Offer it before anyone asks

Most people never ask. They work around it quietly, or they stop turning up. Five things to make standard, and three to start on Monday.

Make these standard, for everyone

- Captions on by default, in every meeting
- The agenda and the materials sent in advance
- Interview questions offered ahead of time, to every candidate
- The quiet room, the written follow-up and the flexible start in the handbook, not on request
- Access to Work mentioned to every new starter in week one, before they need it

Watch for these

- Adjustments available only on request
- Every request routed through one person who is often away
- Asking someone to justify the need before you'll discuss it
- Treating each request as the first time it has ever happened
- Waiting for a diagnosis before you change anything

Pick one to start on Monday. One, not three.

1 **Find where your policy says "ask", and then stops.**
Whoever owns the policy. An afternoon. The gap is usually what happens when the first answer is no.

2 **Pick one thing you do on request, and make it standard.**
Whoever runs the meeting, the rota or the service. This week.

3 **Write your next access decision down, in one line.**
You, on the day you make it. Two minutes. Resource three has the six boxes.

What you can ask, and what you can't

OFTEN SAID	ACTUALLY
I'm not allowed to ask anything about someone's disability.	You can ask what someone needs in order to do the job. What you can't do is make a diagnosis the price of getting it.
If they haven't asked, they must be fine.	Silence isn't consent. The duty can start when you could reasonably have known.
I need evidence before I can do anything.	Occupational health is a way to get advice, not a gate. Start the easy things now.

From The Small Print, a free monthly session for managers and HR on what to do when disability comes up at work. Hugh O'Keeffe, Disability, Access and Inclusion Consultant. hughokeeffe.com. I'm not a lawyer and this isn't legal advice. Use it as a way in, and get advice on anything already in dispute.