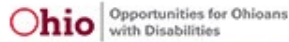


The Employers' Reasonable Accommodation Handbook

Session Three: Mental Health Disabilities



Mental Health Disabilities

Mental health disabilities include conditions that can impact thinking, behavior, emotion, or a combination of these.

- Mental health disabilities can impact daily activities, work, and relationships.
- Treatment is available including medications, therapy, and self-help.
- Examples of conditions that can result in mental health disabilities include anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, depression, eating disorders, and others.
- Each person's abilities, strengths, and skills are unique.



Myth



Fact

People with mental health disabilities are unpredictable and violent.	Most people with mental health conditions are highly active and productive members of their communities. Only 3-5% of violent acts are attributed to people living with a serious mental health condition.
People with mental health disabilities cannot tolerate the stress of working.	People with mental health disabilities are as productive as other employees. Employers report employees with mental health disabilities have good attendance, motivation, and job performance.
Mental health disabilities are caused by a character flaw. People with these disabilities can "snap out of it" if they try.	Mental health disabilities can result from a variety of factors, such as genetics, physical injury, and trauma. These conditions have nothing to do with being lazy or weak. Often treatment is needed to manage symptoms.
Treatments for substance use disorder are ineffective.	Treatment helps people with substance use disorder stop using drugs and/or alcohol and be productive at work.

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Reasonable Accommodation Examples by Type

Accessible Work Environment

- Relocate workstation
- Install dividers or partitions between workstations
- Change work lighting to natural or full spectrum

Modifying Policies

- Permit a beverage at the workstation
- Allow accrued leave to be used on an unscheduled basis
- Permit a job coach or extended training time

Altering Supervisory Methods

- Deliver important information in employee's preferred format
- Meet daily to provide guidance and feedback

Equipment or Services

- Permit noise-cancelling earbuds
- Provide a recording device, such as a Smartpen
- Allow the use of a job coach

Job Restructure

- Permit employee to choose when to do tasks that require increased focus
- Permit large jobs to be broken into smaller tasks
- Provide an app for creating checklists

Permit a Flexible Schedule

- Permit a later start time
- Permit employee to take breaks as needed
- Permit an employee to leave work early one day per week