

# Access to Work

## What is Access to Work?

Access to Work (AtW) is available to help overcome the problems resulting from disability. It offers practical advice and help in a flexible way that can be tailored to suit the needs of an individual in a particular job. AtW does not replace the normal responsibilities of the employer to implement Health and Safety regulations or replace the responsibilities required by the Disability Discrimination Act.

## How does it do this?

As well as giving advice and information to disabled people and employers, Jobcentre Plus pays a grant, through AtW, towards any extra employment costs that result from a person's disability.

## What type of help can be provided through Access to Work?

AtW can help in a number of ways. For example it can pay for:

- Communicator support at interview (CSI) which meets the full cost of hiring an interpreter to remove barriers to communication at interview
- A support worker, which allows the applicant to use the service of a helper. Types of support might include reading to a visually impaired person, communicating for a hearing impaired person via sign language (other than at interview which is covered by CSI), providing specialist coaching for a person with learning difficulties or helping a person with care needs
- Special aids equipment to help a disabled person function in the work place
- Adaptation to premises or to existing equipment
- Help with the additional costs of travel to, or in, work for people who are unable to use public transport

## How are the disabled person's particular needs assessed?

The AtW Adviser will normally speak to you and your employer to arrive at the most effective solution. In the majority of cases, this can be done over the telephone; however, a visit can be arranged if necessary. Sometimes specialist or technical advice may be needed, which the AtW Adviser will arrange.

## How long will it take to put the assistance in place?

We aim to get you the help that you need in the shortest possible time. However, if it is likely to take some time, the AtW Adviser will explore temporary alternatives with you, for example a support worker or reader, while the permanent solution is sorted out.

## How much is the Access to Work grant?

Whatever the employment status of the applicant, **AtW pays up to 100% of the approved costs** of help with

- support workers and fares to work; and
- communicator support at interview

AtW also pays additional travel costs incurred due to a disability.

For those starting work or have been working for an employer for less than 6 weeks, the grant is up to 100% of the approved costs as agreed by the AtW Adviser.

For people working for an employer, and who have been in the job for six weeks or more and need special equipment or adaptations to premises, **AtW pays a proportion of the cost of support**, as follows:

Approved Cost	Maximum Access to Work contribution
Less than £300	Nil
Between £300 - £10,000	80% of the cost over £300
Over £10,000	80% of the cost between £300 and £10,000 and 100% of the cost over £10,000

All help is for a maximum period of three years after which the AtW Business Centre will review the support and the circumstances. Access to Work may provide help for a further period if you continue to be eligible for help under the rules that then apply.

## East Midlands Access to Work Business Centre

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