

# Balancing Work & Cancer

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# CANCER AND CAREERS

Cancer and Careers, founded in 2001, is a national nonprofit that empowers and educates people with cancer to thrive in their work environment by providing expert advice, interactive tools and educational events. All programs and services provided to patients, survivors, healthcare professionals and caregivers are offered free of charge.

- [CancerAndCareers.org](https://CancerAndCareers.org)
- Publications in English and Spanish
- Job Search Tools and Resume Review
- Financial Assistance Grants
- Technology Assistance Program
- Accredited Programs for Healthcare Professionals
- [CancerAndCareers.org/espanol](https://CancerAndCareers.org/espanol)
- Balancing Work & Cancer Webinars
- Community Events
- Job Search Intensives
- National and Regional Conferences
- Career Coaching



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WORK AND CANCER

Join us on **Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>** for a free, daylong event bringing together patients, survivors, caregivers, healthcare professionals, advocates, employers/HR, advocates and others touched by cancer to explore the complexities of balancing treatment and recovery with employment.

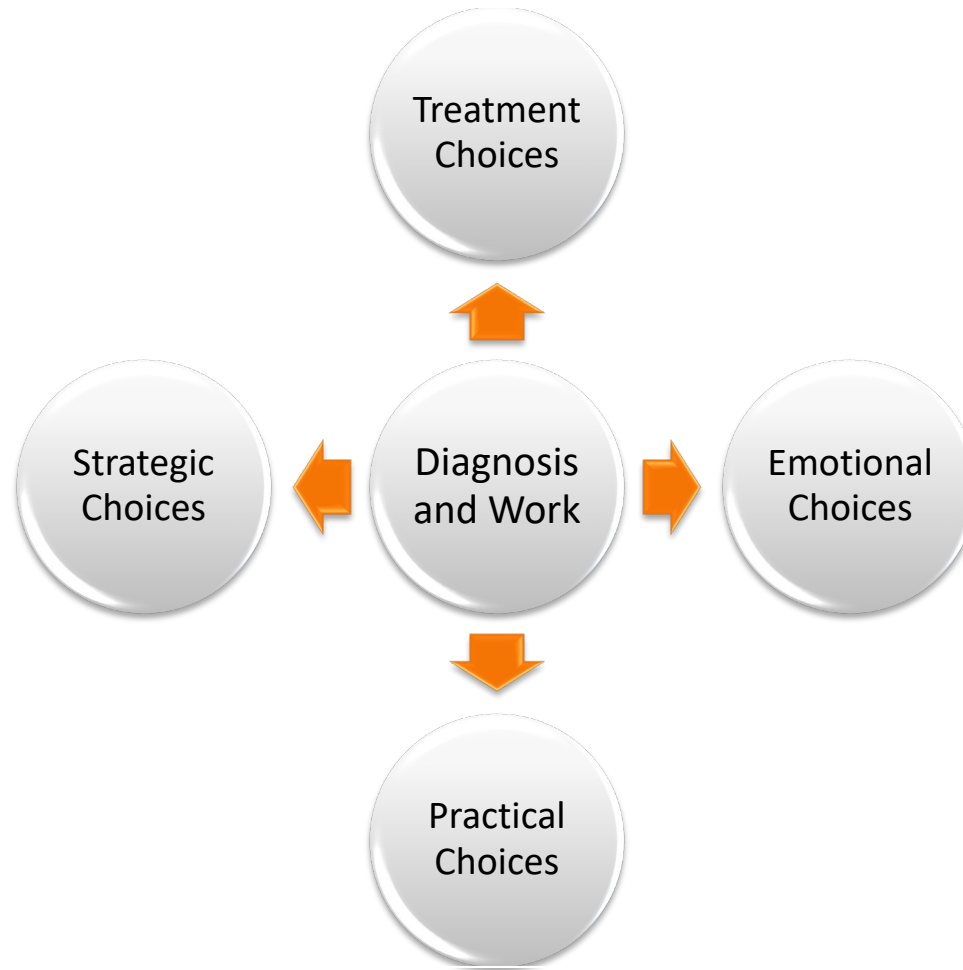
## Topics include:

- Working through treatment
- Making disclosure decisions
- Managing treatment side effects
- Communicating effectively
- Engaging HR
- Doctor's perspective
- Nutrition
- Managing stress
- and more!

More information and registration:

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/events/conference>

# DIAGNOSIS/WORK DILEMMA

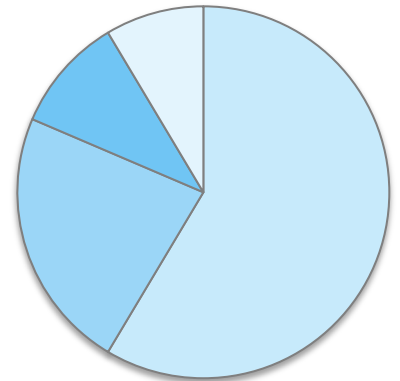


# DIAGNOSIS / WORK DILEMMA

- How important is work to you?
- What information do you need to make a decision about work?

# TO WORK OR NOT TO WORK?

- How will treatment affect work and schedule?
- What are job demands – physical and mental?
- How flexible is the work environment?
- Can accommodations be made?
- What are the financial and health insurance concerns?
- How is identity connected to work?
- Have work priorities changed?



# INFORMATION NEEDS

## Medical and Treatment Info

- Treatment Options
- Timeline
- Potential Side Effects
- Mitigation Strategies

## Work Info

- Insurance Support
- Company Policies & Culture
- Workplace Flexibilities
- Job Demands

## Legal Info

- Federal & State Laws
- Medical Leave
- Disability Insurance
- Health Insurance

# KEY LAW: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

## To access the ADA:

- Your employer (or prospective employer) must be big enough that the ADA is applicable to them
- You must have the required skills, experience, degree, training, license, etc. to do the job
- Your disability must meet the criteria determined by the ADA

## Benefits may include:

- Protection from discrimination
- Access to Reasonable Accommodations

**YOU MAY BE  
FURTHER  
PROTECTED  
BY A STATE  
FAIR  
EMPLOYMENT  
LAW**

More resources:

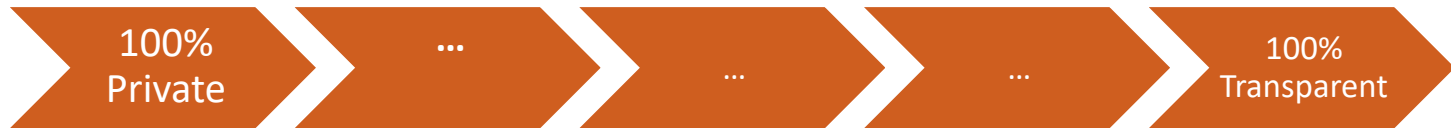
<https://askjan.org/index.html>

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/at-work/legal-and-financial>



# DISCLOSURE

- **Whether to disclose is a personal decision**
  - How do you feel about privacy?
  - What benefits or legal protections might be available if you disclose?  
And, how much information is necessary to access them?
- **The amount you disclose may evolve, but that doesn't mean it ever has to be every detail**
  - Remember you can always choose to share more, but it is not possible to “un-share”
- **Consider timing—and circumstance—before starting a conversation**
  - Are you working during treatment and/or recovery?
  - Are you looking for a new job?



# DO I HAVE TO SHARE THE NEWS OF MY DIAGNOSIS AT WORK?

- Communicating information about your health or health history is a personal choice with many factors to consider
- Understand the pros and cons of sharing before making a final decision
  - Are there legal benefits to disclosing?
  - Are there interpersonal benefits to disclosing?
  - Are there practical benefits to disclosing?
- *Remember disclosure is a spectrum*

More resources:

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/at-work/where-to-start/sharing-the-news>

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/2020-webinar-online>

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/blog/disclosure-in-the-workplace-w>

# SHARING A DIAGNOSIS AT WORK

## Control the Message

- Should you tell?
- Who should you tell?
- When should you tell?
  - Timing is everything
- How much should you share?
- How should you share it?

More resources:

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/at-work/employers-managers/managers-toolkit>

# DISCLOSURE CONSIDERATIONS AT WORK: SIDE EFFECTS

Consider what your side effects might reveal—especially if you are choosing not to disclose widely

- Changed Appearance
- Fatigue
- Personality/Affect Changes
- Mobility Changes
- Neuropathy

# DISCLOSURE & JOB SEARCH

- Should you disclose your cancer history...
  - on your resume?
  - in your cover letter?
  - during an interview?

# DISCLOSURE & ONLINE APPLICATIONS: OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Exit
Apply for Job
Previous Next

**Assistant Professor**

1 Start Complete

2 Resume Complete

3 Education and Work Experience Complete

4 Applicant References Complete

5 Online Questionnaire Complete

6 Referral Source Complete

7 Self-Identify In Progress

Disability In Progress

Veteran Not Started

Diversity Not Started

8 Review and Submit Not Started

### Step 7 of 8: Self-Identify - Disability

Form CC-305  
OMB Control Number 1250-0005  
Expires 1/31/2020

**Why are you being asked to complete this form?**

Because we do business with the government, we must reach out to, hire, and provide equal opportunity to qualified people with disabilities.<sup>1</sup> To help us measure how well we are doing, we are asking you to tell us if you have a disability or if you ever had a disability. Completing this form is voluntary, but we hope that you will choose to fill it out. If you are applying for a job, any answer you give will be kept private and will not be used against you in any way.

If you already work for us, your answer will not be used against you in any way. Because a person may become disabled at any time, we are required to ask all of our employees to update their information every five years. You may voluntarily self-identify as having a disability on this form without fear of any punishment because you did not identify as having a disability earlier.

**How do I know if I have a disability?**

You are considered to have a disability if you have a physical or mental impairment or medical condition that substantially limits a major life activity, or if you have a history or record of such an impairment or medical condition.

Disabilities include, but are not limited to:

- Blindness
- Autism
- Bipolar disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Deafness
- Cerebral palsy
- Major depression
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Impairments requiring the use of a wheelchair
- Diabetes
- Schizophrenia
- Missing limbs or partially missing limbs
- Intellectual disability (previously called mental retardation)
- Epilepsy
- Muscular dystrophy

**Please select one of the options below:**

YES, I HAVE A DISABILITY (or previously had a disability)

NO, I DON'T HAVE A DISABILITY

I DON'T WISH TO ANSWER

**Reasonable Accommodation Notice**

Federal law requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities. Please tell us if you require a reasonable accommodation to apply for a job or to perform your job. Examples of reasonable accommodation include making a change to the application process or work procedures, providing documents in an alternate format, using a sign language interpreter, or using specialized equipment.

<sup>1</sup>Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. For more information about this form or the equal employment obligations of Federal contractors, visit the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) website at [www.dol.gov/ofccp](http://www.dol.gov/ofccp).

PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. This survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

# MANAGING “CHEMO BRAIN”/BRAIN FOG ON THE JOB—BACK TO BASICS

- Avoid multi-tasking
- Write down a list of priorities
- Do one thing at a time—mono-tasking
- Take notes
- Rehearse everything
- Build breaks into your day

“Chemo Brain”/Brain Fog one sheet:

[https://www.cancerandcareers.org/publication\\_orders/new](https://www.cancerandcareers.org/publication_orders/new)

# STRATEGIES AT WORK: COMMUNICATIONS

- Communication is key
  - Ask for priorities
    - Create a written plan
  - Know your limits and set boundaries
    - “I appreciate that you thought of me for this project but I’m a bit swamped this week and am concerned about my ability to get this back to you in a timely manner.”
    - “Thank you for offering me these additional shifts. Unfortunately, I’m short on time at the moment as I’ve got some family obligations to attend to. But I’d love to talk about this possibility again in a few months, once the situation at home has settled down.”



# STRATEGIES AT WORK: THE SWIVEL

My uncle had cancer . . .

- “I’m sorry to hear that, it must have been hard . . . (AND) . . . What did you think about the meeting that we had yesterday?”

How are you feeling?

- “Really excited to be back! In fact, I have a few questions about the new time-card system. Do you have a minute to answer them?”

# STRATEGIES AT WORK: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

- Modifications to your job, your schedule or the environment that you work in that makes it possible for you to perform your essential duties
- Also available during the job search process

More resources:

- <https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/at-work/legal-and-financial/requesting-reasonable-accommodations>
- <https://askjan.org/index.html>

# QUESTIONS TO HELP IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

## Is it reasonable in your job to:

- **Work the same number of hours every week, but at different times?** (e.g. instead of 9-5 work 7-3)
- **Do some or all your work from home?**
- **Move to a different work station?** (e.g. closer to the restroom, or further away from entrance door)
- **Ask for special furniture?** (e.g. a movie theater ticket taker who is given a chair to sit in while working)
- **Ask for special equipment?** (e.g. an anti-glare screen for your computer or a cooling vest to help balance heat sensitivity)
- **Request more frequent breaks?**
- **Reassign job responsibilities?** (e.g. a teacher has recess duty covered by coworkers so they can rest)
- **Ask if an exception can be made to a policy?** (e.g. being allowed to use headphones at your work station to help reduce distractions)
- **Change to working an open role that you are qualified for?**
- **Work in a different location?** (e.g. moving to a different restaurant within the same chain that is closer to home)

# JOB SEARCH

- Things to think about:
  - Emotional highs/lows
  - Being strategic
  - Holding yourself to a higher standard
- The steps of a job search are the same as the steps to build any relationship—*consider what you reveal, and when.*

More resources - CAC Job Search Toolkit:

[http://www.cancerandcareers.org/publication\\_orders/new](http://www.cancerandcareers.org/publication_orders/new)

# NETWORKING

- 85% of jobs are found through networking
- Networking sources:
  - Websites such as LinkedIn
  - Former colleagues and vendors
  - Friends, neighbors, fellow volunteers, members of support groups
  - Professional associations
  - Doctors, lawyers, dentists, accountants, dog walkers

More resources:

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/linkedin>

# NETWORKING DOS & DON'TS



**DO** think about anyone & everyone who you know



**DO** be specific about what you need



**DO** offer to help in return



**DO** update your LinkedIn



**DON'T** rely solely on job boards to find opportunities



**DON'T** be afraid to introduce yourself



**DON'T** expect a job offer right away



**DON'T** forget to follow up

# RESUME DOS & DON'TS



**DO** incorporate keywords for tracking software



**DO** write measurable achievements



**DO** include a short summary



**DO** use active words (created, increased...)



**DO** list volunteer work



**DON'T** include clichés (go-getter, team-player...)



**DON'T** write more than two pages



**DON'T** use elaborate fonts, designs or images



**DON'T** highlight gaps by including months



**DON'T** forget to proof-read

# SAMPLE KEYWORDS

## STRENGTHS & EXPERTISE

- Project Management
- Client Service
- Strategic Planning
- Internal Communications
- Social Media Strategy
- Budget Management
- Graphic Design
- Product Marketing
- Trade Show/Events Planning
- Billing and invoicing
- Vendor Supervision

SAMPLE KEYWORDS BY FUNCTIONAL SPECIALTY	
<b>ACCOUNTING/FINANCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial Modeling &amp; Analysis</li><li>• Scorecards &amp; KPIs</li><li>• Profitability Analysis</li><li>• Financial Reporting</li><li>• Variance Analysis</li><li>• Forecasting &amp; Budgeting</li><li>• Strategic Planning</li><li>• Cash Management</li><li>• Project Management</li><li>• P&amp;L Oversight</li><li>• Hyperion Enterprise &amp; Essbase</li><li>• SAP</li><li>• Microsoft Office Suite</li><li>• FINRA Series 7 &amp; 63</li><li>• Bloomberg Proficiency</li></ul>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Calendar Management</li><li>• Global Travel Arrangement</li><li>• Report Creation</li><li>• Microsoft Office Suite</li><li>• Adobe</li><li>• Photoshop</li><li>• Event &amp; Meeting Planning</li><li>• Vendor Liaison</li><li>• Process Improvement</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Billing &amp; Invoicing</li><li>• Report Preparation</li><li>• Records Management</li></ul>
<b>EDUCATION/TEACHING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Assessment</li><li>• Elementary Education -All Subjects</li><li>• Differentiation Through Small Group Instruction</li><li>• SRBI Tiered Intervention</li><li>• Special Needs Programs</li><li>• Data Collection</li><li>• Lesson Planning &amp; Implementation</li><li>• No Child Left Behind</li><li>• Classroom Management</li><li>• Parent-Teacher Communications</li><li>• AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education Curriculum)</li><li>• OFCUS &amp; PowerSchool</li></ul>	<b>HEALTHCARE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certified Medical Assistant</li><li>• Certified Dialysis Technician</li><li>• Vital Sign Measurement</li><li>• Certified in First Aid &amp; CPR</li><li>• Quality Assurance</li><li>• Medical Insurance Billing &amp; Coding</li><li>• Phlebotomy</li><li>• EMR</li><li>• Vaccine Administration</li><li>• Patient Chart &amp; Medical Record Keeping</li><li>• Surgery Scheduling</li><li>• Pharmaceutical &amp; Supply Ordering &amp; Inventory</li><li>• Patient Assessment &amp; Relations</li><li>• Microsoft Office</li></ul>
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mergers &amp; Acquisitions</li><li>• Compensation Management</li><li>• Coaching/Mentoring</li><li>• Learning &amp; Development</li><li>• Talent Acquisition</li><li>• Leadership Development</li><li>• Employee Relations</li><li>• Organizational Development</li><li>• Performance Management</li><li>• Employee Engagement</li><li>• Diversity &amp; Inclusion</li></ul>	<b>MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social Media Management</li><li>• Digital Photography</li><li>• Blog &amp; Speech Writing</li><li>• Branding &amp; Launch Communications</li><li>• Communication Strategy</li><li>• Media Content Development</li><li>• Website Design &amp; Development</li><li>• Global Brand Building</li><li>• MS Office, iWorks &amp; WordPress</li><li>• Employee Communications</li><li>• Event Planning</li><li>• Strategic Writing</li><li>• Cross-Functional Team Leadership</li><li>• Public Relations</li><li>• Advocacy</li><li>• Client &amp; Account Management</li></ul>
<b>NON-PROFIT/NGO</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Team Leadership</li><li>• Program Design &amp; Implementation</li><li>• Budget Management</li><li>• Community Outreach</li><li>• Development Strategy</li><li>• Event Planning</li><li>• Volunteer Recruitment</li><li>• Counseling</li><li>• Project Management</li><li>• Relationship Management</li><li>• Microsoft Office Suite</li><li>• HTML &amp; Web Design</li><li>• Donor Engagement</li><li>• Marketing Communications</li><li>• Data Analysis</li><li>• Raiser's Edge</li></ul>	<b>COURTESY OF JULIE JANSEN — CAREER COACH, SPEAKER, TRAINER AND AUTHOR</b>

For more sample keywords, check out *Cancer and Careers'* guide,

## SAMPLE KEYWORDS BY FUNCTIONAL SPECIALTY

[www.cancerandcareers.org/en/SampleKeyWords](http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/SampleKeyWords)



# COVER LETTER DOS & DON'TS



**DO** include a cover letter, even if it is optional



**DO** mention specifics about your interest in the company



**DO** highlight your experience that aligns with the job description



**DON'T** copy exactly what is on your resume



**DON'T** use a form letter



**DON'T** forget to proof-read

More resources:

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/looking-for-work/resume-cover-letter>

# INTERVIEWING DOS & DON'TS



**DO** research the interviewer & the company

1. ACKNOWLEDGE
2. "...AND..."
3. SWIVEL TO A WORK-RELATED TOPIC

**DO** practice your Swivels in advance



**DO** focus on your qualifications for the job



**DO** ask for clarification, if needed



**DON'T** feel obligated to disclose your diagnosis



**DON'T** forget you are interviewing the company as well

- Reception, 7 years
- Payroll, 2 years

**DON'T** be vague, answer with specific examples of your experience



**DON'T** leave without asking for next steps

# HANDLING TOUGH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: THE SWIVEL

Can you tell me what you were doing during this gap on your resume?

- “I was dealing with a family issue that is resolved now AND I am thrilled to discuss how my management skills can build the team and grow your business.”
- “I realized that what I was doing didn’t fulfill me so I took a step back to think about what would make me happy AND I think my tech background would really be an asset not just for this role but for the company as a whole.”

More resources:

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/looking-for-work/interviewing/mock-interviews>

# MORE SWIVELING

I noticed on your resume that you have done a lot of volunteering in the cancer community. Do you have cancer?

- *“Like most people, I’ve been touched by cancer, and finding a way to give back is very important to me. Plus, all my volunteer work has given me the opportunity to develop some valuable skills that I think would be applicable here, including X, Y, Z.”*

When I Googled your name, an interview you gave about being diagnosed with cancer was one of the top results. Are you still in treatment?

- *“Thank you for taking so much interest in me. The opportunity to speak to the press gave me some incredible new skills that I think would be very relevant to this role, including X,Y, Z.”*

# THANK YOU NOTE DOS & DON'TS



**DO** send a personalized note to each interviewer



**DO** show your sincere gratitude



**DO** mention something specific that you discussed



**DON'T** wait more than 24 hours to send



**DON'T** make it too long or rambling



**DON'T** forget to proof-read

# RESEARCHING AN EMPLOYER

- Company benefits
- How have they treated other employees in the past?
- How large is the company? Will the ADA apply?
- Discrimination lawsuits
- Do they have employee programs? (e.g., EAP, affinity programs)
- Other information that can help identify their workplace culture (e.g., [www.glassdoor.com](http://www.glassdoor.com) , [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) )

# WORKING IN A NEW JOB WITH A NEW EMPLOYER

- How do you assimilate?
- How do you handle it if you are still in treatment?
- Managing your energy
- How can you succeed?
- Asking for accommodations

# UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENTS

## Balancing Work & Cancer Webinar Series

### **Self-care: Practical Approaches At Work & Beyond**

Wednesday, July 12, 1 PM ET/10 AM PT

### **Balancing Work & Cancer**

Wednesday, August 2, 6 PM ET/3 PM PT

### **Communicating Effectively, Part 1**

Wednesday, September 13, 6 PM ET/3 PM PT

### **Communicating Effectively, Part 2**

Wednesday, October 4, 6 PM ET/3 PM PT

## Conferences

### **National Conference on Work & Cancer**

June 23 | 9:00 AM CT - 4:00 PM CT

For more info & to register, visit:

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/events>





# MORE FROM CAC

## RESUME REVIEW SERVICE

[http://www.cancerandcareers.org/resume\\_reviews/new](http://www.cancerandcareers.org/resume_reviews/new)

## VIDEO ARCHIVE

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos>

## FREE PUBLICATIONS

[www.cancerandcareers.org/publication\\_orders/new](http://www.cancerandcareers.org/publication_orders/new)

## “ASK A CAREER COACH” MESSAGE BOARD

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/career-coach>

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## Employment Rights & Options:

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [www.EEOC.gov](http://www.EEOC.gov)
- Job Accommodation Network [www.AskJan.org](http://www.AskJan.org)
- U.S. Department of Labor (COBRA) [www.dol.gov/EBSA](http://www.dol.gov/EBSA)
- U.S. Department of Labor (FMLA) [www.DOL.gov/WHD](http://www.DOL.gov/WHD)
- FlexJobs [www.flexjobs.com](http://www.flexjobs.com)
- Workplace Transitions: [www.workplacetransitions.org](http://www.workplacetransitions.org)

## Legal Assistance:

- National Cancer Legal Services Network [www.NCLSN.org](http://www.NCLSN.org)
- LawHelp [www.lawhelp.org](http://www.lawhelp.org)
- Lawyer Referral Service  
<http://apps.americanbar.org/legalservices/lris/directory>

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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Twitter

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Newsletter

[www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/newsletter](http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/newsletter)