

Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition

1. What Access to Work is

Access to Work can help you get or stay in work if you have a physical or mental health condition or disability.

The support you get will depend on your needs. Through Access to Work, you can apply for:

- a grant to help pay for practical support with your work
- support with managing your mental health at work
- money to pay for communication support at job interviews

This guide is also available in Welsh (Cymraeg) ([/mynediad-at-waith](#)), British Sign Language (BSL) (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC0aQWFFHARzJYt8cED-WX1g5jD0mApTv>) and Easy Read format ([/government/publications/easy-read-get-help-at-work-if-youre-disabled-or-have-a-health-condition-access-to-work](#)).

Practical support with your work

Access to Work could give you a grant to help pay for things like:

- specialist equipment and assistive software
- support workers, like a BSL interpreter, a job coach or a travel buddy
- costs of travelling to work, if you cannot use public transport
- adaptations to your vehicle so you can get to work
- physical changes to your workplace

Your workplace can include your home if you work from there some or all of the time.

If you get an Access to Work grant, it will not affect any other benefits you get and you will not have to pay it back.

You or your employer may need to pay some costs up front and claim them back later.

How to apply

Check you're eligible (</access-to-work/eligibility>) and then [apply for an Access to Work grant](/access-to-work/apply) (</access-to-work/apply>).

Mental health support

You can get support to manage your mental health at work, which might include:

- a tailored plan to help you get or stay in work
- one-to-one sessions with a mental health professional

How to apply

Check you're eligible (</access-to-work/eligibility>) and then apply directly to either Able Futures (<https://able-futures.co.uk/individuals>) or Maximus (<https://atw.maximusuk.co.uk/>) - you must only apply to one.

If you've had mental health support through Access to Work before, you cannot apply again.

Communication support for job interviews

Access to Work can help pay for communication support at a job interview if:

- you're deaf or hard of hearing and need a BSL interpreter or lipspeaker
- you have a physical or mental health condition or learning difficulty and need communication support

Find out more and [apply for communication support at a job interview](/guidance/apply-for-communication-support-at-a-job-interview-if-you-have-a-disability-) (</guidance/apply-for-communication-support-at-a-job-interview-if-you-have-a-disability->

or-health-condition-access-to-work).

What Access to Work will not pay for

Access to Work will not pay for reasonable adjustments (/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers). These are the changes your employer must legally make to support you to do your job.

Access to Work will advise your employer if changes should be made as reasonable adjustments.

2. Eligibility

As part of Access to Work, you may be eligible for:

- a grant to help pay for practical support with your work
- support with managing your mental health at work

For these types of support, you must:

- have a physical or mental health condition or disability that means you need support to do your job or get to and from work
- be 16 or over
- be in paid work (or be about to start or return to paid work in the next 12 weeks)
- live and work (or be about to start or return to work) in England, Scotland or Wales - there's a different system in Northern Ireland (<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/people-with-disabilities/employment-support/work-schemes-and-programmes/access-to-work-practical-help-at-work.htm>)

For mental health support, you can only claim Access to Work once. If you've received it before, you cannot apply again.

There are different eligibility criteria for communication support at a job interview (/guidance/apply-for-communication-support-at-a-job-interview-if-you-have-a-disability-or-health-condition-access-to-work).

You cannot get Access to Work if you live in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

Your disability, illness or health condition

You must have a disability, illness or health condition that means you need support to do your job.

This can include, for example:

- a physical disability, for example if you're hard of hearing or use a wheelchair
- a learning disability or related condition, for example if you have Down's syndrome
- a developmental condition, like autism spectrum disorder
- having ADHD or dyslexia
- an illness such as diabetes or epilepsy
- a temporary condition, like a broken leg
- a mental health condition, for example anxiety or depression

You do not need to be diagnosed with a condition to apply.

Your work

You need to have a paid job (or be about to start or return to one).

A paid job can be full or part-time and can include:

- employment
- self-employment
- an apprenticeship
- a work trial or work experience
- an internship
- a work placement

You cannot get Access to Work support for voluntary work.



You can still apply for Access to Work if you're working from home some or all of the time.

Your income and benefits

You can get Access to Work at the same time as most benefits, as long as you work more than 1 hour a week.

If you're employed, you can get support however much you earn or have in savings.

If you're self-employed, you must have an annual turnover of at least £6,500.

If you're getting Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

You can get Access to Work and ESA at the same time if you work less than 16 hours a week. There are [rules about working while claiming ESA \(/employment-support-allowance/working-while-you-claim\)](#). You can ask your work coach for advice and support.

If you're a civil servant

Your employer will provide support instead of Access to Work. Contact your employer so they can assess and arrange the support you need.

Get advice on your eligibility

If you're not sure that you're eligible, call the Access to Work helpline.

Access to Work helpline

Telephone: 0800 121 7479

[Relay UK \(https://www.relayuk.bt.com/\)](https://www.relayuk.bt.com/) (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0800 121 7479

British Sign Language (BSL) [video relay service](#)

[\(/https://connect.interpreterslive.co.uk/vrs?ilc=DWP\)](https://connect.interpreterslive.co.uk/vrs?ilc=DWP) if you're on a computer - find out how to [use the service on mobile or tablet \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oELNMfAvDxw\)](#)

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

[Find out about call charges \(/call-charges\)](#)

If phone calls are difficult for you (for example, because you're deaf or hard of hearing), you can ask for all communication to be by email instead.

3. Apply for an Access to Work grant

Check you're eligible (/access-to-work/eligibility) before you apply.

If you're a civil servant, your employer will provide support instead of Access to Work. Contact them directly to arrange this.

You can apply for Access to Work online or by phone.

You'll need to give:

- your contact details
- your workplace address and postcode
- information about how your condition affects your work and what support you think you need
- details of a workplace contact who can confirm you work there, if you're employed (they will not be contacted without your permission)
- your Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) number (/find-lost-utr-number), if you're self-employed
- your National Insurance Number, if you have it

If you need the form in other formats, such as braille, large print or audio CD, call the Access to Work helpline.

Apply online

Start now

Apply by phone

You can apply by calling the Access to Work helpline. Make sure you have all the necessary details with you when you call.

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4. After you apply for the grant

Someone from Access to Work will contact you to talk about your application.

If phone calls are difficult for you (for example, because you're deaf or hard of hearing), you can ask for all communication to be by email instead.

The person who contacts you may ask:

- for more information about your work and your disability or health condition
- for permission to speak to your employer
- to arrange for an assessor to call you or view your workplace by video call or in person - to find out what changes might help

You'll get a letter with a decision and explanation. It will tell you how much your grant will be and what it should pay for.

If your circumstances change

You must tell Access to Work by calling the helpline if your circumstances change.

This could be if, for example:

- your name, address, contact details or workplace address changes

- you change jobs
- your disability, illness or health condition changes

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If you disagree with a decision or want to complain

If you disagree with the decision, call the Access to Work helpline to ask someone to reconsider your application.

You can also call the helpline if you're unhappy with how your case has been handled or the service you've received.

5. Claiming money from your grant

You can claim money from your grant online or by post.

What you need to claim

To claim money from your grant you'll need to provide:

- the dates you had support
- invoices or receipts showing the cost of your support
- bank details for the person or company who will receive the money from the grant

You may also need the details of a workplace contact who can confirm the support you're claiming for.

Claim online

You'll need a GOV.UK One Login to use this service. You'll be able to create a GOV.UK One Login if you do not already have one.

You'll be told when you sign in if you need to prove your identity. This is to keep your details safe. It normally involves using photo ID like a passport or driving licence, but there are other ways to prove your identity if you do not have photo ID.

You'll need a letter confirming your grant has been approved before you can claim.

Claim online

Claim by post

Complete the paper claim form that was sent with your Access to Work decision letter to claim money from your grant by post.

You need to include any invoices or receipts requested in the claims form. You can send copies if you do not have the originals.

You can call the Access to Work helpline to get a paper claim form if you need one.

If you need help with your claim

Call the Access to Work helpline if:

- you need help with your claim
- you do not have the information needed to make a claim
- you need help with setting up your online account
- your grant runs out and you need more money to pay for something your decision letter says you need

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Find out about call charges (</call-charges>)

If phone calls are difficult for you (for example, because you're deaf or hard of hearing), you can ask for all communication to be by email instead.

6. Renew your grant

You'll need to renew your Access to Work grant before it ends if you use it to pay for ongoing support (for example, a support worker).

Your decision letter will say when your grant ends. You can apply to renew it 12 weeks before this.

If you're a civil servant and your grant's end date is on or after 1 April 2022, you will not be able to renew it. Contact your employer for support instead.

You can apply to renew online or by phone.

Check you're still eligible (</access-to-work/eligibility>) before you apply.

You'll need to give your unique reference number (if you know it).

If you need the form in other formats, such as braille, large print or audio CD, call the Access to Work helpline.

[Renew online](#)

Renew by phone

You can apply by calling the Access to Work helpline.

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Telephone: 0800 121 7479

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If phone calls are difficult for you (for example, because you're deaf or hard of hearing), you can ask for all communication to be by email instead.

After you apply

An Access to Work adviser may contact you.

If anything's changed since you last applied, they may ask for more information. For example, about your condition, how it affects your work and what support you think you need.

Another workplace assessment might be needed. If so, the adviser will ask for permission before contacting your employer.

If you're offered a new grant, you'll be told how much you'll get and for how long.



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