

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND THE RIGHT OF DISABLED PERSONS TO ACCESS THE LABOUR MARKET

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SUMMARY

Inequality, discrimination and transformation remain the key challenges which most employers are faced with in the South African labour market. Key among such challenges has also been employers' ability to ensure that persons with disabilities access the labour market. In this paper I highlight employment discrimination experienced by persons with disabilities in South African workplaces, which often prohibits them from accessing employment opportunities. I argue that employers need to consider employing persons with disabilities and also reasonably to accommodate them within South African workplaces. I further illustrate efforts by the legislature to eradicate forms of unjustified discrimination against persons with disabilities through the enactment of the *Employment Equity Act* 55 of 1998. I argue that all of us need to understand how cultural, social, physical and other barriers continue to prevent persons with disabilities in South Africa from enjoying their constitutional rights to equality, freedom and human dignity, and further, that it is desirable that society at large and government work together towards eradicating barriers which prevent persons with disabilities from accessing the labour market.

KEYWORDS: Discrimination; reasonable accommodation; persons with disabilities; Code of Good Practice; *Employment Equity Act*

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