

Information for Students in Co-op

Disclosure, Advantages of Disclosure and Time of Disclosure.....	1
Confidentiality.....	2
Accommodations.....	2

Disclosure, Advantages of Disclosing and Time to Disclose

Q: Do I have to disclose my disability to my employer?

A: Disclosure of your disability is a personal decision. You are not obligated to disclose to your employer, however if you do, there could be some major advantages of doing so.

Q: What are some of the advantages of disclosing?

A: If you disclose before, at the time of application, interview (pre or post) then you could be considered under the company's *employment equity program*. If you disclose then you can advocate and receive required work-place accommodations (e.g. assistive technology, flexible work schedule etc). Employers have a duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Q: If I decide to disclose, when is the best time?

A: There are a different set of advantages and disadvantages associated with each stage/timing of disclosure e.g. at the time of job application; during the interview, just after being hired, never – please see the following link published by the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario for more information titled “Disclosure Chart for Workplace Settings” <http://www.ldao.ca/introduction-to-ldsadhd/ldsadhs-in-depth/articles/about-lds/disclosure-in-the-workplace/>

Confidentiality

Q: Confidentiality? I'm worried about my colleagues finding out...will my information be kept confidential?

A: You can expect full confidentiality and privacy after disclosure of your disability. Maintaining confidentiality is both an ethical and legal obligation (see FIPPA - Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act)

Accommodations

Q: Can I even be accommodated in my Co-op placement?

A: Yes. Employers have a duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Accommodations are determined by the employer and employee and involve certain principles:

1. ***The accommodation must respect the dignity of the individual.*** This means that the process used to request accommodation, and the accommodation itself, must not further stigmatize or prejudice the individual. E.g., a person with a mental health disability who requires a quiet space for breaks during the day should not be required to take the breaks in the garbage room or another undesirable space. Rather, it should be space that is suitable for employee use.
2. ***Information about an accommodation should be kept confidential.*** The individual should feel comfortable that his/her request for an accommodation will be greeted with respect.
3. ***Accommodation must also be consistent with the overarching goals of full integration,*** rather than segregation, except where requested by the individual.

[\(http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca/\)](http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca/)

Q: In what ways can I be accommodated in the work place?

A: Workplace accommodations need to be assessed in an individualized manner and consider the impacts of your disability on your workplace functioning. But some examples may include a modified work week; use of assistive technology; and job restructuring.

Q: How do I get my accommodations?

A: Let your Disability Consultant know that you are in Co-op. Be prepared to discuss what your essential/core job requirements are. Your Disability Consultant will ask for your consent to speak with your Co-op Coordinator as together they will be able to assist you in getting the supports you need at your placement.