

Employer's Guide to Access to Work

Access to Work is a specialist disability service delivered by Jobcentre Plus, which gives practical advice and support to disabled people, whether they are working, self employed or looking for employment.

Access to Work is provided where someone needs support or adaptations beyond the reasonable adjustments which an employer is legally obliged to provide under the Equality Act.

How does Access to Work help me as an employer?

Access to Work can help you:

- retain an employee who develops a disability or long term condition (keeping their valuable skills and saving both time and money recruiting a replacement)
- show that you value your employees by having good employment policies and practices, and
- support your employees who have a mental health condition.

Who can get Access to Work?

To be eligible for help, a person must:

- have a disability or health condition that has a long term substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out their job
- be over 16 years old
- be in, or about to start, paid employment (including self-employment)
- normally live and work in Great Britain, and
- not be claiming Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance once they are in work.

What type of help is provided by Access to Work?

Access to Work can support customers in a number of ways. For example it can provide funds towards:

- special aids and equipment
- adaptations to equipment
- travel to work
- travel in work
- communication support at interviews
- a wide variety of support workers, and
- the Mental Health Support Service.

Access to Work does not provide the support itself, but provides a grant to reimburse the cost of the support that is needed.

What will the level of grant be?

The level of grant will depend on:

- whether the person is employed or self-employed
- how long they have been in their job, and
- the type of help required.

Access to Work will consider paying grants of up to 100% for:

- self-employed people, or
- people who have been working for less than six weeks when they first apply for Access to Work.

Access to Work will also consider paying up to 100% of costs for:

- the Mental Health Support Service
- support workers
- additional travel to work and travel in work costs, or
- communication support at interviews.

Will I have to pay anything?

As an employer you may have to share the cost with Access to Work if the person has been working for you for more than six weeks when they apply for Access to Work.

You will only have to share the cost for:

- special aids and equipment, and
- adaptations to premises or equipment.

Cost share does not apply to self employed applicants or to the Mental Health Support Service.

What will be my share of the costs?

When cost sharing applies, Access to Work will refund up to 80% of the approved costs between a threshold and £10,000. As the employer you will contribute 100% of costs up to the threshold level and 20% of the costs between the threshold and £10,000.

The amount of the threshold is determined by the number of employees you have.

0 - 49 employees	nil
50 - 249 employees	£500
Over 250 employees	£1000

Any balance above £10,000 will normally be met by Access to Work.

If the support also provides a general business benefit, a contribution will be sought in addition to any compulsory cost share.

Mental Health Support Service

Through the Mental Health Support Service, Access to Work:

- gives advice and guidance to help employers understand mental ill health and how they can support employees, and
- offers eligible people an assessment to find out their needs at work and help to develop a support plan.



Who can get help?

A person can get support from Access to Work if they have a mental health condition and are either:

- going into work
- absent from work as a result of their mental health condition, or
- finding work difficult as a result of their mental health condition.

Contact details

For more information about Access to Work, please contact us.

Telephone: **020 8426 3110**

Textphone: **020 8426 3133**

Email: **atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk**

If you require an alternative method of communication, please use the contact details above to discuss your needs.

