

Writing job inclusive job descriptions

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Introduction

This is not legal advice. The intention in writing an inclusive job description is not about compliance with the ADA. This is about being careful about word choices to avoid unintentionally discouraging qualified people with disabilities from applying for jobs.

Examples of job descriptions with physical requirements:

Box Office Support Positions:

Work Environment

This is largely a sedentary role, with most of the duties performed on a computer, phone, or customer service counter. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, and filing cabinets. Desk and workspaces are able to accommodate a wheelchair.

Physical Demands

- Enter accurate customer information into a computer
- Answer 10-15 emails and 5-10 phone calls per day
- Move files and boxes of ticket stock, weighing under 20 pounds
- Retrieve tickets from a printer and give to the customer

Building and Grounds Crew

Work Environment

Work is usually outside in conditions that include inclement weather, heat and humidity. Noise level may be loud at times, due to use of leaf blowers and lawn mowers.

Physical Demands

- Move objects weighing up to 30# (10 yards or less).
- Remove snow with snow shovels.
- Remove weeds manually and operate basic gardening tools like shovels, spades and lawnmowers.
- Requires constant movement around the 10 acre garden grounds on both gravel and grass paths.

Driver's License?

Examples:

- Job of an educator to drive the mobile museum to rural locations. (It's appropriate to require a driver's license in this case).
- Marketing Assistant who goes to 2-3 festivals in the city per year: This position occasionally needs to transport a wheeled cart to events within the city (2-3 per year).
- A position that requires travel between two sites: This position supervises employees at both the downtown theater and the uptown arts pavilion. Must be able to travel between these locations within a single workday on a weekly basis.

Table of words to use in job descriptions

Physical Demand	Better wording	Arts/ Culture Job Description Language Example
Stand or Sit	Stationary position	Must be able to remain in a stationary position 50% of the time.
Walk, Run	Move, Traverse	The person in this position needs to occasionally move about inside the office to access ticket stock, flashlights, office printer, etc.
Use hands/fingers to handle or feel; reach;	Operate, Activate, Use, Prepare, Inspect, Place, Detect, Diagnose, Install/place Remove/replace, Adjust Attach, Positions Sets up Handle/tend, feeds or controls, Applies, Measures Modifies, Signals, Inputs Drafts, writes, Compiles/retrieves, Makes, constructs Creates/fabricates Collects, Serves/services	Constantly operates a computer and other office equipment, such as a scanner, copy machine, and printer.
Climb (stairs/ladder) or balance	Ascend/Descend, Work atop, Traverse	Occasionally ascends/ descends a ladder to service the lights and ceiling fans.
Stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl	Position self (to), Move	Constantly positions self to maintain computers in the lab, including under the desks and in the server closet.
Talk/hear	Communicate, Detect, Converse with, Discern, Convey, Express oneself, Discuss, Exchange information	The person in this position frequently communicates with patrons who have questions about the art. Must be able to exchange accurate information in these situations.
See	Detect, Determine, Discern, Distinguish, Perceive, Identify, Recognize, Judge, Observe, Inspect, Estimate, Assess, Compare	Must be able to inspect tickets for seat numbers, and locate open seats in low light.
Taste/Smell	Detect, Distinguish, Determine	Occasionally must be able to distinguish sweet and bitter flavors when creating desserts for customers.
Strength, Carry weight, lift	Move, Transport, Position, Put, Install, Remove/replace	Frequently moves Audio/Visual equipment weighing up to 50 pounds across museum for event needs.
Exposure to work	Exposed, Work around	Constantly works in outdoor weather conditions.

Adapted from a table at pace.edu/sites/default/files/files/ADA-compliant-words.pdf