

**Discussing Disability 1**

**What is the Difference Between Person-First Language and Identify-First Language?**

**Person-first language** – references a person before their diagnosis (i.e., person with a disability instead of a disabled person).

**Identity-first language** – references the diagnosis, status, or condition before the person (i.e., disabled person instead of a person with a disability).

**WHICH Should You Use?**

**Ask the individual** with a disability if they have a preference! Some individuals do prefer one type over the other and some individuals have no preference for either.

\*See page 4 for communication accommodation suggestions.

**Person First or Identity First?**

**Communication**

Talking to Applicants/Students About Disability Accommodations

**Disability Program**

**What are our legal obligations when communicating with individuals with disabilities applying to or enrolled in the Job Corps program?**

Communication with people with disabilities (whether those people are students, staff, applicants for admission/employment, parents, guardians, or members of the public) **must be as effective as** communication with others.

The obligation to communicate effectively with people with disabilities **is separate** from the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures for qualified individuals with disabilities. Why? The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) nondiscrimination regulations distinguish between these two obligations for a very simple reason: ***Without clear, accurate, effective communication, any encounter between a person with a disability and a program from which that person is seeking services, such as Job Corps, will be literally meaningless.***

**Who is responsible for ensuring effective communication?**

Under the law, the burden is on Job Corps to provide the auxiliary aids and services (communication aids) that are needed for equally effective communication with a person with a disability. Job Corps is not necessarily required to provide the precise communication aid/services requested by a person with a disability when an EQUALLY EFFECTIVE, less costly alternative is available. The law places a clear obligation to provide some method of communication that is **effective** for that particular person with a disability. \*





**Discussing Disability 2**

**Discussing Disability**

If you suspect a disability or an applicant’s or student’s discomfort with discussing their disability, the following are possible script/talking points to help with the process.

***If you are a person with a disability, you may be entitled to receive disability accommodations.*** *For example, if your disability causes you to take longer to read information or to complete tasks, you may be eligible to receive extra time to complete assignments and tests.*

*If you are worried about talking about your disability with me, it is important to understand that Job Corps upholds strict policies on confidentiality, which means I will only share this information with those who need to know. The main reason for telling me about your disability is so I can make sure you can get the support you need to participate effectively/successfully while enrolled in the Job Corps program.*

*In order to receive disability accommodations from Job Corps, you will need to provide documentation of your disability.\*\* Then we can discuss how the disability affects your everyday life, particularly learning, as this will help us know what your needs are going to be while in Job Corps. I am here to assist you in obtaining the support you need to be successful on center.*

\*\*Unless the disability is obvious. If the disability is obvious (i.e., the individual is blind, deaf, has a mobility impairment, etc.), then no documentation is or can be required to determine disability status.

If an applicant or student has disclosed their disability through file documentation or the ETA 653 form, a Disability Coordinator (DC) must contact or meet with the applicant to learn more about the types of supports the individual may need on center and draft an accommodation plan as appropriate. If there is documentation in the applicant file that indicates a disability may exist, the applicant should still be contacted prior to entry. Some examples of questions you may wish to ask the applicant or student include:

1. Can you tell me about your disability or areas that are difficult for you?
2. How does it affect you?
3. What disability accommodations or extra supports have you received in the past?
4. Which ones were helpful and which ones were not helpful?
5. What are your strengths/things you are good at doing/things you like to do?
6. What are your weaknesses/things that are hard for you/things you don’t like to do?
7. After reviewing these disability accommodations with you, which ones do you think will be helpful for you in Job Corps?

Some applicants/students may not know much about the types of disability accommodations they previously received in school or elsewhere and may not specifically know what is needed to assist them while enrolled in the Job Corps program. The DC (and when necessary, other resources such as the CMHC, the Job Accommodation Network, etc.) can assist with accommodation ideas/suggestions.

**Applicant or Student Discloses Disability**



**Other Sample Scripts**

**Resources!**

*If you have questions about talking to applicants with disabilities or disability accommodation, please contact your Regional Disability Coordinator (RDIC) for assistance. The names and contact information of the RDICs are listed on the*[***Job Corps Disability Website***](https://supportservices.jobcorps.gov/disability/Pages/RDICs.aspx)*.*

**Discussing Disability 3**

If a DC suspects a disability or another staff person submits a “suspicion of disability referral” to a DC, they should meet with the student to discuss what types of difficulties they are having and whether disability accommodations may be needed. Some students may not understand what is meant by disability accommodation. In these cases, you may wish to ask some supporting questions such as:

* Did you receive special education services or have an IEP or 504 plan in school?
* Have you ever had extra support in school?
* Were you given extra time to complete assignments or tests in school?
* Did you get help in a resource room in high school?
* Did you receive any adjustments to the scheduled school day for appointments or because of side effects of medication?

If the student chooses to disclose their disability, then a DC should seek permission to obtain supporting documentation and once received, convene a Disability Accommodation Committee (DAC) to discuss disability accommodation needs and develop an accommodation plan. Once an accommodation plan has been developed, all meetings and discussions with the student must be added to the Accommodation Plan Notes tab in CIS.

**Suspicion of Disability**

*Your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (reading, GED, career technical instructor/person who referred student) has observed you struggling with your work in class (or other location) or not attending your classes. Can you tell me why you think you are struggling so we can figure out how to help you be successful here?*

*If you are a person with a disability, you may be entitled to receive disability accommodations. For example, if your disability causes you to take longer to read information or to complete tasks, you might be eligible to receive extra time to complete assignments and tests.*

* *Did you receive special education services or have an IEP or 504 plan in school?*
* *Have you ever had extra support in school?*
* *Were you given extra time to complete assignments or tests in school?*
* *Did you get help in a resource room in high school?*

*To determine whether you are eligible to receive extra support or disability accommodations, we will need documentation of your disability (unless it is obvious such as mobility impairment, blindness, etc.). We will need to request documentation from your (fill in with whatever applies -- school, therapist, doctor, etc.). This information will remain confidential and will only be shared with those individuals with a need to know.*

**Suspicion of Disability**

*I noticed you marked yes for receiving counseling or treatment for a mental health issue and yes for anxiety disorder but marked no for requesting disability accommodations. Job Corps offers special support services for individuals who may need disability accommodations. Do you have side effects from medication that might interfere with your daily work schedule? Are there certain things you need to help reduce your anxiety? Do you want to talk more about disability accommodations and the process for determining if you are eligible to receive accommodations and/or extra support?*

*I noticed you marked yes on the question about needing extra support in the Job Corps program. Can you please share with me ways you will need extra support (see previous section on “Applicant or Student Discloses Disability”)? To receive this extra support, we need documentation of your disability (unless it is obvious such as mobility impairment, blindness, etc.). We will need to request documentation from your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (fill in with whatever applies -- school, therapist, doctor, etc.). This information will remain confidential and will only be shared with those individuals with a need to know.*

**Communication Accommodation Examples**

* Simplify language/rephrase questions
* Give extra processing time to both absorb info & respond to questions
* Use slower rate of speech
* Ask the applicant to repeat back information to confirm understanding
* Provide handouts of questions and information
* Allow written communication/responses
* Interview face-to-face in lieu of phone
* Use pictures or other symbols to convey meaning
* Use interpreters, hearing-assisted devices, text to speech technology

During the first few minutes of the meeting with an applicant/student with a disability (via phone or in person), try to determine if they may need communication accommodations, including translation services.

Listen carefully to the applicant’s speech and language – how they express themselves and how well they seem to understand and respond to the questions.

Logo

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See the list of communication accommodation examples in the right-hand column.

**Discussing Disability 4**

**Disclosure of conditions on 653, Health Questionnaire**

**Other Sample Scripts (cont.)**

**Checked “yes” to needing Disability Accommodations on the 653**

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