

# Menopause-Friendly Workplace Accommodations

It can be difficult for employees to discuss aging, menopause, or other health challenges, especially at work. However, it is important that company leadership and managers encourage sharing these experiences for the promotion of a healthy workplace culture without penalty or discrimination.. Productive conversations between employees and their managers or HR about menopause can help the company to better understand what types of accommodations employees might need. Additionally, offering accessible feedback mechanisms can provide an avenue for employees to share their concerns and make requests anonymously.

**Only 16% of women employees reported feeling comfortable asking for accommodations to address their menopause-related challenges at work.**

**According to a national survey by the Job Accommodation Network, 49% of employers said the accommodations needed by their employees cost absolutely nothing. Another 43% provided accommodations that required a one-time cost, with the median expenditure being only \$300.<sup>3</sup>**

If any or certain accommodations are not possible to implement, it is equally important to have clear and honest conversations with employees and identify alternative solutions to their challenges. Sometimes providing support around the menopause experience can be just as valuable as formal accommodations.

Workplace accommodations can look different depending on the industry, as well as the demands and tasks associated with an employee's job. Consider accommodations that can best meet the overarching needs of your company's diverse workforce, while leaving room for creativity to implement accommodations for the unique needs of a given employee. Examples of accommodations are listed below, based on overarching demands of a job, regardless of industry, and many are simple and/or cost-effective for your company to provide.



## Physically Demanding Work

- ▶ Extra or frequent breaks throughout the day
- ▶ Access to cold water or cooling devices (e.g., fans, towels, misters)
- ▶ Consistent access to restrooms
- ▶ Flexible uniforms or adapted dress codes
- ▶ Comfortable workspaces (e.g., adjustable temperature, dedicated rest areas)
- ▶ Shift in job duties to reduce physical labor
- ▶ Designated areas to freshen up, change clothes, or access sanitary products



## Intellectually Demanding Work

- ▶ Flexible work hours or alternative work schedules
- ▶ Flexible deadlines or deadline extensions (as appropriate)
- ▶ Use of supportive services and devices (e.g., adjustable desk furniture, notetaking support, adaptive tools)
- ▶ Access to quiet workspaces or white noise/sound machines
- ▶ Broad spectrum or natural lighting
- ▶ Flexible meeting schedules
- ▶ Access to task management tools



## Emotionally Demanding Work

- ▶ Time off for medical appointments
- ▶ Telework options
- ▶ **Employee resource groups**
- ▶ Individual coaching or therapy sessions
- ▶ **Employee assistance programs (EAP)**