



University of Strathclyde
LAW CLINIC

How to write a disability impact statement

A guide for the general public

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Outline

We would advise you to read slideshow 8A on disability status before continuing with this slideshow.

- ▶ What is a disability impact statement?
- ▶ When might I need a disability impact statement?
- ▶ How do I write a disability impact statement?
- ▶ Suggested structure for a disability impact statement
- ▶ How long should the impact statement be?

What is a disability impact statement?

You will remember from the information about disability status that one part of the definition of disability requires the disabled person to show that their disability has a **‘substantial adverse effect’ on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

An impact statement is a way of demonstrating (or proving) the impact of your disability by setting out in your own statement how your disability affects your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Tribunal might tell you that you should prepare a disability impact statement and send it to the Tribunal and the Respondent or their representative. Alternatively the Respondent solicitor might ask you to provide this.

An impact statement is often ordered at the initial case management Preliminary Hearing. For more information on Preliminary Hearings see slideshows 4A-4E.

How do I write a disability impact statement?

The content of the impact statement will of course vary from person to person.

It should reflect the impact that your disability has on your day-to-day life and so there is no set formula for how to write it.

However, the next two slides set out a structure which you may find helpful.

Suggested structure for an impact statement (1)

1. What is the impairment?

You should start by setting out what your impairment/s is/are, i.e. you might have a condition that has a medical name or diagnosis. It is also important to talk about what the actual impairments or symptoms arising from the condition are. For example - reduced mobility, pain, fatigue, low mood, poor concentration, increased susceptibility to infections, difficulty reading social situations.

2. When were you diagnosed?

When did you first know that you had this condition- is there a particular date or period in your life? If it took some time to get a diagnosis, you can describe the process of getting this diagnosis. E.g. “I attended my GP with symptoms of suspected [disability] on [date]. I was referred to a specialist consultant on [date] and after further tests was diagnosed with [disability] on [date].”

Suggested structure for an impact statement (2)

1. What effect does it have?

You should set out the effect your disability has on your day to day life. Focus on day to day activities rather than work. There may be some cross over. How does it effect your ability to go about and organise and manage your life. For example, it may create limitations to what you can do, or how you do certain tasks or how long it takes you to do things or how often?

2. What effect has it had in the past?

It is helpful to set out the history of your condition - what effect it has had in the past and then through to the present. It is particularly important to cover the period during which you felt that you were being discriminated against.

3. Include details about treatment and medication

It can be helpful to talk about what difference treatment makes to how you can go about your day to day life and also to cover how things would be if you did not have the treatment.

How long should the impact statement be?



The impact statement should be roughly one to two sides of A4 paper.

If you have more than one disability or a more complex disability then it might be a little longer than this.

The most important thing is that you cover the key points so do not be too worried about the length.

You should use short, numbered paragraphs to break up the information and make it easier to read.