

Important Information about Self-Identification of Disability

Carnegie Mellon University invites all faculty and staff to complete and return a "*Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability*" questionnaire, which can be completed through Workday. The questionnaire has been prepared by the federal government and asks employees to self-identify by selecting one of the following:

- Yes, I Have A Disability, or Have a History/Record of Having a Disability
- No, I Don't Have A Disability, Or A History/Record of Having a Disability
- I Don't Wish To Answer

The legal definition of a disability is likely broader than you may realize and may apply to you—even though you may have never considered yourself as having a disability.

"Disability," for purposes of the government's questionnaire, includes **any physical or mental impairment** that:

- Substantially **limits any of your major life activities** such as caring for yourself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and/or working.

OR

- Substantially **limits operation of any of your major bodily functions or organs**, such as your digestive system, your respiratory system, your reproductive system, your heart, or your brain.

An impairment may be substantially limiting even if it would not completely prevent or even significantly limit a major life activity or a major bodily function or organ.

The **legal definition** of a disability also **includes certain chronic conditions that are in remission or that may only flare up from time to time** provided that, when the condition is active, it would be substantially limiting if untreated. Federal agencies would likely consider people with the following as being disabled:

- **Asthma or other respiratory impairments** but who can engage in normal working and personal activities with the use of an inhaler as needed
- **Allergies** but who can engage in normal working and personal activity with appropriate medication as needed
- **Carpal tunnel syndrome or tenosynovitis** or other wrist, hand, or thumb-based impairment, even if he/she can engage in normal working and personal activities with the use of ergonomic aids, Ace bandages, or splints
- **Pregnancy-related complications**
- A **hearing impairment** whose hearing is in a normal range when using hearing aids/assistive listening devices
- **High blood pressure, high cholesterol, migraines, diabetes, COPD, epilepsy, or heart condition**, even if controlled with medication
- **Back, neck, or other chronic pain or arthritis**, even if controlled with medication
- An **artificial hip or knee**, even if now able to walk comfortably with the artificial joint
- **Cancer or whose cancer is in remission**
- **Dyslexia or any other learning impairment**

Carnegie Mellon University

- **Depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, or any other mental impairment**, even if controlled with medication
- **OCD, Autism Spectrum disorder, ADD, or ADHD**, even if controlled with medication
- A **sleeping disorder**
- A **history of drug or alcohol addiction**, even if he/she has successfully completed, or is participating in, a supervised rehabilitation program
- A person who has sought and obtained **medical leave for treatment of an injury or a chronic medical condition**, even if now back at work

We appreciate your attention to the *"Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability"* questionnaire. Your response will be kept confidential and will be used only to comply with federal law or where disclosure is necessary in order to provide a reasonable accommodation should you indicate you need one. Your response will not go into your personnel file. If you have questions about the questionnaire, please contact eos@andrew.cmu.edu for assistance.