

ACCESS TO WORK

ARE YOU ENTITLED TO ACCESS TO WORK ASSISTANCE?



WHAT IS ACCESS TO WORK?

The Access to Work (ATW) scheme is ostensibly designed to provide help and support for disabled workers enabling them to overcome barriers they may experience getting work, travelling to work and in the workplace. If you qualify for ATW, the government will pay for, or make a contribution in the form of a grant towards the support you need because of your disability. Since October 2010, the austerity cuts, applied by the coalition Government have been a real blow to disabled workers as this process is now a shadow of what the full process used to be.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR ACCESS TO WORK?

If you are a disabled person as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and your health or disability affects the way you do your job and you are:

- unemployed and starting a new job
- self employed
- working for an employer.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

Please refer to the Access to Work Claim data which is on the reverse of this factsheet for full details.

HOW DO YOU GET ATW ASSISTANCE?

In the first instance, discuss the matter with your employer. Your CWU rep can help you with this. Then contact the Disablement Employment Adviser of governments Placement Assessment and Counselling based in your local Job Centre. You will then need to complete an application form stating details of your employment and what type of support you require. Whilst there is support available from Access to Work, there is now a much larger onus on the employer to fund any reasonable adjustments.

Please refer to the claim form for exact details, which is on the reverse page.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

When your application has been approved, the Disablement Employment Adviser (DEA) will contact you and the employer, and may visit your workplace to appraise your needs. When a solution has been identified, costed, and agreed, the applicant and the employer will receive an action plan from the DEA. It is the employer's responsibility – or yours if you are self employed – to arrange the agreed support and/or purchase the required aids or adaptations. The approved costs can then be reclaimed from ATW.

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

The CWU welcomes and supports this initiative. If you want to learn more specific details, you can contact the agency responsible for the scheme's administration at:

Access to Work

Operational Support Unit
1st Floor Alexandra House
377 Cowbridge Road East
Canton, Cardiff CF5 1WU

Tel: 02920 423291

You can also contact the CWU Equal Opportunities Department if you have any questions or queries on this or any other matter or speak to the Equality Officer in your branch.

Trish Lavelle

Assistant Secretary
Education and Equal Opportunities

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ACCESS TO WORK CLAIM INFORMATION

SUBJECT	CLAIMS BEFORE 1/10/10	CLAIMS FROM 1/10/10
Communicator Support at Interview (non employees)	100% of all costs	100% of all costs
Support Workers	Stand first £1,000 per employee then can not claim travel expenses over 25p per mile or admin fees	Stand first £1,000 per employee, but can not claim any travel costs or admin fees
Travel to Work	Stand first £1,000 per employee, then public transport costs for journeys and admin costs	Manager has to discuss alternative options with employee, and then need signed letter from GP if travel support still required. Stand first £1,000 per employee, then public transport costs for journeys and admin costs
Special Aids / Equipment / Furniture	Stand first £1000 per employee, then can not claim 30%	Will no longer provide funding towards items considered as standard equipment. It is believed that in normal circumstances an employer should provide these items as part of their Equality Act 2010 duty to make reasonable adjustment.
Adaptions to Premises	Stand first £1,000 per employee, then can not claim 50%	Will no longer provide funding towards items considered as standard equipment. It is believed that in normal circumstances an employer should provide these items as part of their Equality Act 2010 duty to make reasonable adjustment.
Digital Hearing Aids	Require an NHS Audiologist letter/ report recommending/ confirming that NHS Hearing Aids are not suitable for the Workplace and that the alternative is required for work rather than a Lifestyle improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GP will make this referral. • Stand first £1,000 per employee • Employee pays 2/7ths and RM can claim 5/7ths from ATW 	For Digital Hearing Aids majority of the job will have to be communication led to show that they can't do the job without it. They would need a great deal of evidence to confirm this.
Wheelchairs	Require an NHS Audiologist letter/ report recommending/ confirming that NHS Wheelchairs are not suitable for the Workplace and that the alternative is required for work rather than a Lifestyle improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GP will make this referral. • Stand first £1,000 per employee 	Electric wheelchairs are the same as they have always been. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand first £1,000 per employee