

Sensory Disabilities: Limitations and Reasonable Accommodations

Sensory disabilities can involve any of the senses, but commonly refer to Blindness and Low Vision, Deafness and Loss of Hearing, or both hearing and vision loss. Sensory disabilities affect access to visual and/or auditory information. It should be noted that not every individual with a visual impairment reads Braille, and not every individual with a hearing impairment knows American Sign Language. Employers should always engage in the interactive process to learn about the specific needs and limitations of the individual requesting an accommodation. For more information on reasonable accommodations, visit the [Job Accommodation Network](#). The following table provides common accommodations utilized to meet the various limitations associated with sensory disabilities:

Disability	Limitations	Accommodations
Blindness/Low Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• inability or limited ability to access visual information• legal blindness (20/200 or less in the better eye with best possible correction)• visual impairment ranging from having some degree of useable vision to inability to see anything with either eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- alternative format of printed material (Braille, large print, electronic or auditory versions of documents)- computer reading or screen magnifier software- Braille writing devices- increase color contrast/task lighting- highly visible, crisp, bold pens- smart phone- tactile indicators- talking devices- personal assistant/reader/driver- use of dog guide
Deafness/Loss of Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reduced ability to hear or total loss of hearing in one or both ears• significant hearing loss with ability to use limited hearing to communicate• progressive hearing loss• noise sensitivity• ringing in the ears	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- cellphone- video relay/remote interpreting services- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters- closed captioning- indicator light- vibrating devices- mirror- notepad/whiteboard- communication access technology- text to speech device- assistive listening device- hearing aid compatible headsets- cubical doors, shields, and shades- Tinnitus maskers/environmental sound machines

Both hearing and vision loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced vision and no hearing • reduced hearing and no vision • reduced hearing and vision • no usable hearing or vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deaf-Blind communicator - computer with Braille display - Braille notetaker - Braille embosser (printer) - Braille writer - computer magnification software - large print documents - qualified Deaf-Blind interpreter (tactile) - personal assistant/driver - use of a dog guide
------------------------------	---	--