

## Cost And Benefits Of Accommodations

The President's Committee's Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a toll-free service, has been advising businesses and individuals about job accommodations since 1984. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, JAN expanded to include information about the ADA. During the fiscal year that began October 1, 1994 and ended September 30, 1995, JAN received more than 80,000 calls from individuals and businesses in 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Following is information related to these calls for advice, as well as examples of accommodations that were implemented as a result of the advice.

Major Issues of Concern	Percentage of Cases
Understanding the ADA	34
Impact of Accommodation	13
Conflict between Employer/Employee	13
Cost of Accommodation	3
Concerns related to Federal and State Agencies	6
Other	31

Top Five States Using JAN	Number of Calls
California	10,079
Texas	4,776
Virginia	4,547
Pennsylvania	4,196
New York	3,921

### Accommodation Costs Reported by Percentage Businesses That Used JAN

No cost	19%
Between \$1 and \$50	50%
Between \$501 and \$1,000	12%
Between \$1,001 and \$2,000	7%
Between \$2,001 and \$5,000	9%
Greater than \$5,000	3%

### Company Savings Because Accommodations Were Made

Value unknown	4%
Between \$1 and \$5,000	34%
Between \$5,001 and \$10,000	16%
Between \$10,001 and \$20,000	19%
Between \$20,001 and \$100,000	25%
Greater than \$100,000	2%

Companies reported an average return of \$28.69 in benefits for every dollar

invested in making an accommodation.

#### Accommodations Implemented by JAN Callers

Situation: A production worker with mental retardation, who has limited fine motor dexterity, must use tweezers and a magnifying glass to perform the job. The worker had difficulty holding the tweezers.

Solution: Giant tweezers were purchased. Cost: \$5.

Situation: A teacher with bipolar disorder, who works in a home-based instruction program, experienced reduced concentration, short term memory, and task sequencing problems.

Solution: At one of their weekly meetings the employee and the supervisor jointly developed a check list. This check list showed both the week's work and the following week's activities. Forms were adapted so that they would be easy to complete, and structured steps were developed so that paper work could be completed at the end of each teaching session. An unintended bonus to the company was the value of the weekly check-off forms in training new staff. Cost: \$0.

Situation: A garage mechanic with epilepsy was unable to drive vehicles.  
Solution: The employer negotiated with the employee's union and reached an agreement that any qualified employee, regardless of job held, could drive the vehicles to the mechanic's work station. Cost: \$0.

Situation: An individual with a neck injury, who worked in a lab, had difficulty bending his neck to use the microscope.

Solution: A periscope was attached to the microscope. Cost: \$2,400.

Situation: A catalog salesperson, who had a spinal cord injury, had problems using the catalog due to difficulty with finger dexterity.

Solution: The employer purchased a motorized catalog rack, controlled by a single switch via the mouthstick, and provided an angled computer keyboard stand for better accessibility. Cost: \$1,500.

Situation: A field geologist who was deaf and worked alone in remote areas was unable to use two-way radio communication to report his findings.

Solution: Text telephone technology was used to allow the geologist to communicate using a cellular telephone. Cost: \$400 plus monthly service fee for the phone.

Situation: A saw operator with a learning disability had difficulty measuring

to the fraction of an inch.

Solution: The employee was provided with a wallet-sized card on which the fractions were listed on an enlarged picture of an inch. This allowed the employee to compare the card with the location on the ruler to identify the correct fraction. Cost: \$5.

Situation: An accountant with HIV was experiencing sensitivity to fluorescent light. As a result, she was not able to see her computer screen or written materials clearly.

Solution: The employer lowered the wattage in overhead lights, provided task lighting and a computer screen glare guard. Cost: \$80.

Situation: A custodian with low vision was having difficulty seeing the carpeted area he was vacuuming.

Solution: A fluorescent lighting system was mounted on his industrial vacuum cleaner. Cost: \$240

For additional information contact:  
President's Committee Job Accommodation Network  
(800) 526-7236 (Voice/TTD/TTY)  
jan@jan.icdi.wvu.edu (e-mail)