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2026 Disability at Work Report Reveals Accommodation Breakdowns and Declining Psychological Safety for Disabled Workers Amid DEI Rollbacks

Only 13% of disabled professionals feel fully safe disclosing a disability at work, while more than half report accommodation processes are challenging or fail entirely

Bethel, CT — April 01, 2026 — Disability Solutions released the 2026 Disability at Work Report, a national survey examining the employment experiences of people with disabilities across the job search, hiring, and workplace lifecycle. The findings reveal that persistent structural barriers—particularly around workplace accommodations and psychological safety—continue to limit equitable access to employment for individuals with disabilities.

Based on responses from disabled professionals across the United States, the report highlights widespread breakdowns in accommodation processes, low levels of trust in employers, and growing caution around disability disclosure amid ongoing political and organizational rollbacks of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts.

“Professionals with disabilities are navigating systems that repeatedly fail to meet basic access needs,” said Keith Meadows, Executive Director at Disability Solutions. “This year’s data makes it clear that accommodation delays, denials, and poor communication are not isolated incidents. They are systemic barriers that directly affect retention, trust, and participation.”

Key Findings from the 2026 Disability at Work Report Include:

- **Accommodation processes are a defining barrier:**
60.1% of respondents have requested a workplace accommodation, yet 56.8% describe the process as very or extremely challenging. More than one in four (26.8%) reported their request was denied, and 31.4% received no communication after submitting a request.
- **Psychological safety and disclosure remain critically low:**
While 76.8% of respondents have disclosed a disability at some point in their career, only 13.4% currently feel fully safe doing so under the current political climate. Nearly 60% believe disclosure negatively impacts their job prospects or treatment at work.

- **DEI rollbacks are changing employee behavior:**
Following national and organizational pullbacks on DEI, 27.6% of respondents are now less willing to disclose a disability, 27.2% are more cautious, and 49.8% report a reduced sense of belonging at work.
- **Hiring systems remain misaligned with disabled talent:**
The most significant job search challenges include finding a job for which someone is qualified (51.2% extremely challenging) and finding a job they are interested in (44.8%). Despite these barriers, accessibility factors—not compensation alone—remain the top drivers of job search decisions.

The report also underscores that disabled professionals consistently value access to accommodations (56.4%), work-life balance (55.8%), and location or remote flexibility (54.9%) as top job search priorities, reinforcing those inclusive systems are the determining factor in employment outcomes.

Recommendations for Employers

The 2026 report offers clear, actionable guidance for employers seeking to move from stated commitment to measurable progress, including:

- Establishing transparent, timely, and accountable accommodation pathways
- Making hiring processes more predictable and accessible
- Reinforcing psychological safety and anti-retaliation protections
- Tracking accommodation, accessibility, and inclusion outcomes—not just intent

“Progress requires functioning systems,” said Meadows. “Employers that prioritize clear processes, consistent communication, and sustained leadership commitment will be better positioned to attract and retain top talent, even during periods of political uncertainty.”

About the 2026 Disability at Work Report

The **2026 Disability at Work Report** is Disability Solutions’ second annual national survey examining how people with disabilities experience job search, hiring, accommodations, disclosure, and workplace inclusion. The 2025–2026 survey expanded on prior research with a focused examination of workplace accommodations and psychological safety in the context of DEI rollbacks.

Read the full report: <https://22118574.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/22118574/2026%20Disability%20At%20Work%20Report.pdf>

Media inquiries: Ashley.Sims@DisabilityTalent.org

About Disability Solutions

Disability Solutions helps employers design clearer, more accessible workplace systems including hiring and retention programs, that support disabled talent and business success. Through data, consulting, and employer education, Disability Solutions works with organizations to remove structural barriers and build inclusive employment practices that last.