



Young Onset Parkinson's:

Your Rights, Options & Strategies for Working with Parkinson's

Deciding Whether & When to Tell Your Employer

You are not required to disclose your Parkinson's diagnosis unless you are requesting workplace accommodations or your condition directly affects job safety. Disclosure is a personal decision guided by symptom impact and workplace demands.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA protects qualified employees with Parkinson's from discrimination and ensures reasonable accommodations.

- Protection from termination based on diagnosis
- Right to reasonable accommodations
- Medical confidentiality
- Protection from retaliation

Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

FMLA provides eligible workers with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for serious health conditions.

- Employers with 50+ employees
- 12 months of employment and 1,250 hours required
- Health benefits continue
- Job reinstatement protected

Common Workplace Accommodations

- Flexible work hours
- Remote or hybrid work
- Modified physical duties
- Rest breaks
- Voice-to-text software
- Ergonomic workstation
- Temperature regulation

Sample Employer Disclosure Scripts

Initial HR Disclosure:

“I’ve been diagnosed with Parkinson’s. With reasonable adjustments, I am fully capable of continuing my duties.”

Accommodation Request Example:

“Flexible hours and brief rest breaks would help me maintain productivity.”

Short-Term & Long-Term Disability Insurance

Short-Term Disability (STD) may replace 50–70% of income for up to 6 months. Long-Term Disability (LTD) begins after STD and may continue for years.

COBRA & Health Insurance Continuity

COBRA allows continuation of employer-sponsored health insurance for 18–36 months after employment changes.

Self-Advocacy Planning Worksheet

Job Role: _____

Symptoms Affecting Work: _____

Accommodations Needed: _____

Disclosure Plan: _____

Medical Provider: _____

Wisconsin Employment & Disability Resources

- Wisconsin Equal Rights Division – dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/civilrights – (608) 266-6860
- Wisconsin Disability Determination Bureau – dhs.wisconsin.gov/disability-determination – (800) 562-5440
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr
- Legal Action of Wisconsin – legalaction.org – (855) 947-2529
- Disability Rights Wisconsin – disabilityrightswi.org – (800) 928-8778
- Office of the Commissioner of Insurance – oci.wi.gov – (800) 236-8517

© Wisconsin Parkinson Association – Young Onset Parkinson’s Employment Resource