

CANCER and EMPLOYMENT

What Survivors Need to Know

**Cancer Survivors Symposium
Massey Cancer Center
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Cancer Survivors Are a Major Component of the Workforce

- Approximately 40% of those diagnosed with cancer are working-age adults.
- Nearly 10 million have a history of cancer.
- More than 20 million are primary caregivers to those diagnosed with cancer.

Survivors Are Able to Work

- Employers need to be educated:
 - most survivors (59%) miss fewer than 15 days of work as a result of cancer treatment;
 - only 23% of survivors missed more than 30 days;
 - survivors with more stressful and physically demanding jobs are more likely to have cancer affect their ability to do their job.

Surviving Cancer May Be easier than Keeping your Job after the Diagnosis

- The success in keeping a job depends on
 - working out arrangements with your employer in advance;
 - making reasonable requests for changes in the work to be done;
 - the nature of the job and/or the relationship with the employer predating the diagnosis.
- Employers need to be educated about the realities and dissuaded of their fears.
- Although for many, there are laws affording certain employment rights, many survivors work in employment situations where there are no protections.

Most Cancer Survivors are Accommodated

- 60% experienced a positive response at work.
- 6% lost their jobs.
- 13% had job responsibilities reduced.
- 6% reported their supervisor was not understanding.

Be a Survivor at Work

- Know what legal rights you have.
- Exercise those rights within the procedures set forth in the law.
- Work with the employer and within its procedures.
- Let your doctors know that you have to work and therefore treatments must be scheduled to enable you to be at work.

All Employment in Virginia Is At-Will

- This means that:
 - you can be fired for any reason and no reason;
 - you do not even have to be given notice.
- Employment at-will does not exist when:
 - there is a contract of employment;
 - a collective bargaining agreement;
 - a law that affords rights.
- Most employers are employment at-will employers.

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