

## **List of MCS appropriate accommodations**

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) can greatly affect an individual's quality of life, limiting their ability to participate in daily activities and social interactions. It is important for individuals, employers, and service providers to understand and accommodate the needs of people with MCS to promote inclusivity and equal access. With the right accommodations, individuals with MCS can participate more fully in their communities and enjoy a better quality of life. In this section, we will explore some of the accommodations that can be made to support individuals with MCS in different environments, including the workplace, home, transportation, and services.

It's essential to recognize that everyone's needs are unique, thus, before initiating any of the following accommodations, it's crucial to discuss with the individual in question to identify what would best serve them. Optimal accommodations result from collaborative decision-making.

### **Healthy Environment:**

One of the most common accommodations for individuals with MCS is to provide a healthy environment. This may include:

- Using fragrance-free products.
- Introducing a scent/fragrance-free policy.
- Using least toxic products for all uses (cleaning, maintenance, renovations, pest control).
- Avoiding the use of pesticides and using ecological alternatives instead.

- Introducing a least-toxic product use policy for all applications in the establishment.
- Carpet-free workspaces or apartments.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc.).
- Smoke-free policy.
- Include people with the lived experience of MCS when making product choices.

### **Air Filtration:**

While it is always important to choose healthy products at the source, and not rely on dilution of pollution, providing air filtration systems, such as HEPA filters, can enhance indoor air quality for everybody, including individuals with MCS, by removing airborne chemicals and pollutants.

Furthermore, ventilation systems should be interconnected with outdoor air, ensuring a continual supply of fresh air, rather than mere recirculation within the building.

Air filtration is particularly important in areas where Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are present, such as near copiers, printers, and any similar VOC-emitting equipment.

We also advise employing air filtration in communal eating spaces since VOCs can occasionally be emitted from certain foods, oils, or microwaved plastics.

### **Other Work Arrangements:**

- **Dedicated Workspace with Air Purifier:** Establish individual workspaces equipped with high-quality air purifiers to maintain an environment free of airborne contaminants.
- **Windows for Natural Ventilation:** Ensure, where possible, that workspaces have operable windows to allow access to fresh air, enhancing the overall air quality within the workspace.
- **Flexible Work Hours & Remote Work:** Allow employees to work from home or alter their working hours. This can help them avoid heavy traffic during rush hours and crowded public transport.
- **Provisions for Building Renovations:** In cases where the office building is undergoing renovations, an option to work remotely should be offered to avoid potential exposure to harmful construction materials and dust.

### **Inclusivity and Safety in the Workplace:**

- **Educational programs:** Incorporating comprehensive educational programs about MCS in the workplace serves multiple purposes. Namely, it enhances the overall understanding of MCS, providing employees with insights into the challenges faced by individuals with this condition. This can significantly diminish misconceptions and foster empathy among colleagues.
- **Communication:** Promoting open communication within the workplace is crucial, especially in the context of accommodating individuals with MCS. Open dialogue allows for the expression of needs, clarification of accommodations, and resolution of potential issues or misunderstandings that may arise. Regular check-ins, open-door policies, and the incorporation of feedback mechanisms can be valuable tools for ensuring this.

- **Emergency Preparedness:** Plan for potential emergency situations related to the individual's MCS. This can involve training staff on how to respond if the person has a reaction to a chemical exposure.
- **Review and Monitor:** Regularly review and adjust accommodations as necessary, based on the changing needs of the individual, and ensure that everybody in the workplace respects the implemented accommodation (ex: a scent/fragrance-free policy).

## **Conclusion**

With these additional accommodations, you can help ensure a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals with MCS.

If needed, ASEQ-EHAQ offers [Accommodation Request Letters](#). It is also important to note that fragrance-free, unscented and scent-free products are not the same. For more information on this topic, please consult our [Fragrance-free VS scent-free](#) factsheet.