

Common Work Accommodations Following a Brain Injury

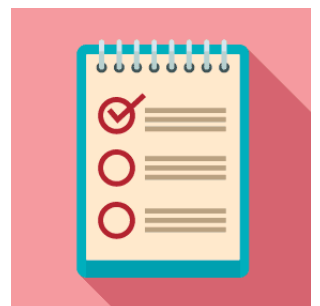
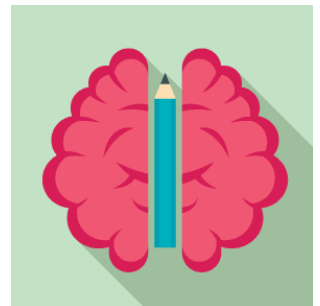
No two brain injuries are the same, but some accommodations may be similar depending on the individual and the severity of injuries.

Many survivors are able to return to work full-time with some basic accommodations. This is a list of common work accommodations recommended for survivors of brain injury.

Survivors of brain injury are eligible for a workplace 504. For assistance writing a formal 504 for return to work, contact NDBIN!

Difficulty Paying Attention

- Adjust light fixtures (reduce flashing lights, exchange LED for soft/warm white)
- Dim screen lights (computer screens, phone screens)
- Change of office space or location to reduce distraction; private workspace
- Desk organization tools, such as filing cabinets, labels, binders
- Remove distractions – use cubicles, shields, and shades
- Fidget devices
- Timers/reminders, alarms, calendars, and planners
- Job coach
- Noise canceling headphones or earplugs
- Restructure job schedule or hours
- Telework
- Clear verbal and written instructions and deadlines from supervisors and colleagues
- Uninterrupted time blocked off on schedule
- Take short breaks between tasks
- Turn off or remove phones and tablets from the room when focusing on tasks
- Create a clean and clear workspace free of clutter (a cluttered workspace = a cluttered mind)
- Set aside 5-10 minutes each day to organize your space
- Organizational software, tools, or apps
- Additional time to complete tasks
- Use strategies such as color coding systems and task flow charts



Difficulty Staying Organized; Reduced Executive Function

- Set up a structured daily routine. Write down this routine.
- Timers/reminders, alarms, calendars, and planners
- Attention strategies (see above)
- Create to-do lists and cross items off when they are complete
- Checklists
- Color coded systems (using colored tabs, folders, sticky notes, paper clips to organize)
- Extra time
- Flexible schedule
- Job coaches
- Job restructuring
- On-site mentoring
- Recorded directives, messages, materials, and meeting notes
- Written instructions
- Desk organizers
- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps



Fatigue

- Reduced hours
- More breaks/flexible scheduling
- Telework
- Job restructuring
- Ergonomic equipment
- Assistant
- Task rotation
- Task separation
- Workload reduction:
 - Gradually increase workload as tolerated (Return to work ___ hours per day, ___ days per week, for ___ weeks)
 - Work hours to be modified (more/less) as deemed necessary
 - Develop a procedure to routinely evaluate the effectiveness of accommodations
 - Time off for medical appointments

Memory

- Timers/reminders, alarms, calendars, and planners
- Labels/bulletin board
- Notepad/white board
- Additional training time/training refreshers
- Checklists

- Color coded system
- Extra time
- Support person
- Task flow chart
- Written instructions

Photosensitivity

- Adjust light fixtures (reduce flashing lights, exchange LED for soft/warm white)
- Change of office space or location
- Anti-glare filters for fluorescent lights

Noise Sensitivity

- Offer white noise in work area
- Noise canceling headphones or earplugs
- Monitor noise stimulation

Emotional Control/Stress Tolerance

- Counseling/work with HR
- Mental health counseling with counselor and/or cognitive-behavioral training with speech-language pathologist
- Job coach
- Disability training for the rest of the team
- Positive feedback from supervisor or colleagues
- Flexible scheduling
- Positive feedback
- No responsibility for supervision/management of others
- Monitor levels of fatigue and overload
- Monitor emotional tolerance/response to workload
- One-on-one communication
- Support animal, support person
- Telework
- Behavioral modification techniques
- **Apps for Mental Health/Control of Anger and Emotions**

Reduced Mobility

- Grab bars
- Canes
- Walkers
- Scooters
- Wheelchairs
- Modified workspace

Seizure Activity

- Designated responders
- Disability awareness/etiquette training
- Fall protection
- Flexible scheduling
- Job restructuring
- Modified lighting
- Padded edging
- Plan of action
- Rest area/private space
- Telework
- Support animal

NDBIN can help supervisors, managers, and others by providing technical assistance resources. We can come to you and provide trainings, tips, and more. We can assist in the development of 504s, goals, training staff, etc. **All of our services are FREE!**

References

How can I request job accommodations after brain injury?. Brain Injury Association of America. (2022, June 30). <https://www.biausa.org/brain-injury/about-brain-injury/nbiic/requesting-job-accommodations-after-brain-injury>

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