

Reasonable adjustments for disabled workers

Employers must make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled workers are not seriously disadvantaged when doing their jobs.

Disabled workers are protected by the Equality Act 2010. In Northern Ireland workers are protected by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Workers must be given access to training opportunities, recreation and refreshment facilities.

Employers have to make reasonable adjustments even if they don't employ the person directly - this includes contract workers, trainees, apprentices and business partners.

Access to Work can help employers with some costs involved in making adjustments for disabled workers.

What reasonable adjustments are

Examples could involve:

- doing things another way – e.g. allowing someone with social anxiety disorder to have their own desk instead of hot-desking
- making physical changes – e.g. installing a ramp for a wheelchair user or an audio-visual fire alarm for a deaf person
- letting a disabled person work somewhere else – e.g. on the ground floor for a wheelchair user
- changing their equipment – e.g. providing a special keyboard if they have arthritis
- allowing employees who become disabled to make a phased return to work – e.g. working flexible hours or part-time

More advice

You can get advice on reasonable adjustments from the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Jobcentre Plus office via the Access to Work scheme.

Access to Work

Overview

An Access to Work grant helps pay for practical support if you have a disability, health or mental health condition so you can:

- start working
- stay in work
- start your own business

How much you get depends on your circumstances.

The money doesn't have to be paid back and will not affect your other benefits.

Access to Work is only available in England, Scotland and Wales.

What you'll get

There is no set amount for an Access to Work grant. How much you get depends on your circumstances.

The money can pay for things like:

- adaptations to the equipment you use
- special equipment
- fares to work if you can't use public transport
- a support worker or job coach to help you in your workplace
- a support service if you have a mental health condition and you're absent from work or finding it difficult to work
- disability awareness training for your colleagues
- a communicator at a job interview
- the cost of moving your equipment if you change location or job

Eligibility

Access to Work grants are only available if the employer is based in England, Scotland or Wales.

- You must be 16 or over and either:
 - about to start a job or work trial
 - in a paid job or self-employed (you can't get a grant for voluntary work)

You might also qualify if you're getting New Enterprise Allowance or starting work experience under a Youth Contract.

Your condition

Your disability or health condition must affect your ability to do a job or mean you have to pay work-related costs. For example, special computer equipment or travel costs because you can't use public transport.

Your mental health condition must affect your ability to do a job and means you need support to:

- start a new job
- reduce absence from work
- stay in work

Exceptions

You might not qualify if you get any of these benefits:

- Incapacity Benefit
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Income Support
- National Insurance Credits

Changing jobs

You can transfer your grant to another employer if you change jobs.

How to claim

Follow these steps if you think you can get help from Access to Work.

1. Contact your Access to Work centre - see below to find the right centre.
2. Print the Access to Work eligibility letter and take it to your employer or to a job interview.
3. An adviser will contact you and your employer to find out what help and support is needed.

Find your Access to Work centre

Contact the centre that covers the area where you live. You may need the following information:

- your National Insurance number
- your workplace address, including your postcode
- the name, email address and work phone number of a workplace contact (e.g. your manager)
- your unique tax reference number (if you're self-employed)
- the name of your New Enterprise Allowance mentor (if you have one)

London (for South East England and East England)

Access to Work - London
atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Telephone: 020 8426 3110
Textphone: 020 8426 3133
Fax: 020 8426 3134

Jobcentre Plus
Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Nine Elms Lane
London
SW95 9BH

Cardiff (for South West England, Wales, West Midlands and East Midlands)

Access to Work - Cardiff
atwosu.cardiff@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Telephone: 02920 423 291
Textphone: 0845 602 5850
Fax: 02920 423 342

Jobcentre Plus
Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Alexandra House
377 Cowbridge Road East
Cardiff CF5 1WU

Glasgow (for Scotland, North West England, North East England, Yorkshire and Humberside)

Access to Work - Glasgow
atwosu.glasgow@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Telephone: 0141 950 5327
Textphone: 0845 602 5850
Fax: 0141 950 5265

Jobcentre Plus
Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Anniesland JCP
Baird Street
Glasgow G90 8AN

What we can provide you with

Following an assessment, Freedom of Speech Ltd can provide you with the solution recommended for you. This can be in the form of:

- software to enable you to dictate text onto a computer or read e-mails and documents back to you
- hardware to enable work more ergonomically on your PC or digital audio recorders to enable you to records your thoughts and letters
- training to teach you how to use this equipment effectively and so minimise the impact that you disability has on you job role

Give us a call or send an e-mail via our details below:

Telephone: 01903 263007
E-mail: info@freedom-speech.co.uk
Website: www.freedom-speech.co.uk
Webshop: www.freedom-speech-shop.co.uk