

Disclosure: How much should an employer know?

Disclosure applies to students with information that may impact their co-op work requirements or work environment. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **Disability- visible or invisible** (examples: vision impairment, autism spectrum, dyslexia, ADHD)
- ✓ **Medical condition** (examples: diabetes, arthritis, cancer)
- ✓ **Mental health challenges**
- ✓ **Gender identity/presentation**

BENEFITS OF DISCLOSING:

- ✓ Self-advocacy skills benefit students in school, work and life!
- ✓ You begin your co-op job with peace of mind, knowing you have addressed any potential issues that may arise.
- ✓ **Diversity and inclusion are important to all work environments.** Many employers value and seek out individuals in varied groups when hiring.
- ✓ You are probably not the first person who has shared this information with this employer.

Considerations for disclosure:

- ✓ If you receive accommodations at Drexel, would you need a similar accommodation on the job?
- ✓ Is your information relevant to the job you will do?
- ✓ Could your information in any way impact the job requirements or the work culture?

When to disclose:

- ✓ **In most cases, it is strongly recommended that students wait until they have a job offer to disclose.**
- ✓ The disclosure should be with your supervisor and within the first few days on the job.
- ✓ If you need an accommodation for the interview (examples: sign language interpreter, access to an elevator for your wheelchair), you will essentially reveal your “visible” disability at that time.
- ✓ How you dress for interview may reveal your gender identity at that time.
- ✓ A disclosure can be “soft”. (examples: Your resume indicates that you tutor children who have ADHD. Your pronouns. The student groups you belong to.) This is a way to share information indirectly.

- ✓ If appropriate, you can elaborate on the “soft” disclosure resume information to a greater degree in the interview. All information is discussed in the context skills and how these skills transfer to the co-op job.

Once you disclose...

- ✓ It is suggested that a meeting with the student, supervisor and company’s Human Resources representative be held to ensure all accommodations/available resources are identified.
- ✓ Student will provide any necessary documentation.
- ✓ The student must initiate these steps as soon as the co-op job begins.
- ✓ The **Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** is a source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on job accommodations and disability employment issues. <https://askjan.org/about-us/>
- ✓ **Drexel’s ODR will not be involved in this process**, but you can contact them for assistance. <https://drexel.edu/disability-resources/about/overview/>

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION:

- ✓ **Students must be pro-active when seeking work accommodations.**
If you do not meet job requirements, you can be fired. This is not the ideal time to discuss accommodations! Employers can fire you, even if it is due to your disability, since they did not seek accommodations ahead of time.

Tips for your company research: Finding an inclusive work environment

- 1) **Employer Resource Groups (ERGs).** Employers sometimes offer groups for their employees to seek support and information. (examples: **LGBTQ+, veterans or people with disabilities**). See if your potential employers provide these. ERGs will be listed under the Human Resources tab and are one way to gauge the company commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- 2) The **Disability Equality Index** annually publishes the best places to work: https://www.disabilityequalityindex.org/top_companies
- 3) The Human Right Campaign has **The Corporate Equality Index**: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/corporate-equality-index>

This is a national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices related to LGBTQ+ employees.