

CAPtions

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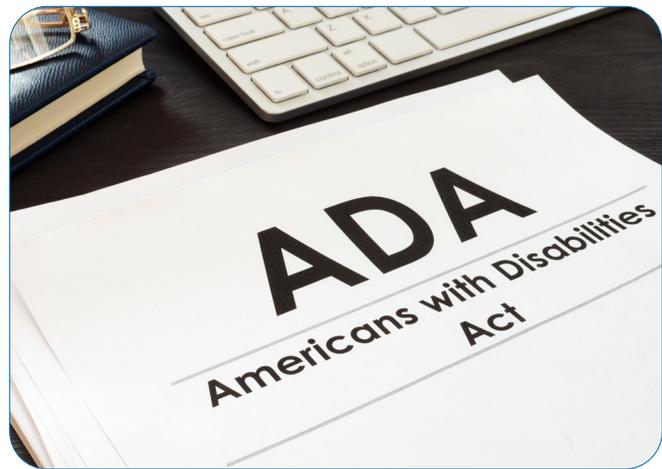
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30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

In 1986, the National Council on the Handicapped (now known as the National Council on Disability) issued a report called *Toward Independence*, which included Congressional legislative recommendations for a comprehensive national equal opportunity law. In the article, the title for the proposed law was the ‘The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1986’. In 1988, building off this framework and years of hard work, a bill was introduced to the 100th Congress. On July 26, 1990, the late President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. To learn more about the timeline of the ADA, you can check out an official timeline here:

www.adata.org/ada-timeline. Thanks to the passage of the ADA, the physical and institutional barriers that hindered Americans with disabilities began to fall. The signing of the ADA was an important step towards the goal of a more accessible society. Please join CAP this month in recognizing 30 years of the ADA by posting on Twitter with the hashtag [#ThanksToTheADA](https://twitter.com/hashtag/ThanksToTheADA). The ADA National Network has also created a toolkit to help spread knowledge and awareness about the ADA, and it is available here: www.adaanniversary.org.



The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; where does CAP fit?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. This Act extended important protections to individuals with disabilities in the private sector. However, the statute to which CAP and the federal government must adhere is the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, commonly referred to as the Rehab Act. The Rehab Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by



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Federal agencies, in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, in Federal employment, and in the employment practices of Federal contractors. While the primary laws that govern equal opportunity and public access are different between the private and public sectors, these laws do have the same end goal, full access for individuals with disabilities in all aspects of public and private life. The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation

Act are the same as in Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. CAP serves as a resource to all Federal agencies in meeting these Rehabilitation Act standards. In the thirty years since the ADA was passed, many steps towards creating an accessible nation were made, but it is vitally important to ensure that the next 30 years continues to build on the gains that have been made.

Repetitive Stress

Repetitive stress injuries, also known as repetitive strain injuries, are one of the most common injuries in today's workforce. The term "repetitive stress injuries" refers to discomfort or pain caused by repetitive movements. The movements employees make every day at their desks may cause strain over time. This can both aggravate an employee's existing condition and result in repetitive stress conditions such as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome or tendonitis. Office-related repetitive stress injuries can also cause discomfort in the hands, wrists, shoulders, arms, and neck, along with potentially other parts of the body. Symptoms of repetitive stress injuries can include pain or other discomfort, tingling, numbness, and reduced range of motion.

Utilizing ergonomics best practices is a crucial and effective way to prevent or accommodate repetitive stress injuries during a time in which so many employees are working from home. Proper workstation setup can help prevent and alleviate symptoms of repetitive stress injuries symptoms and discomfort. CAP produced our Workplace Ergonomics Reference Guide that provides illustrations of proper workstation ergonomics as well as tips



on implementing these strategies. It includes a checklist that assists readers in assessing their own workspaces and guides to proper workstation setup. www.cap.mil/Documents/Workplace_Ergonomics_Reference_Guide.pdf

As always, CAP remains available to perform needs assessments for individuals who are unsure which solutions would suit them in their current work environment. These needs assessments can be performed remotely, allowing customers to receive assessments and accommodations without leaving their home office. Requests for needs assessments may be submitted by navigating to the online CAP request form at www.cap.mil and selecting the option in the form that says "I want CAP to contact me."

COVID-19

The effects of the COVID-19 virus have been unprecedented and drastically changed the ways in which we live and work. Our daily patterns and interactions have changed to adhere to a restriction on distance. Due to facility closures and mandates for social distancing, many have found themselves performing their daily work tasks in new settings. CAP has helped people adapt by offering flexible solutions, such as shipping accommodations to telework locations and home addresses, along with extending the time frames to submit or provide required medical documentation. Considering the majority of the federal workforce is working from home, it is imperative for CAP to accommodate this workforce to meet their mission's needs regardless of location. CAP is just one part of federal government's response to COVID-19. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has posted updated guidance about EEO laws and COVID-19 throughout this pandemic, available at www.eeoc.gov/coronavirus. This guidance has also been put into a webinar, www.youtube.com/watch?v=X50G7I41NKg.

Some agencies are beginning phased approaches to retuning their workforce to their respective duty stations. For some, this may be a stressful and somewhat uncertain return. To help make this transition as smooth as possible, CAP developed a new webinar PTSD/Anxiety which is available here: <https://youtu.be/EcdYSaMPehw>. COVID-19's rapid spread has presented a unique and historic set of obstacles, but it is something we will overcome. We hope this helps support your agency and employees to create a safe and accommodating workspace in both your telework location and as your return to the office environment.



Telework

Many individuals were teleworking before the advent of COVID-19, but the pandemic compelled many federal agencies to mandate telework for all employees. This mandate has shown that telework can serve as an effective force multiplier, allowing individuals to support agency missions regardless of their physical location. The inability to access a physical location does not have to prevent any individual, including those who may be at greater risk from either COVID-19 or other environmental complications, from applying their knowledge and skills in support of their agency's mission.

The Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 requires supervisors and employees to create and have in place a signed telework agreement. Employees should always work with their supervisor to ensure they are following their agency's telework process. Just as CAP can provide tools to accommodate individuals with disabilities in their federal workplace, CAP may be able to provide duplicate accommodations for the telework location. In addition to the CAP Accommodation Request, CAP will likely require a copy of the signed telework agreement as well. For more information on how CAP may be able to accommodate you or your employee, please visit www.cap.mil or contact us at CAP@mail.mil.

