



Supporting Pregnant Employees

As part of our commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace, it's essential that we recognize and address the unique needs of pregnant employees. It's crucial that managers are proactive in ensuring that our pregnant employees feel supported throughout their pregnancy journey.

These guidelines are designed to help you recognize and address the potential needs of pregnant employees outside of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) process. While some accommodations may fall under ADA regulations, and may need to be processed through the ADA accommodations process, many other supportive measures can be implemented proactively to ensure the well-being and comfort of pregnant employees. These measures include, but are not limited to:

1. **Open Communication:** Encourage open communication between the pregnant employee and the supervisor. Let the employee know they can discuss any concerns or needs related to their pregnancy. This should include regular check-ins with pregnant employees to discuss their needs and ensure they receive the support they require.
2. **Access to Resources:** Provide information about resources available to pregnant employees, such as FMLA leave or ADA accommodations. Direct the employee to the Office of Human Resources for additional information.
3. **Honoring Time-Off Requests:** Regular prenatal care is essential for the health and well-being of both the employee and their baby. Allow for additional time-off requests for the employee to attend their appointments. Please note, these appointments will become more frequent toward the end of the employee's pregnancy.
4. **Allowing Additional Rest Breaks:** Permitting additional short breaks through the day can help pregnant employees manage fatigue and discomfort. This is especially true for employees who are often on their feet and moving throughout the day.
5. **Allowing Breaks for Walking/Stretching:** Permitting additional short breaks throughout the day for employees who are predominantly seated throughout the day to walk or stretch may help with pregnancy-related discomfort.
6. **Allowing Employees Additional Opportunities to Eat/Drink:** Encourage pregnant employees to stay hydrated and to have snacks throughout the day, including during meetings, as this may help the employee manage nausea or hunger related to the pregnancy.
7. **Adjusting Uniform or Dress Code Requirements:** If uniforms or dress codes are restrictive or uncomfortable for the employee, consider providing flexibility or alternatives. For example, if a department requires "Business Attire," an employee may need an exemption to wear supportive tennis shoes to alleviate foot pain associated with pregnancy.

Additional accommodations including, but not limited to, flexible work arrangements, accessible workspaces, light duty assignments, temporary transfer of duties, or a reduction of physical demands, must be discussed with the Office of Human Resources, as these must go through the ADA Accommodations process.

Resources:

Office of Human Resources can provide information on FMLA and ADA
hrrservices@westga.edu

Office of Legal Affairs can provide information on discrimination and harassment
legal@westga.edu