

Our phone number is

Code	Number	Ext
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Textphone users with speech or hearing difficulties call

Code	Number
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If you get in touch with us, tell us this reference number

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Date

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Information for employers

Your employee is applying for help

We are contacting you because one of your employees has applied for help from the Access to Work programme. Access to Work is a Government programme delivered by Jobcentre Plus to help overcome barriers that disabled people come across in getting or keeping work.

The programme helps by providing advice, an assessment of your employee's disability needs in the workplace and if required, a financial grant towards the cost of any necessary support.

Access to work enables disabled people to contribute to the success of your business.

This letter guides you through the Access to Work process and will help you understand your responsibilities and any actions you may need to take.

Elements of Access to Work

The programme is broken down into six elements, each offering a specific type of help.

- Adaptation to Premises and Equipment.
- Communicator Support at Interview.
- Travel within Work.
- Special Aids and Equipment.
- Support Worker.
- Travel to Work.

Depending on your employee's circumstances, we may provide support under more than one of these elements.

What happens now?

Having spoken to your employee this is what will happen next.

- ☐ Your employee will be referred to a specialist for an independent assessment that will take place on your premises.
- ☐ Support has been negotiated and agreed between the Adviser and your employee
- ☐ There is still uncertainty about the support required and further information is needed
- ☐ No support can be provided at this time based on the information supplied.

Following that

- ☐ A written report will be sent to your employee and we will encourage them to share it with you.
- ☐ You will get a summary of the support recommended and where you can get that support from
- ☐ You will get written confirmation of the amount of Access to Work will pay towards that support and how much is your responsibility.

Once the recommendations have been received with the letter confirming the award of the grant it is your responsibility to buy the support as soon as possible.

When the support has been bought by you, send the completed claim form, with invoices where required, so that Access to Work can pay the money back.

When support has been paid for by your employee please complete the employer's declaration on their claim form.

Please make sure that claims for reimbursement are made within six months of costs being incurred. Access to Work will not accept claims made more than six months after costs have been incurred.

What we need from you to assist us and your employee

We need you to

- provide contact details for someone in your business who will be available for us to discuss the application with throughout the process
- allow us to visit your employee at work, if required, to conduct an assessment of their needs
- agree to share the cost of some types of support if your employee has been with you for more than 6 weeks or if your business will gain a general benefit from it
- buy what is needed as soon as you receive written confirmation
- make claims for reimbursement within six months of costs being incurred
- support claims for payment with original invoices or receipts, or certified copies, and
- allow your employee to take equipment to a new job if they leave your employment, or dispose of any unwanted equipment responsibly.

What you can expect from us

We aim to enable employers to work to support disabled people to be productive and contribute to the business. Therefore we will

- pay for an independent assessment where needed
- help your employee identify the support they need
- help to get your employee's support in place as quickly as possible by approving the grant as soon as a suitable solution is identified
- keep your employee and you informed
- pay any claims within 10 working days after we get your correctly completed claim form
- respond promptly to any changes in your employee's circumstances
- review your employee's requirements at least once a year to ensure that their needs are being met
- respect your privacy and protect your personal and business information, and
- be friendly, helpful and professional.

More information

Access to Work funding period

The Access to Work programme can make funding awards for periods of up to 3 years. At the end of 3 years the customer must re-apply for Access to Work support. If an employer cost share is required, it is applied to all eligible spending in each 3 year Access to Work award period.

Employer cost share

If your employee has been with you for 6 weeks or more when they apply for Access to Work support for specialist equipment or an adaptation, you will have to contribute to the cost.

The minimum level of cost sharing is:

- employers with 1 to 9 employees are not required to pay a share of costs
- employers with 10 to 49 employees must pay the first £300 and 20% of costs up to £10,000
- employers with 50 to 249 employees must pay the first £500 and 20% of costs up to £10,000
- employers with over 250 employees must pay the first £1,000 and 20% of costs up to £10,000.

Access to Work can pay up to 100% of any costs over £10,000.

Access to Work will normally ask you to agree additional voluntary contributions.

Standard equipment and reasonable adjustments

Access to Work will not provide funding for equipment that is considered standard for the job or equipment that it is reasonable for you to provide. If this applies to your case the Access to Work Adviser will discuss this with you.

Review of support

Your employee's support will be subject to regular reviews, at least every 12 months. We may need talk to you and your employee to confirm that all the support is still required and that the support is still meeting their needs.

Amount of Access to Work payable

If the actual cost of support is less than the approved amount we will adjust the payments accordingly.

Backdated applications

Access to Work will not normally pay for any costs incurred before we received the signed application form and approval of support.

Employing support workers

There are different ways that a support worker can be recruited and employed to assist an Access to Work customer. You can:

- add the support role to an existing employee's job
- recruit a new employee
- use an agency worker.

Or the Access to Work customer can employ the Support Worker directly.

You and your employee will need to decide how you want to recruit and employ the support worker, taking account of:

- the number of hours of support you need
- the skills the support worker must have
- the resources available to deliver employer functions such as payroll.

The Access to Work adviser will be able to give you more information about agencies and professional associations who can help you find a Support Worker with appropriate skills and qualifications.

HM Revenue & Customs operates a helpline for new employers on **0845 60 70 143**. A new employer pack is issued to people who register through the helpline.

You can also get advice about employer responsibilities from the Health & Safety Executive Infoline on **0845 345 0055** or local ACAS office.

Access to Work will not accept claims for a support worker's travel costs. If the support worker is employed on an hourly basis, all travelling costs including parking must be included in the rate agreed with the Access to Work adviser.

If a support worker is required full time, for more than 30 hours a week, Access to Work will normally fund this on the basis of an annual salary rather than an agency worker employed on an hourly basis.

Support worker driver

If a support worker is employed to drive a company car, you are responsible for ensuring adequate insurance cover for the vehicle.

Specialist equipment

You are responsible for any ongoing costs associated with equipment purchased to support your employee. This includes the costs of consumables, such as batteries, maintenance, and insurance.

