

JAN

Job Accommodation Network

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

Effective Accommodation Practices (EAP) Series

Job Accommodations for People with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome or Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy

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JAN'S EAP SERIES

JOB ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX REGIONAL PAIN SYNDROME OR REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY

Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) is a condition described as a chronic pain occurring as a result of trauma to a soft tissue or bone (Type I) or nerve injury (Type II). Type I CRPS is also called reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD) and causalgia. A progressive disease of the nervous system, symptoms of pain and burning can affect one, two, three, or all for limbs. In extreme cases other or all parts of the body may be affected. Complications to the condition include depression, anxiety, and atrophy.

The following is a quick overview of some of the job accommodations that might be useful for people with CRPS. For a more in depth discussion, access JAN's publications at <http://AskJAN.org/media/atoz.htm>. To discuss an accommodation situation with a consultant, contact JAN directly.

Activities of Daily Living:

- Allow use of a personal attendant at work
- Allow use of a service animal at work
- Make sure the facility is accessible
- Move workstation closer to the restroom
- Allow longer breaks
- Refer to appropriate community services
- Provide access to a refrigerator

Depression and Anxiety:

- Develop strategies to deal with work problems before they arise
- Provide sensitivity training to coworkers
- Allow telephone calls during work hours to doctors and others for support
- Provide information on counseling and employee assistance programs
- Allow time off for medical treatment

Fatigue/Weakness:

- Reduce or eliminate physical exertion and workplace stress
- Schedule periodic rest breaks away from the workstation
- Allow a flexible work schedule and flexible use of leave time
- Allow a self-paced workload
- Provide parking close to the work-site and an accessible entrance
- Install automatic door openers
- Provide an accessible route of travel to other work areas used by the employee
- Move workstation close to other work areas, office equipment, and break rooms

Muscle Pain and Stiffness:

- Implement ergonomic workstation design, i.e., ergonomic chair and adjustable workstation to alternate between sitting and standing
- Reduce repetitive tasks or interrupt the tasks with other duties
- Provide carts and lifting aids
- Modify work-site temperature and/or dress code
- Use fan/air-conditioner or heater at the workstation
- Allow work from home during extremely hot or cold weather

Resources Specifically for People with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome or Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy**International Research Foundation for RSD/CRPS**

c/o Mary Davis, Executive Director
1910 East Busch Boulevard
Tampa, Florida 33612
Direct: (813)907-2312
<http://www.rsdfoundation.org>

Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association of America

PO Box 502
Milford, CT 06460
Toll Free: (877)662-7737
Direct: (203)877-3790
info@rsds.org
<http://www.rsds.org/>

RSDHope

PO Box 875
Harrison, ME 04040
<http://www.rsdhope.org/>

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