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# Employment Rights

Patient Information



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Having a long-term condition like chronic kidney disease (CKD) can affect many areas of your life, including your work. This leaflet describes some of the rights you have in regards to employment.

**For more information visit [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**

## Do I have to tell my employer about my CKD?

No. Like all medical conditions this is your private information and you do not have to share it with anyone else if you do not want to. However if you are asked about your health on an official employment document and you do not mention CKD, it could cause problems later on.

Anything you tell your employer is confidential so they cannot share it with anyone else without your permission. If you do not feel comfortable talking to your direct line manager, you can ask to speak to your company's human resources (HR) department who will be trained to deal with confidential medical information.

## How can having a diagnosis of CKD affect my work?

If you have mild or moderate CKD (stages 1-3) you may have very few symptoms and still feel well. However, more advanced CKD can make you feel very unwell, even when it is being actively treated. You may feel very tired, sick or in pain. These can all make it hard to keep working and may mean that you have a lot of time off sick. You may also have to take time off work for hospital appointments or dialysis sessions. As your CKD progresses, you may feel unable to work at all.

## What are my legal rights?

The UK Equality Act (2010) is a law that protects you if you have a **“physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term effect on your ability to carry out normal daily activities”**

Many people on dialysis with CKD and other long term conditions will meet this definition. This means that you are legally guaranteed certain rights and protections. A lot of these relate to benefits such as statutory sick pay and personal independence payments (previously known as disability living allowance). For more information see our leaflet on **Welfare Benefits**.

**It is against the law for your employer to discriminate against you, make you redundant or force you to retire because of ill health.**

## What can my employer do to help me?

If you are struggling at work because of your CKD, ask to speak to your manager and/or your HR department. They can discuss how reasonable adjustments can be made to make your working life easier. This will depend on your individual work situation but could include:

- Conducting a workplace assessment
- Changing your hours to suit your haemodialysis schedule
- Allowing you to work from home for some or part of the week
- Providing adapted computer equipment or better seating
- Allowing you to take more breaks if you need them
- Changing your job responsibilities – for example, to avoid heavy lifting if you are on dialysis or have had a transplant
- Providing access to an occupational therapist.

## Where else can I go for help?

If you cannot reach an agreement about reasonable changes with your employer, you have the right to raise a formal grievance. Talk to your HR department about how to do this.

You may also like to join a trade union – see [www.gov.uk/join-trade-union](http://www.gov.uk/join-trade-union) for details.

## Where can I find out more information?

Kidney Care UK's National Advocacy Service can provide help and support with problems you may be facing at work. Our Officers are also able to refer your case on to additional organisations for more specialist support if required.

See [www.kidneycareuk.org/get-support/advice-support](http://www.kidneycareuk.org/get-support/advice-support) for details

Other sources of information include:

- NHS Choices: Chronic Kidney Disease - [www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease)
- Citizens Advice: Work - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work)
- Renal Association: Patient Information - [www.renal.org/information-resources/patient-leaflets](http://www.renal.org/information-resources/patient-leaflets) - Includes leaflets on Chronic Kidney Disease and Welfare Benefits



 [www.kidneycareuk.org](http://www.kidneycareuk.org)

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