

WORLD POLIO DAY

24 OCTOBER

POLIO IS A VIRAL INFECTION THAT CAN CAUSE PERMANENT PARALYSIS (PHYSICAL DISABILITY) OR EVEN DEATH. BY DEFINITION OF THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1998 (ACT 55 OF 1998) A PERSON WITH THIS DIAGNOSIS IS CLASSIFIED AS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY.

Early signs and symptoms of polio during childhood

The early signs of polio during childhood are non-specific and include fever, headache, muscle pains and vomiting. This may progress to weakness, loss of function or paralysis of any limb or limbs.

You can prevent polio:

While the world focuses on critically important new vaccines to protect against COVID-19, there remains a need to ensure that routine vaccinations are not missed. Make sure that children are fully vaccinated against polio.

Polio as a disability and job functioning

Example: Mr Jacobs works as a sterilisation operator at an institution. The physical demands of the job, however, pose a challenge to his ability to perform optimally. On a typical workday, Mr Jacobs is required to provide a comprehensive sterilisation service to patient care units, operating theatres and other user departments by collecting, cleaning, controlling, distributing and sterilising surgical instruments and medical equipment. The physical demands of the job include standing for long periods of time, walking, lifting, pushing and packing heavy equipment e.g. baskets, trolleys etc. His supervisor identifies that Mr Jacobs is struggling with the physical demands of the job. In a scenario like this, the basic steps to follow for the supervisor would be to set up a meeting with Mr Jacobs to discuss his performance using the following guideline for the provision of reasonable accommodation.

Job Duties

- Provision of quality sterilised products and equipment.
- Maintain optimal functioning of the sterilisation unit and washing machine instruments.
- Perform heavy duty functions e.g. transporting packs and instrument trays to various user areas.

How to reasonably accommodate?

- **Kindly note:** Legally, it is advised that the provision of reasonable accommodation be done on the basis of consultation between the employee and supervisor as a first step.
- The supervisor may pose the following questions with the aim to understand the employee's needs:
 - Did you disclose your disability?
 - What limitations are you experiencing when executing your job duties?
 - How do the identified limitations affect your job performance?
 - What specific job tasks are problematic as a result of your limitations?
 - Do you have suggestions about how you can be reasonably accommodated?
- Contact the Disability Component for further consultation about reasonable accommodation measures and options available to the employee and supervisor.

Once the reasonable accommodation has been ascertained for the employee, it would be useful to meet with the employee to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodations and to determine whether additional accommodations are needed.



**Western Cape
Government**

FOR YOU

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