

# DEVELOPING GOOD JOB DESCRIPTIONS

When the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was instituted, it placed strong restrictions on the type of questions an employer can ask when screening applicants for a particular job. Of these questions, those regarding a prospective employee's medical history have received the most attention. While you cannot ask about pre-existing illnesses, disabilities, past injuries or accidents, you can discuss the essential functions of the job and ask if the prospective employee can perform them with or without reasonable accommodations. One tool that you can use for this is a detailed job description. The following will assist you in developing job descriptions, as well as discussing reasonable accommodations that can allow a person with a pre-existing condition or disability to be a productive employee. Identifying Essential Functions The most effective way to determine job duties is to consult with supervisors and current employees in each position. Ask them to keep a record of daily and non-daily duties and responsibilities. Once all duties are identified, determine if it is considered essential to the job in question.

- Are employees in the position required to perform the function?
- Would removing the function fundamentally change the job?
- Does the position exist to perform the function?
- Are there a limited number of other employees available to perform this function or among whom the functions can be distributed?
- Is the function highly specialized?
- Is special expertise required for the position?
- Is a driver's license and therefore insurability under company's policy required?

Keep in mind that just because a particular job is currently performed in a particular manner DOES NOT mean it can't be performed differently. (This statement is essential to being in compliance with the ADA as the definition of a disability includes any individual who with or without reasonable accommodation can perform essential functions of a job.)

## Job Requirement When Determining Essential Functions

### Physical Strength

- Average weight of objects
- Size of items
- Heights lifted to/distance traveled
- Average time spent lifting
- Also not material handling equipment in use

### Endurance/Environment

- Time spent standing/sitting/kneeling
- Heights
- Temperature extremes
- Indoor/Outdoor

### Ability

- Specific degrees/Education requirements
- Machinery or equipment used
- Ability to learn technical material
- Ability to perform specific calculations/take readings

**Vision**

- Depth perception
- Clarity for far and/or near
- Peripheral vision

**Hearing**

- Ability to discriminate fine changes in pitch or sound
- Noise levels in work area

**Other**

- Any chemical encountered in the normal duties
- Driver's license and insurability under company's policy (including DOT Class, Commercial Driver's License, or other special need). Important note: Motor vehicle reports (MVRs) should be obtained for all employees that will drive company vehicles upon hire, and annually thereafter. Evaluation criteria should be established, outlining the minimal acceptable driving record for an employee who has permission to drive a company vehicle.
- Computer skills
- Any needs that you have for the applicant to have which do not fit into the above

This form is not intended to be substituted for legal advice nor does it constitute a guarantee of compliance with appropriate statutes or regulations.

# JOB DESCRIPTION OUTLINE

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Summary:

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Physical Strength Required:

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Endurance Required/Environment:

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Ability:

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Vision:

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Hearing:

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Other:

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Analyst: \_\_\_\_\_

Verified by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_