

## Reasonable adjustments for mental health

### Understanding the law

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

Disability is defined as a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities. Some people might not recognise their mental health condition as a disability, but it's important that employers are aware that it could be.

The law (Equality Act 2010) says that employers must make reasonable adjustments for:

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

Employers must make reasonable adjustments when:

- they know, or could reasonably be expected to know, someone is disabled
- a disabled staff member or job applicant asks for adjustments
- someone who's disabled is having difficulty with any part of their job
- someone's absence record, sickness record or delay in returning to work is because of, or linked to, their disability

Employers should try to make reasonable adjustments even if the issue is not a disability. Often, simple changes to a person's working arrangements or responsibilities could be enough to help them stay in work and work well.

Find out more about:

- [disability and the law](#)
- [what reasonable adjustments are](#)

### Making reasonable adjustments for mental health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and behave.

If an employee has a mental health problem, it's important their employer takes it seriously and with the same care as a physical illness.

Mental health problems can:

- happen suddenly, because of a specific event in someone's life
- build up gradually over time
- be hard to spot because everyone has different signs and signals

- be hidden because many people find it difficult to talk about their mental health
- fluctuate over time which means that an employee's ability to cope with the demands of the job might change

When making reasonable adjustments for mental health it's helpful to remember that:

- every job is different, so what works in one situation might not work in another
- every employee is different, so what works for one employee might not work for another
- mental health fluctuates over time, so what works for an employee now might not work in the future

Employers and employees should work together to agree and review reasonable adjustments over time to make sure that the adjustments work well.

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

## **Benefits of reasonable adjustments for mental health**

Reasonable adjustments for mental health can help employees to stay in work while recovering from or managing a mental health condition. They can also help employees work safely and productively.

Reasonable adjustments for mental health can help employers to:

- retain employees, reducing recruitment and training costs
- reduce absence and associated costs
- make sure that people at work are well, safe and productive
- create a healthy work culture, building mental health awareness and demonstrating a commitment to good practice