Job Accommodation and the Interactive Process: The Supervisor's Role

The University is committed to retaining valued, experienced and trained employees, while complying with our obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Employment and Housing Act. This update provides an overview of the supervisor’s critical role in job accommodations and engaging in what’s referred to as the “interactive process” with employees. Also, information is contained in this update about who to contact within Human Resources about these matters, and process improvements currently underway within Human Resources to provide more proactive services to supervisors and employees.

Job Accommodation: When an employee has prolonged or permanent disabilities that impair the employee’s ability to perform his/her job, an effort must be made to provide accommodation to enable the employee to work in a modified capacity or change to a more suitable position.

Interactive Process: The department must engage an employee in the Interactive Process to evaluate whether job modifications can be made which enable the employee to continue to perform the essential functions of the job when:

- An employee is out for a prolonged disability leave (As a general rule, when an employee is off work on a leave of absence for more than 90 days, supervisors should contact Disability Management Services);
- An employee discloses that s/he has a disability impacting his/her job;
- An employee provides medical information describing prolonged or permanent impairments.

Roadmap: Attached is a chart that provides a basic overview or “roadmap” for supervisors about how to approach job accommodations and the interactive process.

Human Resources Contact: Please contact Dennis Dark at 916-734-8191 in Human Resources, Disability Management Services/Vocational Rehabilitation with questions or for assistance in addressing job accommodations, the interactive process or medical separations. The Disability Management Services website is at: http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/departments/Benefits

Process Improvements: Human Resources recently developed an internal work group that meets on a monthly basis to review pending disability management cases. Practices are being adopted to provide additional correspondence and informational updates to supervisors throughout the process; and to manage cases in a more proactive fashion to assist both affected employees and their departments.

In addition to correspondence, the attached Disability Management Action Summary Form has been developed to enable supervisors to refer questions and issues to Human Resources on these subjects. The attached form will also be used by Human Resources to answer questions and provide updates to departments. Please feel free to contact Dennis Dark with additional suggestions and comments.
A Supervisor’s Roadmap to Job Accommodation and the Interactive Process:

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<th>What to do</th>
<th>How to do it</th>
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| 1. Identify the need for an employee job accommodation. | a. Identify this need through:  
• Observation  
• Verbal or written notice from the employee  
• Medical note from the employee’s licensed treatment provider |
| 2. Begin the Interactive Process in a timely manner. | a. Identify job-related limitations with your employee, unless limitations are obvious.  
b. If not provided, ask the employee to obtain medical documentation of job-related limitations to support job accommodation. Documentation may include a completed:  
• Statement from a licensed treatment provider  
• Work Status Form  
• Family and Medical Leave Certification |
| 3. Involve UCDHS Disability Management Services | a. Contact Dennis Dark (916-734-8191), Disability Management Services to:  
• Receive guidance on the interactive process  
• Obtain other necessary forms  
• Request an interactive process meeting  
b. Fax the latest licensed treatment provider’s statement or other completed form to Disability Management Services, Attn: Dennis Dark, (916) 734-2484. |
| 4. Participate in the Interactive Process meetings. | a. Identify the employee’s essential and non-essential functions using the job description.  
• Consider whether your employee’s limitations are temporary or permanent, as indicated by a licensed treatment provider.  
b. Determine if the limitations interfere with the employee performing the job function in the traditional way.  
c. Identify the possible job accommodations:  
• Discuss which job accommodation request may be reasonable or may cause undue hardship on your department.  
d. Document indicating:  
• Clear explanation of your objective analysis of reasonable accommodation requests.  
• Why an unreasonable job accommodation would cause undue hardship on your department.  
e. If a reasonable job accommodation cannot be identified:  
• Consider alternate vacancies within your department or vice chancellor area.  
• Discuss Priority Reassignment available through Disability Management Services. |

Note: We respect an employee’s confidential medical information by asking for information about how the medical condition affects the employee’s abilities to perform job functions. Do not ask the employee for confidential medical information.