



**Job Accommodation Network**

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

## **Accommodation and Compliance Series**

# **Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees with Lyme Disease**

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**Funded by a contract with the Office of Disability  
Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor**

## Preface

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is funded by a contract with the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor. JAN makes documents available with the understanding that the information be used solely for educational purposes. The information is not intended to be legal or medical advice. If legal or medical advice is needed, appropriate legal or medical services should be contacted.

JAN does not endorse or recommend any products or services mentioned in this publication. Although every effort is made to update resources, JAN encourages contacting product manufacturers/vendors and service providers directly to ensure that they meet the intended purposes. This guarantees that the most up-to-date information is obtained.

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## **JAN'S Accommodation and Compliance Series**

### **Introduction**

JAN's Accommodation and Compliance Series is designed to help employers determine effective accommodations and comply with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Each publication in the series addresses a specific medical condition and provides information about the condition, ADA information, accommodation ideas, and resources for additional information.

The Accommodation and Compliance Series is a starting point in the accommodation process and may not address every situation. Accommodations should be made on a case by case basis, considering each employee's individual limitations and accommodation needs. Employers are encouraged to contact JAN to discuss specific situations in more detail.

For information on assistive technology and other accommodation ideas, visit JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) at <https://askjan.org/soar>.

### **Information about Lyme Disease**

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which are transmitted to humans by the bite of infected deer ticks. Lyme disease is associated with a "bull's-eye" rash and/or lesion called erythema migrans. Other nonspecific symptoms include fever, malaise, fatigue, headache, and muscle and joint aches. Later symptoms of Lyme disease can include chronic pain, arthritis, meningitis, tingling and burning sensations in the extremities, Bell's palsy, chronic fatigue, depression, and heart, vision, respiratory, and gastrointestinal-related problems.

### **Lyme Disease and the Americans with Disabilities Act**

The ADA does not contain a list of medical conditions that constitute disabilities. Instead, the ADA has a general definition of disability that each person must meet. A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having an impairment. For more information about how to determine whether a person has a disability under the ADA, see [How to Determine Whether a Person Has a Disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act \(ADAAA\)](#).

## **Accommodating Employees with Lyme Disease**

People with Lyme disease may develop some of the limitations discussed below, but seldom develop all of them. Also, the degree of limitation will vary among individuals. Be aware that not all people with Lyme disease will need accommodations to perform their jobs and many others may only need a few accommodations. The following is only a sample of the possibilities available. Numerous other accommodation solutions may exist.

### **Questions to Consider:**

1. What limitations is the employee experiencing?
2. How do these limitations affect the employee and the employee's job performance?
3. What specific job tasks are problematic as a result of these limitations?
4. What accommodations are available to reduce or eliminate these problems? Are all possible resources being used to determine possible accommodations?
5. Has the employee been consulted regarding possible accommodations?
6. Once accommodations are in place, would it be useful to meet with the employee to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodations and to determine whether additional accommodations are needed?
7. Do supervisory personnel and employees need training?

### **Accommodation Ideas:**

#### **Limitations**

##### **Decreased Stamina/Fatigue**

- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Elevating Wheelchairs
- Ergonomic Assessments
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Flexible Schedule
- Job Restructuring
- Periodic Rest Breaks
- Scooters

- Stand-lean Stools
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Walkers
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

#### Overall Body Weakness/Strength

- Move Items/People
  - Animal Lift Tables
  - Battery Powered Lift Tables
  - Compact Material Handling
  - Lift Tables
  - Linen Carts
  - Multi-Purpose Carts
  - Patient Lifts (General)
- Other
  - Aide/Assistant/Attendant
  - Fall Protection
  - Modified Break Schedule
  - Periodic Rest Breaks
  - Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Workspace Access
  - Adjustable and Ergonomic School Desks and Equipment
  - Anti-fatigue Matting
  - Elevating Wheelchairs
  - Ergonomic and Adjustable Office Chairs
  - Foldable / Transport Wheelchairs
  - Forearm Supports
  - Grab Bars
  - Independent Living Aids
  - Large-Rated Scooters

- Large-Rated Wheelchairs
- Office Chairs with Brakes and Locking Casters
- Personal Safety and Fall Alert Devices
- Personal Transportation and Mobility Products
- Power Assist for Manual Wheelchairs
- Scooters
- Stair Lifts
- Stand-lean Stools
- Stand-up Wheelchairs
- Toileting Aids
- Walkers
- Walkers with Seats
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Wheelchairs
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace

## Pain

- Adjustable Workstations for Industrial Settings
- Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings
- Aide/Assistant/Attendant
- Alternative Input Devices
- Alternative Keyboards
- Alternative Mice
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Anti-vibration Gloves
- Anti-vibration Seats
- Anti-vibration Tool Wraps
- Automatic Door Openers
- Carts
- Chairs with Head Support
- Compact Material Handling
- Ergonomic and Adjustable Office Chairs

- Ergonomic Assessments
- Ergonomic Equipment
- Fans
- Flexible Schedule
- Forearm Supports
- Gooseneck and Other Telephone Holders
- Headsets
- Modified Break Schedule
- Scooters
- Scribe/Notetaker
- Service Animal
- Speech Recognition Software
- Stand-lean Stools
- Supine Workstations
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Wearable Anti-fatigue Matting
- Worksite Redesign / Modified Workspace
- Workstation Space Heaters
- Writing Aids

#### Skin Rash/Blisters/Sores

- Alternative Cleaning Supplies
- Disability Awareness/Etiquette Training
- Job Restructuring
- Policy Modification

#### Stress Intolerance

- Apps for Anxiety and Stress
- Behavior Modification Techniques
- Counseling/Therapy
- Environmental Sound Machines / Tinnitus Maskers / White Noise Machines
- Flexible Schedule

- Job Restructuring
- Marginal Functions
- Modified Break Schedule
- Supervisory Methods
- Support Animal
- Support Person

## **Work-Related Functions**

### **Commute**

- Flexible Schedule
- Ridesharing/Carpooling
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Transportation Assistance

### **Parking**

- Accessible Parking Space
- Flexible Schedule
- Telework, Work from Home, Working Remotely
- Wheelchairs



## **Situations and Solutions:**

**A maintenance worker for an apartment complex has been diagnosed with Lyme disease and is experiencing chronic fatigue.**

Walking between the apartment buildings greatly drains her energy levels and finds it hard to get through the day. She brings these concerns up to management and they restructure the way work is assigned for the maintenance worker so that she is assigned a certain block of apartments to maintain, rather than the usual method of first come first serve within the entire complex.

**An employee with Lyme disease mentions that she experiencing depression symptoms and that they are preventing her from performing at her usual level.**

She is still meeting her deadlines, but she has noticed a marked drop in the quality of her work. She discusses the fact that she has an emotional support animal at home that has been trained in how to be non-disruptive when taken out of the home and that she is trained in how to handle the animal. The employer agrees to allow her to bring her emotional support animal into the workplace as an accommodation so long as she maintains control of the animal and that it does not disrupt others who are working.

**An applicant discloses that he has Lyme disease and that he needs to be able to manage his stress levels to be able to best manage his disease.**

He states that he find situations where he is meeting one on one with a supervisor to be very stressful for him. The employer agrees to allow him to mostly communicate with his supervisor via phone or e-mail, and if an in-person meeting is required, that he will be permitted to have a support person attend the meeting with him.

**An employee with Lyme disease mentions that the chronic pain that she experiences makes it difficult for her to type as much as her job requires her to type.**

The employer provides her with speech recognition software to allow her to dictate what she would type to the computer which greatly reduced the amount of typing she needed to do each day.

**An applicant discloses the fact that he has Lyme disease and because of this experiences migraines.**

His migraines are often triggered due to extended exposure to fluorescent lighting. The employer agrees to provide incandescent lighting sources for his workstation and install full spectrum light filters to cover fluorescent lighting fixtures throughout the office to accommodate him.

## **Products**

There are numerous products that can be used to accommodate people with limitations. JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource at <https://askjan.org/soar> is

designed to let users explore various accommodation options. Many product vendor lists are accessible through this system; however, JAN provides these lists and many more that are not available on the Web site upon request. Contact JAN directly if you have specific accommodation situations, are looking for products, need vendor information, or are seeking a referral.

## Resources

### **Job Accommodation Network**

West Virginia University  
PO Box 6080  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6080  
Toll Free: (800) 526-7234  
TTY: (304) 293-7186  
Fax: (304) 293-5407  
[jan@askjan.org](mailto:jan@askjan.org)  
<http://AskJAN.org>

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a free consulting service that provides information about job accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the employability of people with disabilities.

### **Office of Disability Employment Policy**

200 Constitution Avenue,  
NW, Room S-1303  
Washington, DC 20210  
Toll Free: (866) 633-7365  
[odep@dol.gov](mailto:odep@dol.gov)  
<http://dol.gov/odep>

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Labor. ODEP provides national leadership to increase employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities while striving to eliminate barriers to employment.

### **American Chronic Pain Association**

P.O. Box 850  
Rocklin, CA 95677-0850  
Toll Free: (800) 533-3231  
Fax: (916) 632-3208  
[ACPA@theacpa.org](mailto:ACPA@theacpa.org)  
<http://www.theacpa.org>

The purpose of the American Chronic Pain Association is to facilitate peer support and education for individuals with chronic pain and their families so that these individuals may live more fully in spite of their pain.

**American Lyme Disease Foundation, Inc.**

P.O. Box 466

Lyme, CT 06371

[questions@aldf.com](mailto:questions@aldf.com)

<http://www.aldf.com/>

The Foundation works to help people make wise healthcare decisions by providing key information on Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections to the public and medical community. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of prevention and early intervention in avoiding complicated, expensive and potentially debilitating long-term illness.

**Arthritis Foundation**

1330 W. Peachtree Street

Suite 100

Atlanta, GA 30309

Direct: (404) 872-7100

<http://www.arthritis.org>

The Arthritis Foundation is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of arthritis, a disease which must be taken as seriously as other chronic diseases because of its devastating consequences. The Arthritis Foundation is leading the way to conquer the nation's leading cause of disability through increased education, outreach, research, advocacy and other vital programs and services.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

1600 Clifton Rd

Atlanta, GA 30333

Toll Free: (800) 232-4636

<http://www.cdc.gov>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are dedicated to protecting the health and safety of people - at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships.

**Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation**

636 Morris Turnpike

Suite 3A

Short Hills, NJ 07078

Toll Free: (800) 225-0292

Direct: (973) 379-2690

[TeamReeve@ChristopherReeve.org](mailto:TeamReeve@ChristopherReeve.org)

[http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ddJFKRNoFiG/b.4048063/k.67BA/The\\_Christopher\\_amp\\_Dana\\_Reeve\\_Foundation\\_Paralysis\\_amp\\_Spinal\\_Cord\\_Injury.htm](http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ddJFKRNoFiG/b.4048063/k.67BA/The_Christopher_amp_Dana_Reeve_Foundation_Paralysis_amp_Spinal_Cord_Injury.htm)

The Reeve Foundation is dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by funding innovative research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis through grants, information and advocacy.

**Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center (GARD)**

P.O. Box 8126

Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8126

Toll Free: (888) 205-2311

Fax: (301) 251-4911

<https://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/>

The Genetic and Rare Diseases (GARD) Information Center is a program of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) and funded by two parts of the National Institutes of Health (NIH): NCATS and the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI). GARD provides the public with access to current, reliable, and easy to understand information about rare or genetic diseases in English or Spanish.

**Hyperacusis Network**

4417 Anapaula Lane

Green Bay, WI 54311

Direct: (920) 866-3377

[earhelp@yahoo.com](mailto:earhelp@yahoo.com)

<http://www.hyperacusis.net/>

Support group established to care for individuals with collapsed tolerance to sound (hyperacusis). Educate the medical community and families about this rare auditory disorder by sharing ways to cope, providing advice on how to secure disability assistance, and reporting on current research and treatment options.

**International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society**

PO Box 341461

Bethesda, MD 20827

Direct: (301) 263-1080

Fax: (301) 560-5799

[contact@ilads.org](mailto:contact@ilads.org)

<http://www.ilads.org/>

ILADS is a nonprofit, international, multi-disciplinary medical society, dedicated to the diagnosis and appropriate treatment of Lyme and its associated diseases. ILADS promotes understanding of Lyme through research and education and strongly supports physicians and other health care professionals dedicated to advancing the standard of care for Lyme and its associated diseases.

**Invisible Disabilities Association**

P.O. Box 4067

Parker, CO 80134

<http://invisibledisabilities.org/>

The Invisible Disabilities Association (IDA) encourages, educates and connects people and organizations touched by illness, pain and disability around the globe. Formerly known as The Invisible Disabilities Advocate, IDA was founded in 1996 and incorporated in 2004 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit

**Lyme Disease Association, Inc.**

PO Box 1438

Jackson, NJ 08527

Toll Free: (888) 366-6611

Direct: (732) 938-7215

[LDA@LymeDiseaseAssociation.org](mailto:LDA@LymeDiseaseAssociation.org)

<http://lymediseaseassociation.org/>

The Lyme Disease Association, Inc. (LDA) has been granted 501(c)(3) non-profit status by the IRS. Its mission is promoting awareness of and controlling the spread of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases (TBD) and their complications through education and other means; raising and distributing funds for Lyme and tick-borne diseases (TBD) research, education and other related Lyme and TBD issues; assisting underprivileged patients in connection with Lyme and other TBD.

**Lyme Research Alliance**

2001 West Main Street

Suite 280

Stamford, CT 06902

Direct: (203) 969-1333

[info@lymeresearchalliance.org](mailto:info@lymeresearchalliance.org)

<http://www.lymeresearchalliance.org/>

Lyme Research Alliance funds cutting-edge research into Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

**Mayo Clinic**

13400 E. Shea Blvd.

Scottsdale, AZ 85259

Direct: (480) 301-8000

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/>

The Mayo Clinic's mission to inspire hope and contribute to health and well-being by providing the best care to every patient through integrated clinical practice, education and research.

**MedlinePlus**

8600 Rockville Pike

Bethesda, MD 20894

[custserv@nlm.nih.gov](mailto:custserv@nlm.nih.gov)

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>

MedlinePlus is the National Institutes of Health's Web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, the world's largest medical library, it brings you information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues in language you can understand. MedlinePlus offers reliable, up-to-date health information, anytime, anywhere, for free.

Created by the U.S. National Library of Medicine

**National Center for Biotechnology Information**

8600 Rockville Pike

Bethesda, MD 20894

[pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](mailto:pubmedcentral@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

MISSION: IMS brings together an international community of health care professionals, researchers, educators, and others to improve care and transform delivery of treatment to those suffering from soft tissue pain through the promotion and exchange of globally recognized research, education, and innovation in patient care.

**National Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Association**

31 Federal Avenue

Logan, UT 84321

Toll Free: (801) 200-3627

[info@fmcpcaware.org](mailto:info@fmcpcaware.org)

<http://www.fmcpcaware.org/>

The National Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Association (NFMCPA) is a 501(c)3 not for profit organization. We support people with chronic pain illnesses and their families and friends by contributing to caring, professional, and community relationships. Through continuing education, networking with support groups and advocates, and affiliation with professional organizations, the members of the NFMCPA have a place to be informed, get involved, and recognize achievements.



**National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases**

5601 Fishers Lane

MSC 9806

Bethesda, MD 20892-9806

Toll Free: (866) 284-4107

Direct: (301) 496-5717

Fax: (301) 402-3573

[ocpostoffice@niaid.nih.gov](mailto:ocpostoffice@niaid.nih.gov)

<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

NIAID conducts and supports basic and applied research to better understand, treat, and ultimately prevent infectious, immunologic, and allergic diseases.

**National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke**

P.O. Box 5801

Bethesda, MD 20824

Toll Free: (800) 352-9424

Direct: (301) 496-5751

<http://www.ninds.nih.gov>

The NINDS, an agency of the U.S. Federal Government and a component of the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Public Health Service, is a lead agency for the congressionally designated Decade of the Brain, and the leading supporter of biomedical research on disorders of the brain and nervous system.

**National Organization for Rare Disorders**

55 Kenosia Avenue

Danbury, CT 06813-1968

Toll Free: (800) 999-6673

Direct: (203) 744-0100

Fax: (203) 263-9938

<http://www.rarediseases.org>

NORD is a unique federation of voluntary health organizations dedicated to helping people with rare "orphan" diseases and assisting the organizations that serve them. NORD is committed to the identification, treatment, and cure of rare disorders through programs of education, advocacy, research, and service.

### **Remedy's Health Communités**

<http://www.healthcommunities.com>

Remedy Health Media is America's fastest growing health information and technology company. We are a leading provider of clinical resources and wellness tools that help millions of patients and caregivers live healthier, more fulfilled lives.

Our mission is to empower patients and caregivers with the information and applications needed to efficiently navigate the healthcare landscape and as a result, to permit better health outcomes through use of our products and services.

### **The Environmental Illness Resource**

162 Bramham Drive  
Oakdale Court  
Harrogate, North Yorkshire, England HG3 2-2UB  
Toll Free: (441) 423-528055

[support@ei-resource.org](mailto:support@ei-resource.org)  
<http://www.ei-resource.org/>

The Environmental Illness Resource seeks to provide those with environmental illnesses with information of the highest quality in the hope that this will lead to improved quality of life and perhaps even recovery of good health. In addition, to provide a free and open online community in which members may exchange information between themselves and support each other in their healing journeys.

**The Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy**

485 Half Day Road

Suite 350

Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

Toll Free: (877) 883-9942

Fax: (847) 883-9960

[info@tffpn.org](mailto:info@tffpn.org)

<https://www.foundationforpn.org/>

The Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy is a Public Charity committed to fostering collaboration among today's most gifted and dedicated neuroscientists and physicians. These specialists from around the country will help us maintain a comprehensive view of the field and determine the research areas that hold the most promise in neuropathy research and treatment to develop new and effective therapies that can reverse, reduce and one day eliminate Peripheral Neuropathy. It is our ultimate goal to utilize every means and opportunity to dramatically improve the lives of those living with this painful and debilitating disorder.

**World Health Organization**

525 Twenty-third Street

N.W.

Washington, DC 20037

Direct: (202) 974-3000

Fax: (202) 974-3663

<http://www.who.int/en/>

We are the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations' system.

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