



Disability disclosure chart

What happens if I disclose . . . ?

Time of disclosure	Advantages	Disadvantages	Issues
ON A JOB APPLICATION:	Appears honest. Have peace of mind. Lets employer decide if disability is an issue.	Risk of discrimination. May decrease chance to present skills/explain effects of disability. No comeback.	May have a harder time finding work but usually have a more supportive workplace when you do.
DURING AN INTERVIEW:	Appears honest. Have peace of mind. Chance to explain effects of disability positively in person. Discrimination less likely face-to-face.	May not get job offer. May change focus from your abilities to your disability. You may not handle disability issues in a clear/non-threatening way.	How comfortable are you with discussing your disability? Are you emphasising your disability too much?
AFTER THE INTERVIEW: (When job is offered but before you begin work)	Appears honest. Have peace of mind. If employer changes mind after disclosure and you are sure your disability will not interfere with your ability to perform the job, or job safety, there may be legal comeback.	Employer might feel you should have told him/her before decision was made. Might lead to distrust of you.	Need to look honestly at how disability affects ability to perform tasks of the job. Need to be able to explain how disability will not interfere. This includes job safety.
AFTER YOU START WORK:	Opportunity to prove yourself before disclosure. Allows you to answer workmate's questions. If disclosure affects employment status and your condition will not interfere with your ability to perform the job, or job safety, you may be protected by law against dismissal.	Employer may feel you have falsified application. You may feel nervous and afraid of relapse on the job. Co-workers may not know how to react if you become unwell. You may be treated differently from other staff, eg. given simpler tasks.	The longer you leave the disclosure the harder it becomes. It may be difficult to know who to tell.
NEVER:	Employer cannot react to your disability unless you have a relapse which affects your work performance.	If your disability is discovered and it potentially affects work performance/safety, you run the risk of being fired. May not get the support you need when it is required. Increased stress from fear of being 'found out'.	If you have not had a relapse for a long time, the issue of disclosure becomes less critical.

How to disclose: some ideas

Remember: Always sandwich the 'tricky' information with lots of positive, 'good' information

1. On a job application:

In answer to the question "Do you have any health problems?"

Possible Responses:

(on an application form)

- Not that would affect my ability to do the job.
- I will discuss this at an interview.
- Not applicable (to this job).
- I previously had _____ which I have now recovered from and I do not feel that this will affect my work performance.
- I have a health condition but I feel I will still be able to do the job as required.
- Leave it blank and explain verbally in a job interview if required.
- Do not say 'no' if the answer is 'yes'.

(on an application letter)

If there are long periods of absence from the workforce your resume could be skilled based not employment based so as not to draw attention to it.

2. At the interview:

Possible Response:

I have good insight into my health/condition. I know my early warning signs for illness and have put in place strategies to manage them (if asked to explain, have examples ready).

Note: The responses indicated above for the job applications are also suitable for use in the interview situation.

3. After the job is offered/accepted:

Possible Strategy:

Choose an appropriate time to talk privately with the employer. If in the position for a short time ask for feedback on performance. Let them know regular feedback is important to help gauge your compatibility to the job. If your condition may mean you need regular time off for appointments you may wish to explain why. However, generally all workers have some absence due to appointments.