MetLife | Return to Health

Job Restructuring

As a Potential Accommodation

Job restructuring and role changes occur when an organization adjusts its structure, workforce or job roles to meet business needs. Combining roles, changing job responsibilities or removing positions to improve efficiency, reduce costs, or adapt to market conditions are examples of job restructuring.[1]



Essential vs. Marginal Job Functions:[2]

An essential function is a fundamental duty or responsibility that is critical to the job, while a marginal function is relatively less important to the job's purpose. An essential function cannot or should not be delegated to others.

A marginal function may be important to the overall work unit, but it is not essential for a specific job. It must still be completed, but it can be handled by another employee or position.

SCENARIO	POTENTIAL SOLUTION (IF PRACTICABLE FOR THE BUSINESS)
While working in an office setting among multiple clerks, a clerk is experiencing stress/anxiety and is having difficulty with customer interaction.	Restructure the job tasks where one clerk may do most of the customer interaction while the other clerk handles more of the paperwork, behind the scenes tasks (either temporarily or permanently).
A Teacher is having difficulty with walking/standing for long periods of time. Going on field trips is required as a marginal duty.	Provide a substitute teacher on field trip days or add a Teacher's Aide to help alleviate that requirement.
A Truck Driver with a temporary visual impairment can assist with some job duties but is unable to complete the driving requirement.	Temporarily eliminate the driving requirement if another employee can reasonably perform the duty with no undue hardship to the other employee or the business. Allow the employee to ride along to help with other job duties or offer a temporary sedentary role, such as in customer service.
A Production Technician is experiencing back pain with lifting and twisting 75 lb. parts onto an assembly line. There are two other technicians working on the assembly line at different points.	Restructure to include team lifts or temporarily reduce lifting requirements if a lighter lifting role on the assembly line is available and the temporary role shifting can be accommodated without adversely impact business needs.

The information contained herein is for purely informational purposes only, 0and is not intended to present medical, occupational, or therapeutic advice.

1.https://www.davidsonmorris.com/restructuring-and-role-changes/. 10 March 2025
2. Guidelines for Essential vs. Marginal Positions. Retrieved on 12 June 2025 from https://admin.hr.ufl.edu/hiring/position-planning-and-establishment/guidelines-for-essential-vs-marginal-positions/ Copyright 2025

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company | 200 Park Avenue | New York, NY 10166
L5500444[exp0628][All States and][All Territories] © 2026 MetLife Services and Solutions, LLC.