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# CMT

## Work Accommodations

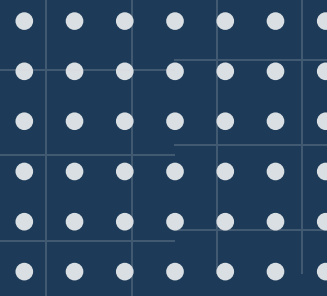
A Guide for Employees Living with Charcot-Marie-Tooth



stay safe

stay productive

stay healthy





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# CMT Workplace Accommodation Guide

*For Employees Living with Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease*

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## Disclaimer

This guide provides general information and is **not legal advice**. Workplace rights can vary by state, employer, and personal circumstances. For personal legal guidance, consult an employment attorney or advocate. For free expert support, contact the **Job Accommodation Network** ([askjan.org](http://askjan.org)).

## Quick Overview

### What is CMT in the workplace?

Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease (CMT) is a hereditary neuropathy that can cause foot drop, balance issues, hand weakness, sensory loss, pain, and fatigue. CMT does not affect cognitive ability, but symptoms may change over time.

### Possible Workplace Challenges

- Mobility & balance: walking long distances, stairs, prolonged standing
- Hand dexterity: typing, gripping tools, handling small objects
- Fatigue & pain: fluctuating energy, symptom flare-ups
- Sensory changes: reduced feeling in feet/hands, safety concerns
- Temperature sensitivity: symptoms worsening in heat or cold

# 1) What Is a “Reasonable Accommodation”?

**Reasonable accommodation** is any change or adjustment to your job, work environment, or how work is done that helps you perform the essential parts of your job despite disability-related challenges.

## Examples (CMT-friendly):

- Flexible start/end times, short rest breaks, hybrid or remote work
- Sit-stand desk, ergonomic chair/keyboard/mouse, anti-fatigue mats
- Voice-to-text software or adaptive tools to reduce hand strain
- Relocating workspace to reduce walking; accessible parking
- Permission to use mobility aids without penalty
- Temperature control (fan, space heater, dress code flexibility)

## Key points:

- Must remove a disability-related barrier.
- Must be **effective** (it works for you).
- Cannot cause **undue hardship** (significant expense/difficulty for the employer).
- You are entitled to an effective solution, even if it’s not your first choice.

# 2) Know Your Rights (ADA)

If CMT limits your ability to walk, stand, use your hands, or sustain energy, you are covered

under the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#).

## Your Rights:

- Equal opportunity in hiring, promotions, and job assignments
- Reasonable accommodations to perform essential job duties

- Privacy: you do not have to disclose your diagnosis, only the limitation
- Timely responses to accommodation requests
- Equal access to workplace benefits, events, and activities

#### **Your Responsibilities:**

- Disclose that you have a disability and need accommodations
- Link your request to a work-related limitation
- Participate in the **interactive process** with your employer

### **3) Identify Your Workplace Barriers**

Ask yourself:

- When does CMT make my job harder? (e.g., long standing, repetitive typing)
- What triggers my symptoms? (e.g., temperature, schedule demands, specific tasks)
- What helps me succeed? (e.g., ergonomic tools, breaks, mobility aids)

**Tip:** Make two lists — **Barriers** and **Possible Solutions**. This helps you create a strong, specific request.

### **4) Common Accommodation Ideas for CMT**

#### **Mobility & Balance**

- Accessible parking close to the entrance
- Relocate workstation to reduce walking
- Clear, obstacle-free pathways
- Sit-stand desk for posture changes

#### **Fatigue & Energy Management**

- Flexible start/end times
- Extra short breaks for rest
- Remote or hybrid work on high-symptom days
- Reduced standing or walking requirements

### **Hand Weakness & Dexterity**

- Ergonomic keyboard, mouse, and chair
- Voice-to-text or dictation software
- Lightweight/adaptive tools to reduce strain

### **Safety & Comfort**

- Anti-fatigue mats for standing tasks
- Control over workspace temperature
- Non-slip flooring in high-traffic areas

## **5) Step-by-Step Accommodation Guide for CMT Employees**

### **Step 1 — Prepare Your Request**

Identify the barrier and link it to your CMT symptoms. If not obvious, ask your doctor for a short note confirming the limitation.

### **Step 2 — Write It Down**

Put your request in writing (email/letter). Use confident, clear language:

“Due to CMT-related foot drop and fatigue, prolonged standing increases pain and impacts my work. I’m requesting a sit-stand desk and two short breaks to manage symptoms and maintain performance.”

### **Step 3 — Send It to the Right Person**

- HR if available
- Otherwise, your manager or a trusted leader
- You may copy both HR and your supervisor

#### **Step 4— Engage in the Interactive Process**

- Meet to discuss barriers and solutions
- Be open to equally effective alternatives
- You have the right to an **effective** solution

#### **Step 5 — Follow Up**

- Check in if no response within 1–2 weeks
- If denied, ask for the reason in writing and suggest alternatives
- A “no” to one option does not end the process

#### **Step 6 — Keep Records**

Save emails, notes, and agreements. Documentation protects you and helps if you need to escalate.

## **6) If Your Request Is Denied**

- Ask for the reason in writing
- Propose alternatives that solve the same barrier
- Remind your employer the process is ongoing
- Seek help from **askjan.org** or local advocacy groups
- File a complaint with the **EEOC** if you face discrimination or retaliation

## **7) Templates You Can Copy & Paste**

### **Accommodation Request Email**

***Subject: Accommodation Request under the ADA***

Hello [Name],

I'm requesting a reasonable accommodation under the ADA. Due to CMT-related [barrier], [task] impacts my ability to perform effectively. I am requesting [accommodation(s)] to remove this barrier.

These adjustments will allow me to meet my essential job duties. I can provide a short note from my clinician if helpful.

Thank you for beginning the interactive process.

Best,  
[Your Name]

**Follow-Up (No Response)**

***Subject: Follow-Up on ADA Accommodation Request***

Hello [Name],

I'm checking in on my request submitted on [date]. Please let me know a time we can meet this week to discuss solutions.

Best,

[Your Name]

**If One Option Is Denied**

***Subject: Continued Interactive Process – Alternative Options***

Hello [Name],

I understand the concern about [denied option]. I still need an effective accommodation for [barrier]. Could we consider [Option A] or [Option B]?

Best,  
[Your Name]

**Doctor's Note Template**

To whom it may concern:

I have evaluated [Patient Name], who has a condition resulting in limitations in [function]. Accommodations such as [examples] are indicated to support essential job duties. Please consult the patient directly for task-specific details.

Sincerely,  
[Clinician Name]

## 8) Tracking Checklist

Date	Person/Dept	Barrier&Accommodation	Status	Next Step/Review Date
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## 9) Self-Advocacy & Well-Being

- Advocacy can be tiring — schedule downtime around key meetings
- Connect with others in the CMT community for support
- Document everything — notes reduce stress and protect you
- Set boundaries if stress flare symptoms
- Remember: you're not asking for favors — you're asking for the tools you need to succeed

## 10) Resources

- **JobAccommodationNetwork (JAN):** [askjan.org](http://askjan.org) – Free, confidential workplace accommodation guidance
- **Hereditary Neuropathy Foundation (HNF):** [hnf-cure.org](http://hnf-cure.org) – Patient resources, education, and community support for CMT