

Recruiting, Training and Supporting disabled employees

With shortages of potential employees and large numbers of those in the job market presenting with a disability or health condition, what help is there for you as an employer, to engage and support a disabled employee? Since the early 1990's there has been a successful support programme called Access to Work.

As a self-employed worker, following injuries sustained in a hit and run incident, I personally benefitted from the system.

How can it help?

Access to Work assists disabled people (DP) who are in paid employment or with a job or a Work Trial to start by providing practical support with overcoming work related obstacles from disability. There is very occasionally an employer cost share involved.

Access to Work may contribute to additional employment costs resulting from disability over and above those considered to be reasonable adjustments.

Access to Work advisers work closely with the Disabled Person and can draw on the expertise of independent specialist assessors to identify appropriate solutions to the Disabled Person's needs.

Access to Work advisers work with the Disabled Person and their employer to deliver the support required, and reimburse some or all of the costs as agreed in advance.

Reimbursements made under Access to Work are not liable for Income Tax.

Access to Work funding encourages employers to recruit and retain disabled people by offering practical financial help towards the additional cost of employing a disabled person.

Disabled people who are employed, self-employed or applying for or starting a job or Work Trial can be eligible for Access to Work help.

There are many types of Access to Work Support and they include support equipment , processes or paid for support colleagues in the following categories:-

Communication Support at Interview

Travel to Work

Travel in Work

Support Worker in these categories:

BSL Interpreter

Carer

Counsellor

Driver

Job-Aide

Job Coach

Lip Speaker

Note Taker

Palantypist (a specially trained person, dedicated to improving communication for the deaf and hard of hearing)

Personal Reader

Travel Buddy

Adaptations to Equipment

Special Aids and Equipment

Sometimes adaptations to premises.

Eligibility conditions for Access to Work

Too get help a disabled person must:

be disabled or have a health condition that impacts their ability to work.

be 16 or over; there is no upper age limit for support as long as the employment is likely to continue;

be in need of help at a job interview with an employer;

or be about to start employment;

or be about to start a Work Trial, or be in employment, whether as an employed or self-employed person; and not be in receipt of Incapacity Benefits/ESA and/or NI credits only (or will cease to claim whilst in work) unless the customer is about to start a Work Trial.

Definition of disability

For Access to Work the Equality Act 2010 definition is used to determine eligibility. People falling within the Equality Act 2010 definition are eligible to apply for support.

Sometimes an individual's disability does not substantially affect their normal day-to-day activities but does have a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to do their job. These people should be considered eligible to apply in the same way as those covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Employers have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments. Access to Work may pay for additional employment costs that go beyond what is reasonable for an employer to provide.

For full guidance check out <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work> or get in touch with me.

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