



DISABILITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH IN THE JOB SEARCH

• *Disabilities and Mental Illness*

While you are not required to disclose any information regarding a disability during the interview process, those who have visible disabilities may not feel they can choose. If you are someone with a non-visible disability or mental illness, you may have more flexibility in what you choose to share. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination based on disability, and this includes in the workplace and in the job hunt.

Mental illnesses are covered by the Equality Act if they have a substantial and long-term effect on a person's day-to-day abilities. While it is illegal for an employer to ask about your mental health before a job offer is made, they may ask you to make them aware if there is any support or accommodations you need during the interview process.

56%

of people face emotional and/or mental health issues while searching for a job

– 2021 Pew Research Center

In cases where you may need job accommodations, disclosing a disability or mental illness ensures that your employer can create a better work environment. Because employers are not required to provide accommodations when they are unaware, disclosing a disability in this case ensures that adequate support is available.

Once your employer knows you need accommodations, you can work together to figure out what changes or implementations need to be made. You should ask for exactly what you want and explain why you need certain accommodations, but be open to alternatives suggested. Also, be aware that it can take time for changes to be made, but don't

let your comfort and needs be downplayed or stalled. Be patient, but insistent.

There are also many job boards specifically aimed toward workers with disabilities or mental illnesses where you can find great job opportunities.

Mental Health

Taking care of your mental health during the job search is essential, especially with so many job applicants feeling the pressure of securing a role. The job search can lead to increased feelings of depression and anxiety, and it's important to surround yourself with strategies and tools for wellness.

Download Resources:

Check out the Career Center resource on [How to Manage Job Search Stress](#).



Partner with a Coach:

Career coaches are helpful resources when applying for jobs. They can assist with your resume, give you feedback for interviews, and simply act as a sounding board for your questions. The Career Center has [Career Advisors](#) who can support you on every step of your career journey and help with the stress and anxiety that come with the search.

Seek Mental Health Support:

[DePaul University Counseling & Psychological Services](#) (UCAPS), offers options for in-person or telehealth screenings and consultations with a therapist and 24/7 phone calls with a therapist via the Mental Health Support Line, (773) 325-2273.

If you have a disability or are currently living with a mental health need, know that you are not alone. While on the job search, take breaks and pace yourself throughout the process. Remember to tap into your network for resources and support. The job search can be overwhelming, but know that you can advocate for yourself and ask for what you need.

You are not alone!