



Essential vs. Marginal Function

Dear Reader:

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We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Essential vs. Marginal Function

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When discussing ADA the term “essential function of the job” is used quite frequently. This is because all individuals are required to be able to perform the essential functions of their job either with or without accommodations.

It is important to be able to distinguish between an essential function and a marginal function. To determine this, employers should consider the following items:

- Does the job exist to do this function?
- Would taking this function from the job fundamentally change the job?
- Would there be significant consequences if this function were not performed?
- Can other employees do this function if necessary?
- What equipment is used to do this function? How frequently is the equipment used?
- How much time per week is spent doing this function?
- What are the minimum qualifications and job standards?
- Could this function be performed in another way?

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