



## Accommodations for a party with a head injury

A party may ask for specific accommodations. However, a party may not know enough about the hearing process to know what they need. No two parties with a head injury are exactly alike. The way a party does things as a result of a head injury may depend on the site of the injury and how recently the injury occurred. A party with a head injury may experience:

- Visual difficulties
- Small motor impairment
- Fatigue, and fatigue-induced cognitive problems
- Difficulty processing information
- Short-term memory problems
- Problems prioritizing tasks and remembering lengthy instructions
- Other functional limitations due to physical, sensory and cognitive impairments

### Examples of Accommodations

Accommodations and supports that may help individuals with a head injury include:

- scheduling hearings in the morning or no later than early afternoon to avoid difficulties caused by fatigue;
- ending all-day or multiple-day hearing at noon or by early afternoon to avoid difficulties caused by fatigue;
- keeping the reception area and hearing room free of clutter;
- increasing natural lighting or providing full-spectrum lighting in the hearing room;
- explaining the hearing process step-by-step in greater detail during the prehearing conference
- scheduling a prehearing conference in case types where one would usually not be held, to provide detailed instructions in plain words about how to participate at the hearing
- sending an audio recording of the prehearing conference with the written prehearing order, to provide both verbal and written instructions about the hearing process;
- providing clear instructions and graphics demonstrating how to access OAH's public website for the "how to" information specific to the case type
- using large print versions of written materials; and
- creating checklists of "next steps", including dates of next hearing events, due dates for documents, to assist the party to prepare for hearing.