

[BIAS INTERRUPTERS] *small steps big change*

Potential Accommodation Ideas for Employers

As employees are requested to return to in-person work, many will require accommodations. Some employees are not comfortable returning for myriad reasons, including high-risk conditions, pregnancy, mental health disabilities, and child or eldercare obligations. Other employees need accommodations for religious beliefs or to help manage health conditions, including continuing long COVID symptoms. Discrimination on the basis of pregnancy (and related conditions, like lactation), disability, or association with disabled people is illegal, but the accommodation rules can be complicated and may vary based on location.

For more information on the legal standards used when assessing these requests under law, contact WorkLife Law or see our [Frequently Asked Questions on Return to In-Person Work](#).

For a searchable database of accommodation ideas by employee limitations or work-related functions, see the [Job Accommodation Network's Searchable Online Accommodation Database](#).

Below is a general overview of accommodation ideas related to the return to in-person work that may apply across circumstances:

Employee Need	Potential Accommodation Ideas	Example
Reduced workplace COVID exposure		
	100% Remote work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Employee telecommutes for a predetermined period of time. For example policies, see TK
	Remote work hybrid schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Employee works from home regularly but returns to the office for important client meetings.Employee returns to office to complete essential in-person duties first thing every other morning, when the number of people in the office is lowest, then finishes the work-day from home.Employee works in-person to perform essential in-person duties each Friday.

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	Workplace capacity changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee is not required to attend meetings with more than X number of people in attendance, and remote participation options are provided.
	Staggered scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee works atypical hours to avoid office crowding. Some employees work in-person M-W, others work in-person Th-F.
	Travel changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee is not required to take business trips beyond driving-distance. Employer will only require business travel that is essential.
	Workspace barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee who must work in-person is provided barriers to limit the air flow from others to their workspace. (E.g. ability to use a private office instead of an open-plan setting, plexiglass barriers).
	Airflow improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee is provided with a properly sized, maintained, and operated HEPA filter, in addition to building airflow improvements.
	Personal protective equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee is provided with high quality respirator, face shield, etc.
	Mask requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To safeguard at-risk employees, all employees are required to wear masks when not in designated zones.
	COVID-19 Sick/quarantine leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any employee who has been exposed to COVID-19, or lives with a person under a quarantine/isolation order, is provided with job-protected paid time off. Implement employee screening protocol.

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Need to accommodate caretaking/parental duties		
	Stable scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees have advance notice of when they are expected to be working. • If working remotely, employees have advance notice of when they will be expected to work in-person.
	Flexible scheduling policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees can work at any time, as long as the job is getting done. • Employees can extend their workday to make time during the day for care arrangements, such as childcare drop off/pickup times.
	Remote work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above for examples of remote work and remote hybrid schedules. • Permission to work remotely as-needed for short term periods when faced with extenuating circumstances (e.g. school or care closures, COVID-19 quarantine orders for household members).
	Lactation accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New lactation space to reduce number of employees sharing air, space airflow improvements. • Lactation space scheduling to allow for air turnover and disinfecting between users. (Be careful to ensure a space is available as needed to meet legal obligations.) • Temporarily permit lactating employees to work in a private office to reduce the need for shared lactation spaces. • Temporarily permit lactating employees to work remotely to avoid concerns about exposure in lactation spaces, lost work time, and space constraints.