

Options for Informing Employers About Disability

When	Advantages	Disadvantages	Potential Issues
At the time of the job application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up front, peace of mind from the onset Employer decides if barrier is an issue before meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Might disqualify you with no opportunity to present your qualifications May never know why you were screened out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may have a more difficult time finding work, but may have fewer related problems when you become employed
When offered an interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepares employer after committing to an interview Can arrange accommodations for an interview, if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May predispose employer to anticipate problems making interview more difficult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewer may focus too much on potential issues Be prepared to answer barrier questions with accurate information
During an interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to respond positively and in-person to specific barrier issues Discrimination less likely in-person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puts responsibility on you to manage barrier issues Emphasis on barrier may indicate possible problems and minimize the evaluation of your abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tendency to focus too much on issues related to barrier during the interview Be prepared to answer barrier questions with accurate information
At time of job offer, but before you begin work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers you peace of mind If the disclosure changes the hiring decision and you are sure that you can do the job, the Human Rights Code will apply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer might resent not being informed before the hiring decision May lead to distrust Job offer may be rescinded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to honestly evaluate barrier and potential impact on success in the job Need to be able to explain abilities and accommodation needs, if any
After you begin work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to prove yourself Allows you to respond to questions from peers If disclosure affects employment status, you may be protected by law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be more nervous Employer may accuse you of falsifying your application Problems may begin May change interaction with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The longer you wait to disclose, the more difficult it becomes of whom to tell Need to be aware if any problems related to barrier
After a problem or change on the job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to prove yourself on the job before disclosure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer may accuse you of falsifying application Can perpetuate barrier myths and misunderstandings if problems arise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May affect relationships with co-workers May be difficult to regain trust Be aware if job problems are really related to barrier
Never	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will not be asked to explain your disability Employer will not assume performance issues are related to disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If problems have arisen due to barrier, you may be terminated May not be able to access accommodations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are sure your barrier is not an issue, disclosure is less critical If your barrier does not affect the job, you have a right to privacy

When	How	What Circumstances and Why
<p>At the time of the job application</p> <p>What should you say?</p>	<p>a. In the cover letter b. Over the telephone (prior to applying or after the application would have been received)</p> <p>In your cover letter you could include a line in the closing paragraph which briefly mentions your barrier, for information purposes only or to clarify a potential need for the interview. For example you could say, <i>'As a person with a _____ (barrier) I would appreciate it if you could provide me with any relevant written information in advance of an interview.'</i> Or, <i>'I wanted to mention that, although I am very interested in this opportunity and am confident that I could undertake this job, I do have a _____ barrier which may require some accommodation (or, which I wanted to tell you about prior to an interview). I would be happy to provide you with relevant information to assist you in understanding any relevant issues.'</i></p>	<p>a. Perhaps beneficial for a position that is targeting recruiting efforts for applicants with a disability b. Opportunity for the employer to prepare and determine potential ability to accommodate</p>
<p>When you are offered an interview</p> <p>What should you say?</p>	<p>a. When you arrange the interview b. In a follow-up call, after interview has been arranged, you may call the interviewer (not always who made the arrangements).</p> <p>At the time when you are arranging the interview you might say something which acknowledges the barrier, but do not make an issue of it. For example, <i>"I was wondering if the interview was being held in an accessible building or office?"</i> Or, <i>"I wanted to mention that I have a _____ barrier. I have information related to accommodation in the workplace and was wondering if you already knew this information or would you like me to supply it at the interview?"</i></p>	<p>a. Usually more beneficial for a visible barrier, as employer will not be 'caught off guard' when they were not expecting a potential issue b. If you do require accommodation during the interview</p>
<p>During an interview</p> <p>What should you say?</p>	<p>a. You may mention your issue near the beginning of the interview. Mention in the context of an answer.</p> <p>You do not need to say "I would like to mention my barrier." What you should do is incorporate relevant information into one of your answers. For example, if you are asked why did you select our company or this career you could say, <i>"I have always been interested in _____. While in school _____, (then work your information into the answer). While in my first year of study I found that my barrier was not really an issue. I was able to educate myself and gather information to educate potential employers on relevant issues and accommodations."</i> The key is to be prepared to answer potentially unspoken concerns by being up front and having prepared thoughtful, realistic answers.</p>	<p>a. If you have any potential issues (including a barrier) which the employer may notice and, therefore, may wonder about, you should consider addressing their potentially unspoken concerns.</p>

When	How	What Circumstances and Why
<p>When a job is offered</p> <p>What should you say?</p>	<p>a. Prior to accepting the job offer or during negotiation of the job offer</p> <p>b. After you accept the job offer</p> <p>c. Prior to references being provided*</p>	<p>a. If you have concerns about issues which may arise after you start and you want to discuss with employer</p> <p>b. If you need to arrange or discuss accommodation that may be needed on the job</p> <p>c. Employer may contact your references and information may be shared</p> <p>Once you are offered the job, you are in a better position to discuss any potential issues (including a barrier). Once the offer is made you say, "Thank you for the offer. I am very interested in this opportunity and am pleased to have received your offer. I did want to mention one thing as we finalize any arrangements. Although I do not anticipate any problems, I did want to mention that I have a _____ which from time to time may require _____. I wanted to let you know so we could make arrangements to address any potential concerns at this time." If possible, try to arrange to have this discussion in person. If you would like to accept the job first, then mention any potential issues, try to make arrangements to meet in person. You could indicate to the person that you would like to meet in person to discuss some questions you have about the job. You could arrange to do this at the meeting where you are signing the contract.</p> <p>* Ensure that you talk to your references and have a clear understanding of what they will be telling a prospective employer. If a reference is not certain what to say, remind them of what you can do and ask them to focus on your skills and positive experiences.</p>
<p>After you begin work</p> <p>What should you say?</p>	<p>a. Early in your employment, at the end of the first day or at the end of the first week</p> <p>b. End of the probation period</p>	<p>a. You may need to begin to put accommodations in place</p> <p>b. You may be asked by HR to complete forms, such as insurance forms, which may put you in a situation to disclose information</p> <p>At the end of the orientation training you may request a meeting with your supervisor (and possibly HR) to discuss issues you want the employer to know. Perhaps you need time off for medical appointments and so on. Simply make a request for a time to meet with the supervisor. When speaking with the supervisor, you should be prepared to answer questions related to the potential impact of your issue on the employer and the organization. You do not need to provide a lot of information and detail about your issue, simply mention the possibility of requiring some accommodation at some time in the future. The goal is to lay the ground work for future consideration.</p>
<p>After, or in anticipation of a problem on the job</p> <p>What should you say?</p>	<p>a. If require assistance to succeed in specific areas</p> <p>b. A change situation has lead to a potential issue</p>	<p>a. Request a meeting as soon as you become aware of your need for assistance or accommodation</p> <p>Approach your employer (and possibly HR or a Union) in a professional manner and ask to set up a time to discuss some issues which have arisen. Ensure that you have all of your information (what accommodation is required, which may include leave from work, a reduced work load or altering of duties). You should have options and potential solutions to present to the employer, do not just focus on the 'problem'.</p>

