



National Disability Coordination Officer Program
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

Working effectively with people with vision impairment

What is vision impairment?

- Refers to some degree of sight loss
- A person is legally blind if:
 - they cannot see at six metres what someone with normal vision can see at 60 metres, or
 - their field of vision is less than 20 degrees in diameter (normal vision 180 degrees)
- A person may be born with a vision impairment, or acquire it through an accident or the aging process
- Examples include:
 - Cataracts – clouding of the clear lens in the eye
 - Glaucoma – damage to the optic nerve associated with pressure in the eye
 - Macular Degeneration – deterioration of central vision
 - Retinitis Pigmentosa – genetic condition causing retina to progressively degenerate

Affects of vision impairment in the workplace

- An employee with a vision impairment may have difficulties with:
 - Accessing written or electronic information
 - Navigating unfamiliar workplaces

Reasonable adjustments for vision impairment

- Reasonable adjustments need to be individualised to meet employees' specific needs.
- It is important to **ask** the employee what would be most helpful for them.
- Some examples of reasonable adjustments that may help employees with vision impairment include:
 - Screen reading software – e.g. Jaws
 - Screen magnification software – e.g. Zoomtext
 - Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSI's)
 - Contrasting work surfaces
 - Magnification software for mobile phones or personal digital assistants
 - Reorganising work areas, and keeping work stations consistent
 - CCTV magnifiers for reading printed material
 - Braille documents

Sources

Vision Australia

www.visionaustralia.org.au/

JobAccess

http://jobaccess.gov.au/ServiceProviders/Assisting_job_seekers/Supporting_jobseekers_with_different_types_of_disability/Pages/home.aspx

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