

Access to Work



Access to Work
Making work possible

Access to Work – Making Work Possible

What is Access to Work (AtW)?

- Access to Work is a grant that supports people with a health condition or disability
- It provides individual practical support and advice to help to overcome barriers at work
- It helps people with all types of disabilities, including Mental Health conditions
- Access to Work grants may help with additional costs beyond “Reasonable Adjustments”
- Employers may be asked to contribute towards the cost of one off support

What can Access to Work pay for?

- Special equipment or adaptations
- A support worker or job coach to help in the workplace
- Disability awareness training for colleagues
- Communication support at a job interview or in the workplace
- The cost of moving equipment following a change in location/job
- Travel support to work for those who cannot use public transport or drive which may include taxis
- An Access to Work Mental Health Support Service for people who are absent from work or experiencing difficulties with their wellbeing
- Customers may be asked to source three quotes and grants would be determined based on the most cost effective solution.

Eligibility

Who can get help?

To be eligible for Access to Work, people can apply who;

- Have a disability or health condition that affects their ability to work
- Mean they have to pay additional work-related costs e.g. specialist equipment/travel costs
- Are aged 16 or over
- Are in or about to start paid work in England, Scotland or Wales

The type of work or opportunity

Access to work can help people who are;

- Employed
- Self-employed
- Have a job interview
- About to start work or a work trial
- Starting Work Experience opportunities
- On Apprenticeships or Traineeships

Other benefits

Some benefits can affect whether a customer can get an Access to Work grant and you can find out more about eligibility by visiting www.gov.uk/access-to-work;

- **Universal Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance or Personal Independence Payment** – Applicants can be supported if they work more than 1 hour per week
- **Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)** - Help from Access to Work is available as long as 'permitted work' has been agreed
- **Incapacity Benefit** - Help from Access to Work is available as long as 'permitted work' has been agreed

How to apply

Apply for Access to Work online or by phone;

<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply>

Access to Work helpline

Telephone: 0800 121 7479

Textphone: 0800 121 7579

Relay UK(for customers who cannot hear or speak on the phone):

18001 then 0800 121 7479

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

British Sign Language (BSL) video relay service

To use this, first [check you can use the service](#)

go to the [video relay service](#)

What to expect

During the application, the Customer will need to provide;

- Their workplace address and postcode
- The name of a workplace contact who can authorise Access to Work payments
- Their workplace contacts email address or telephone number
- Their unique tax reference number (if self-employed)
- There may be an element of cost share depending on the size of the company

The Customer will also need to explain;

- How their condition affects them at work/getting to work
- What help they are already receiving
- What else could help them

After the application is made

Once an application is allocated, an Access to Work adviser will contact the applicant to discuss what help they could get.

An adviser may also contact their employer to discuss how Access to Work can help support them. They will not contact their employer until they've agreed this with them first.

A specialist assessor may contact them and their employer to assess their needs and discuss appropriate support before providing a detailed report.

An applicant may get an offer of support, which could include a grant. If it does, they will be told how much they will get and for how long for.

Grants are awarded depending on the needs of the individual for a maximum of three years and are reviewed annually.

Cost share

There may be an element of cost share depending on the size of the company and when the customer started working for that employer;

- Small Employer (0-49): Zero Cost Share
- Medium Employer (50 to 249): First £500 and 20% of costs thereafter
- Large Employer (250+): First £1000 and 20% of costs thereafter
- Any costs above £10,000 met by Access to Work and cost share does not apply to self employed applicants

Applicant contributions;

Some Access to Work applicants are asked to make a contribution towards equipment or adaptations if they can benefit from them away from work. When reimbursing travel costs we also ask that the normal cost of travel (if appropriate) is considered.

Renewals

If an Access to Work grant is ending soon, customers will need to apply to renew it. They can apply up to 12 weeks before the date it ends.

To renew, applications can be made online or by phone and the following information will need to be provided;

- Name
- Address
- Date of birth
- Unique reference number (given to them when they initially applied)

Once the application has been made and the case has been allocated, an Access to Work adviser will make contact. They may request further information about the customer's condition and will also contact the employer.

If a customer is offered a new grant, they will be told how much they are being awarded and how long for.

Change of circumstances

If receiving support from Access to Work, the customer must report any changes, including;

- Their disability or health condition
- Home or work address
- Changes in employer, job role or working pattern
- Changes in personal contact details

Any changes can be reported to the Access to Work helpline

Reconsideration

If a customer disagrees with a decision on their Access to Work claim, they can request a reconsideration.

Once the request is received, the customer will be contacted by the reconsiderations team and an officer may contact the customer if further information is required.

The customer will then be contacted with the outcome of their request by letter or email.

If the customer is still unhappy with the outcome, they can complain.

Case studies

- James made an application as he is starting a new job in 3 weeks. James is Deaf and BSL is his first language. James was previously in full time education and this is his first job.
- The adviser that was allocated the case emailed James to gather further information, James advised he required a BSL interpreter.
- The adviser sent James a Support Worker Record of Tasks document to complete. This document allows a standard working week to be broken down showing the tasks he can undertake independently, and those he feels support are required with.
- James was also advised to source 3 quotes for interpreters.
- James initially requested 15 hours support per week, following discussions with his employer this was reduced to 12 hours due to additional support from the employer.
- The hourly rate agreed was £45 per hour and the support was input for 3 years which meant an award for support for James of over £28,000.

Case studies

- Tom is employed by a local Estate Agents as an Office Assistant, he has been in the role for the past 4 years and drives himself to work.
- Tom has Epilepsy. He takes medication and is usually in control of his condition however suffered a seizure recently. As a result, the DVLA have revoked his driving licence for 12 months. Tom lives in a rural area and there is no public transport route to and from work. The journey is 8 miles each way.
- The adviser gathered all the required information, confirming there were no alternative means of getting to and from work. Tom was advised he would need to provide three quotes from different registered taxi firms for the journey.
- He was also sent a medical form to be approved by his GP.
- The most cost effective taxi quote was £14 each way. Support was agreed until the date his licence was due to be reinstated.
- As Tom previously drove to work he would contribute 25p per mile towards the cost (£2 per journey) which meant an award of £24 per day.
- Tom was made aware should circumstances change, for example a delay in the return of his licence he should contact us to report the change.

Case studies

- Louise contacted Access to Work as she was having difficulty at work due to Dyslexia. She was diagnosed whilst at University and had some assistive software but was unsure what was available to help her now.
- Louise discussed what support her employer had already provided which was an Occupational Health referral and additional time to complete some tasks.
- The advisor referred Louise for a Work Place Assessment and confirmed her employer agreed to the mandatory cost share agreement.
- A report was produced detailing recommendations which was discussed with Louise and her employer.
- One of the recommendations was a Laptop to run some assistive software and Louise's employer confirmed she could take this home with her on an evening and weekend.
- As a result Louise agreed to contribute 2/7 of the cost of this item to account for social and domestic usage.

Case studies

- Asif contacted ATW as he is working as a Bus Driver. After a crash in his car 6 months ago he is feeling very anxious about driving passengers once again.
- He contacted ATW as he wanted to know if there was any help we could offer him. Asif has had some counselling after the accident which has helped him to start driving his car again but he wants some help to enable him to drive a bus again and to start taking passengers.
- He made an application online and was allocated to an adviser.
- The adviser then made a referral to our Mental Health Support Service (MHSS) who provided Asif with 9 months of support. The Vocational Rehabilitation Coach contacted Asif every month to keep up to date with his progress and to provide further support and coping mechanisms. The last three months were a light touch approach as Asif's confidence grew.
- At the end of the 9 month period the adviser was provided with an exit report which showed that Asif was able to remain in work and had started to drive the bus again, maintaining his employment.

Links and marketing material

[Our content on gov.uk](#)

There is Access to Work content and information available on gov.uk which is aimed at applicants and stakeholders, this includes;

- eligibility
- employee and employer factsheets and easy read document
- links to our BSL videos
- Information in Welsh

[The Access to Work Communications Toolkit](#)

Our communications Toolkit contains information relevant to jobcentre colleagues, those in the Employer & Partnership community as well as for our stakeholders and employers. This includes;

- marketing materials (leaflets and posters)
- upskilling products
- factsheets
- social media images