

Patient information

Access to Work

Access to Work - what is it?

Access to Work provides grants to help people to overcome barriers they may be facing when looking for a job, or when working. This means helping you to overcome any difficulties you are facing because of not hearing at work.

Who is eligible?

You must be 16 or over with a permanent hearing loss which affects your ability to do a job.

You can apply if:

- you have an interview
- you're about to start a job or work trial
- you're in a paid job or self-employed (you can't get a grant for voluntary work)
- you're getting New Enterprise Allowance
- you're starting work experience

Exceptions

You might not qualify if you get any of these benefits:

- Incapacity Benefit
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Income Support
- National Insurance Credits

You might still qualify for Access to Work if you earn less than £105 a week and either work:

- as part of a treatment programme to get you off benefits
- supervised by someone from a local council or voluntary organisation who arranges work for disabled people. This is called 'supported permitted work'.

How can they help?

Here are some examples of what the money can provide:

- communicators for interviews
- note takers
- special equipment for the work place such as FM systems
- alterations to existing equipment
- adaptations to the equipment you use
- fares to work if you can't use public transport
- a support worker or job coach to help you in your workplace
- a support service if you have a mental health condition and you're absent from work or finding it difficult to work
- disability awareness training for your colleagues
- the cost of moving your equipment if you change location or job

Only non-standard equipment is funded. Phones are considered to be standard equipment and special fire alarms are deemed the responsibility of the employer for health and safety reasons.

Assessments are always funded and this is usually the best way for an employee to proceed.

What does it cost?

In some cases, employers need to share the costs involved:

- If you have recently started working, are about to start, or you are self-employed, Access to Work will pay 100% of the approved costs for special equipment.
- If you have been employed for six weeks or longer, there is a sliding scale of cost share depending on the size of the employer.

The maximum employer contribution is £1000 before Access to Work will help to fund costs:

- If you are self-employed, 100% of the approved costs will be paid for, no matter how long you have been self-employed.
- **It is important to contact an Access to Work Advisor as soon as possible when starting a new job, in order to get 100% of the approved costs paid for (within the first six weeks).**

Access to Work grants are capped at £41,400 per year.

How do I apply?

Contact Access to Work – see www.gov.uk/access-to-work for more information.

In your application, you may need:

- Your National Insurance number
- Your workplace address, including your work postcode
- The name, email address and work phone number of a workplace contact, eg your manager
- Your unique tax reference number (if you're self-employed)
- The name of your New Enterprise Allowance mentor (if you have one). For more information on this allowance use this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/moving-from-benefits-to-work/starting-your-own-business>

Contact details

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

Telephone: 0345 268 8489

Textphone: 0345 608 8753 Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 6:00pm

Operational Support Unit, Harrow Jobcentre Plus, Mail Handling Site A,
Wolverhampton, WV98 1JE

It may be helpful to contact your Occupational Health department for support in making your Access to Work application

What happens once I have made an application?

- Once you have made an application it will be processed.
- An advisor will be allocated and will contact you and your employer to arrange an assessment.
- The advisor will gather further information and provide your employer with written information.
- Funding is then provided and your employer should implement the support/purchase the equipment.
- You will need to complete the final paperwork.
- The advisor will check that you are managing with the support put in to place and your claim will be reviewed after a year.

If you change jobs

Tell Access to Work if you change jobs. You may be able to:

- transfer equipment to a new job
- get a different amount of grant

You have to make a new application to:

- transfer support workers
- get travel costs

Acknowledgements

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If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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