

## What employers should do

Employers must do all they reasonably can to support disabled employees, workers and job applicants and protect them from disability discrimination.

It's important to understand that:

- some disabilities are not obvious to others – often called non-visible, invisible or hidden disabilities
- everyone is different – even people with the same disability might be affected in very different ways
- not everyone who's considered by law as having a disability will consider themselves to be disabled

## Areas of work to consider

Employers must support disabled people in all areas of work, including:

- accessibility of the workplace or the tools and systems people need to use
- ways of working, for example flexible working or hybrid working
- recruitment
- redundancy and dismissals
- sickness and absence
- terms and conditions of employment, including pay and promotion
- training
- working hours or rest breaks
- work-related events – for example away days, conferences or team social events

## What the law says

The law (Equality Act 2010) sets out [when someone is considered to have a disability](#). At work, the law protects:

- employees and workers
- contractors and self-employed people hired to personally do the work
- job applicants

By law, employers must:

- make reasonable adjustments when they know, or could reasonably be expected to know, someone is disabled
- do all they reasonably can to support disabled staff and job applicants and protect them from discrimination
- take steps to prevent disability discrimination – this includes recognising the benefits of having an inclusive and diverse workforce that does not exclude disabled people

It's also the employer's responsibility to make sure other people do what's needed for a reasonable adjustment to work well. For example, if someone needs information presented in a certain format, the employer must make sure other people do that.

An employer could be liable under the law if they do not do these things. For example, an employee or job applicant could make a disability discrimination claim to an employment tribunal.

[Find out more about disability discrimination](#)

## Making reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability.

By law, an employer must make reasonable adjustments if they know, or could be reasonably expected to know, that someone is disabled.

It could be disability discrimination if an employer fails to make reasonable adjustments.

[Find out more about reasonable adjustments](#)

## Supporting people with a mental health condition

Some people with mental health conditions will be [considered as having a disability by law](#).

It might not always be obvious that someone has a mental health condition unless they tell their employer. But in some circumstances an employer might reasonably be expected to know.

[Find out more about supporting mental health at work](#)

### Example of when an employer might reasonably be expected to know about a mental health condition

Kiran's employer knows Kiran is sleeping badly, not eating and showing no interest in work they used to enjoy. It's gone on for over a year including several self-certified absences. It does not occur to the employer that Kiran might be experiencing poor mental health.

Kiran is diagnosed with clinical depression. It's considered a disability because it's having a substantial and long-term adverse effect on Kiran's ability to carry out day-to-day activities. It might have been reasonable for the employer to know this because of the change in Kiran's behaviour and the time off work.

## Disability and the covid pandemic

Disabled people and many people with health conditions were disproportionately affected by the covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Some disabled people will still be at high risk from covid.

By law, employers must consider this when they make decisions, for example around workplace safety or ways of working.

Long covid could be a disability, depending how someone is affected by it.

Find out more about:

- [covid and work](#)
- [long covid](#)

## Making the workplace accessible

Accessibility at work is about removing barriers to make sure disabled people can take an active part in working life.

Employers should make sure their workplace, and the way they work, is accessible to as many people as possible. This is on top of the legal requirement to make reasonable adjustments.

[Find out more about accessibility at work](#)

## Get more advice and support

[Find more support for managing disability at work](#)

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