



Nearly One-fourth of Employers Unsure How to Accommodate Employees on a Disability Leave

New white paper from The Standard highlights employer best practices for ADAAA compliance

Portland, Ore. — Feb. 4, 2014 — The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) has changed the way employers manage employee disability leaves, requiring employers to first consider all reasonable accommodations before resorting to termination. Standard Insurance Company (“The Standard”) has found that while employers are embracing accommodations under the ADAAA, there’s still room for improvement.

A recent survey conducted by The Standard found that 23 percent of employers are unsure of how to handle disability absences and employee accommodations.¹ To help educate employers, The Standard has released a new white paper, “[Accommodate, Don’t Terminate: Best Employer Practices for ADAAA Compliance](#),” highlighting common mistakes employers should avoid when considering ADAAA accommodations and tips for ensuring compliance.

“The ADAAA is challenging employers to apply creative thinking to accommodating employees,” said Sandy Johnson, disability and productivity consultant for The Standard, and co-author of the white paper. “Each workforce has unique and complex disability scenarios, tasking employers with thinking outside the box regarding accommodations. This can be difficult, considering all the issues human resources managers are faced with each day.”

Through a series of case studies, Johnson and co-author Alycia Bleeker, attorney at The Standard, show how enlisting the assistance of a consultant from the employer’s disability insurance company can help navigate the legal complexities associated with providing accommodations or reviewing policies to ensure ADAAA compliance. In The Standard’s survey, only 37 percent of employers surveyed say they have worked with their disability insurance carrier to find employee accommodations.¹

The five mistakes employers commonly make include:

- Strictly enforcing policies
- Believing employee accommodations are too expensive
- Staying inside the box
- Devaluing an aging workforce
- Not asking for help

“Mishandling or refusing reasonable accommodations can result in an employee-filed complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or even a lawsuit for failing to accommodate a disabled employee,” Bleeker said. “Avoiding these common mistakes — and learning about best practices — can help ensure compliance.”

¹Standard internal data 2013.

For more information about how the Workplace PossibilitiesSM program can help employers manage employee absence and disability, visit www.workplacepossibilities.com.

About the Workplace Possibilities program

The Workplace PossibilitiesSM program is a unique, proactive approach to helping employers prevent and manage employee absence and disability. A Workplace Possibilities on-site consultant helps to connect employees with their health management programs and identifies opportunities to keep at-risk employees on the job or return to work faster. By doing so, the program delivers rapid and measurable reductions in absence- and disability-related costs. For tips and tools HR professionals can use to help re-imagine the way they manage absence and disability, visit www.workplacepossibilities.com.

The Workplace Possibilities Program is available through The Standard's Group Disability Insurance. An on-site consultant is available for groups with 1,000 or more employees. This policy has exclusions, limitations, reduction of benefits and terms under which the policy may be continued in force or terminated.

About The Standard

The Standard is a leading provider of financial products and services, including group and individual disability insurance, group life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance, group dental and vision insurance, absence management services, retirement plans products and services, individual annuities and investment advice. For more information about The Standard, visit www.standard.com.

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