

# Reasonable Adjustment Disability Passport Policy

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## Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and this policy applies to all employees.

The policy covers the agreed approach of the Council towards staff, and potential members of staff, who are disabled, who believe that they may be disabled or become disabled.

The nature of societal attitudes and environmental design means that the workplace is often much more difficult to use than it should be for many employees. This policy is designed to encourage meaningful conversations between employees and their managers about the Council's working environment and practices that make working for us more difficult for disabled people and what steps can be taken to mitigate or eliminate them. The reasonable adjustment disability passport is designed to provide a documented record of an individual's needs, which will allow them to function to their full potential in a supportive and encouraging environment.

The legal definition of a 'reasonable adjustment' in the Equality Act 2010 is a change to remove or reduce the effect of:

- an employee's disability so they can do their job
- a job applicant's disability when applying for a job

The reasonable adjustment could be to:

- the workplace environment
- the provision of equipment or tools
- the ways things are done
- get someone to help the employee or job applicant

This list is not exhaustive.

The scope of this policy covers both visible and hidden conditions including, but not limited to physical disability, sensory impairment, mental health conditions, and neurodiversity (including but not limited to ADHD, autism, dyspraxia and dyslexia).

## Rights and Responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 states that a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantially adverse and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Long-term is usually defined as over a 12-month period. It stipulates that employers must make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled employees are not disadvantaged and take steps to remove, reduce or prevent obstacles a disabled employee or job applicant faces.

Reasonable adjustments should always be tailored to the individual's needs and the barriers faced. Adjustments may comprise one or more measures to enable the employee to do their job to the best of their ability.

### Principles

We recognise that all our employees deserve the opportunity to realise their full potential and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the Council's policies, practices, and culture do not discriminate against disabled people including those with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, mental health conditions or those who are neurodiverse. However, some disabled people may not have a formal diagnosis or assessment or may feel uncomfortable about disclosing this information. Further, each person is unique and there can be a high degree of overlap between multiple conditions. As a result, we aim to identify and implement any support needs based on personal evaluation and individual need. This will be gained primarily through Occupational Health referrals and workstation assessments as outlined in the Attendance Management policy and Corporate Risk Assessment Guidance respectively.

As a result, we commit to:

- promoting the reasonable adjustment disability passports to all staff.
- considering all requests fairly and objectively to assess whether we can accommodate the adjustments.
- proactively working to eliminate barriers (including prejudice) that disabled people face in the workplace.
- raising awareness of the full range of disabilities including those that are often overlooked, for example: mental health conditions, dyslexia or other neurodivergent conditions.
- eliminating potentially discriminatory practices in employment that can arise throughout the course of normal day-to-day workplace activities.

## Access to this Policy

In the application of this policy, the Council will make reasonable adjustments for employees who are unable to complete the template form due to disability, as well as any other reasonable adjustments that may be needed to enable an employee to disclose their requirements.

Employees who need assistance with interpreting this policy should contact the HR team for guidance and support by e-mail at [HR@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:HR@scambs.gov.uk)

## Organisational Context

This policy supports the aims of the current South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Scheme and meet our obligations as a local authority outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. A key objective of our Equality Scheme relevant to this policy is that South Cambridgeshire District Council is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings. This document also supports our status as a Disability Confident employer.

## Dignity at Work

If you have concerns about the treatment of yourself or others in relation to the workplace such as harassment, bullying or victimisation linked to a disability, you should raise this with a trusted colleague, manager, trade union representative or HR so that this can be investigated under the Council's Dignity at Work policy.

[A copy of the Council's Dignity at Work policy can be found on Insite.](#)

## Reasonable Adjustment Disability Passport

The reasonable adjustment disability passport is designed to provide a documented record of an individual's needs, which will allow them to function to their full potential in a supportive and encouraging environment.

An employee may require reasonable adjustments to remove workplace barriers because of environmental, attitudinal, or organisational issues. These barriers prevent disabled people from equal participation in the workplace including people with sensory impairments, mental health conditions, long-term injury or neurodivergent conditions (including but not limited to ADHD, autism, dyspraxia and dyslexia).

### Completing the Passport

The reasonable adjustment disability passport template can be found on Insite.

The passport is a resource available to all employees at any time during their employment. A passport can be requested by the employee or be proactively offered by their line manager.

An employee should complete a draft passport in the first instance and then share this with their line manager and HR. An initial meeting should be arranged to discuss the passport, confirm workplace adjustments that can be made or agree further actions to obtain advice. A member of the HR team could attend this meeting to provide additional advice.

### Seeking Help and Advice About Reasonable Adjustments

There are lots of sources of advice available to help employees and managers identify and implement reasonable adjustments.

The HR team can be contacted by e-mail at [HR@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:HR@scambs.gov.uk). They can advise on the Council's obligations under the Equality Act, draft Occupational Health referrals or advise on supportive wellbeing activities like Wellness Action Plans and Stress Audit tools. The Health and Safety team can support with completing a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment or risk assessment and will retain these records for future reference. An employee may also be eligible to receive a grant to help pay for practical support by making an application to [Access to Work](#).

Further, an external organisation that promotes awareness of a particular condition could be consulted for advice before or after the initial meeting between an employee and their manager. An example of this would be consulting with British Sign Language about an employee experiencing hearing difficulties.

## **Redeployment**

If the implementation of reasonable adjustments will not enable a disabled employee to continue in their current post, it may be appropriate to seek suitable redeployment opportunities after consulting with Occupational Health. This process will include a time limited period based on the employee's contractual notice period during which the employee is supported appropriately to look for vacancies within the council which match their skills, knowledge, experience and competencies. Please note that employees who secure alternative employment through redeployment have no right to protection of current terms and conditions including salary protection if the new post is at a lower grade.

## **Ownership of the Passport**

A reasonable adjustment disability passport is owned by the employee; they will decide who has a copy or can see it, although a signed version of the passport should be held by the employee, their line manager, and HR.

An employee must consent to a new line manager accessing their passport. However, it is recommended that this is shared whenever an employee moves into a new role or changes line manager. The reason is that a reasonable adjustment disability passport can be used to ensure that the new manager is aware of the employee's required adjustments or information relating to the individual's requirements without the need to repeat potentially difficult conversations and situations.

Following any successful recruitment process, where an employee's new role is substantially different to their previous one a new Occupational Health referral is recommended to obtain advice about reasonable adjustments. Similarly, all new employees are required to complete an Occupational Health questionnaire before commencing their employment. This is to encourage disclosure of conditions and help the recruiting manager to ask for advice about appropriate reasonable adjustments.

## **Reviewing the Passport**

The passport should be reviewed by the employee and their line manager three months after the reasonable adjustments have been put in place to ensure they are effective. If they have not been put in place or have not proved to be useful, a review meeting ensures adjustments can be made. Agreed reasonable adjustments shouldn't be reduced without a valid business reason.

The passport may be reviewed at any time at the employee's request to ensure that any adjustments remain appropriate if:

- Their disability or health conditions changes.
- Their personal circumstances change.
- Their job requirements change.
- Their post changes.
- There is a change to the working environment.

## Right to be Accompanied

All employees have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague in discussions about the passport with their line manager. It's important to approach these conversations in an open and supportive way ensuring employees are treated with sensitivity, respect, and confidentiality.

## Right to Appeal

All requests for reasonable adjustments will be fully considered by the Council and responded to by the employee's line manager within a maximum of 28 calendar days. If the Council refuses a request for an adjustment written reasons must be given within a maximum of 14 calendar days from the previous meeting date by the employee's line manager.

An employee has the right to appeal against the decision within 14 calendar days of being notified in writing of the decision. The employee must set out their grounds for appeal in writing to HR, with a copy to the line manager who made the decision. HR will arrange for an appeal meeting which will be chaired by the corresponding Head of Service, unless they have previously been involved at an

earlier stage of the process. In this case an alternative Head of Service will chair the meeting instead. A representative of the HR team will accompany the Head of Service to advise and take notes. The line manager will present the reason for refusal. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

After hearing both sides of the case, the Chair will adjourn the hearing to consider the outcome.

After the adjournment, the chair will reconvene the meeting by arrangement with all parties to advise verbally of the decision. HR will write to the employee as soon as possible after the verbal decision, within 14 calendar days of the meeting, stating the outcome of the appeal.

The decision of the appeal hearing is final.

## **Revisions to the Reasonable Adjustment Disability Passport Policy**

The operation of this procedure will be reviewed periodically through the normal consultation process. This policy will also be updated in line with any relevant statutory changes.

Any amendments proposed because of these reviews will be advised to all staff, as well as the date from which changes are to be implemented.