

## ***Guide to Writing Accommodation Notes for Pregnant or Lactating Patients***

### **First, understand the patient's needs.**

Determine what specific accommodations and/or leave arrangements meet the patient's medical, employment, and/or educational needs. You could ask your patient:

- What duties are you required to do on the job? Do you have a written job description?
- Are you having difficulty with tasks, activities, or work due to your pregnancy?
- Have you asked your employer/school to provide you with accommodations?
- What accommodations is your employer/school providing?
- What accommodations do you need?
- Are you comfortable revealing your pregnancy or medical condition to your employer?

### **An effective, narrowly tailored accommodation note should include:**

- Your relevant professional qualifications
- The limitations for which the patient needs accommodation
  - Explain the patient's precise limitations and avoid overstating
  - Generally, no need to provide a diagnosis
  - May include the need to attend medical appointments, such as prenatal appointments
- Link the limitation to a condition related to, affected by, or arising out of current, past, or potential pregnancy, labor and childbirth, or pregnancy-related medical condition
  - Pregnancy-related medical conditions can include: lactation, miscarriage management, pregnancy termination, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, HELLP syndrome, antenatal or postpartum depression, menstruation, or preexisting conditions exacerbated by pregnancy or childbirth
- Note the patient's ability to continue work, school, or activities, pending reasonable accommodation
- Include suggested "reasonable accommodations," or adjustments, to meet the patient's needs
  - A reasonable accommodations is a feasible adjustment or change to the environment, tasks, or application process that removes or alleviates the barrier
  - For examples of reasonable accommodations and detailed guidance, see the [Center for WorkLife Law](#), [Job Accommodation Network](#), and [The Pregnant Scholar](#)
  - Note that not all limitations require leave or remote education; a different accommodation may be more beneficial and practical for the patient
  - Temporary suspension of an essential job function may be permissible
- Expected duration of the accommodation or leave
- Closely tie the requested accommodation to the needs caused by the condition or limitation.
- Overbroad requests can give an employer or school unnecessary reasons to deny accommodations, terminate employment, or mandate leave. Strong notes are directive, detailed, and specific.

**This tip guide does not constitute legal advice. To inquire about free confidential legal advice, please contact WLP at (215) 928-9801 or [info@womenslawproject.org](mailto:info@womenslawproject.org).**