

STEWARTS
THE LEGAL SERVICE

RETURNING TO WORK



Returning to work

If you have a disability that affects your ability to work following an illness or injury, you can seek assistance from a “work coach” at your local Jobcentre Plus. A work coach (or a disability employment advisor) is trained to help you find work or gain new skills for a job.

A work coach may be able to help by:

- Identifying what type of work or training would be most suitable for you;
- Arranging an assessment with a work psychologist to help you prepare to find and stay in work;
- Keeping you informed about jobs that match your experience and skills; and
- Providing information about other available help.

Your work coach can tell you about programmes and grants to help you return to work which may include the Access to Work scheme.

Access to Work

The Access to Work scheme provides practical and/or financial support for employers and employees to overcome work-related obstacles resulting from disabilities.

Before you apply for Access to Work, speak to your employer about “reasonable adjustments”. Your employer must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that you are not substantially disadvantaged when doing your job. Reasonable adjustments could include amending your working hours or providing you with a specific piece of equipment.

Eligibility

You can use the Access to Work scheme if you:

- have a disability or health condition that makes it hard to do parts of your job or get to and from work,
- are over the age of 16, and
- are in a paid job (which includes self-employment, apprenticeships, work experience or internships) or are about to start a job or a work trial.

Assistance available

Among other things, the scheme can help with the costs of:

1. Equipment and/or adaptations to the equipment you use;
2. Support workers;
3. Communicators to assist in job interviews;
4. Travel to work if you cannot use public transport;
5. Disability awareness training for colleagues; and
6. The cost of moving your equipment if you change job or location.

There is no set amount for an Access to Work grant; the amount you receive will depend on your individual circumstances but grants are capped (in 2021/2022, the cap is £62,900).

How to access the assistance

You can apply online (www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply).

It is the responsibility of the employer (or your own responsibility if you are self-employed) to arrange any recommended equipment. The employer can reclaim these costs from the Access to Work scheme.

Other benefits

If you receive certain benefits, this may affect whether you are eligible to apply for an Access to Work grant.

If you receive Universal Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support, you can still get an Access to Work grant if you work more than one hour a week.

If you receive Employment and Support Allowance, you can only get help from Access to Work if you're doing "permitted work". Permitted work applies where:

- You earn up to £140 a week;
- You work less than 16 hours a week;
- It has been agreed with your work coach.

Further Information

Access to Work:

www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Telephone: 0800 121 7479

Textphone: 0800 121 7579

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Dr Eynon,
Consultant in Intensive Care,
University Hospital Southampton



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