



HABINTEG
Disability Equality Centre

Access to Work (AtW).

Disability Service Team (DST)

The Jobcentre Plus (formerly the Employment Service) Disability Service Teams (DSTs) - provide information and advice to employers to support them in the employment, recruitment, retention and career development of disabled people.

Disability Employment Adviser (DEA)

Support is provided through Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) who work as part of a local DST. DEAs are employment specialists, who are usually based in Job Centres and who work in partnership with external disability organisations.

Access to Work (AtW)

Access to Work (AtW) provides practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles and make reasonable adjustments. AtW Advisers, based within the DSTs, have specialist knowledge of the AtW programme.

Through Jobcentre Plus, AtW pays a grant towards any extra employment costs resulting from disability. Whether recruiting a disabled person or looking to make a reasonable adjustment for an existing employee who is disabled or who has recently become disabled, AtW is available to help overcome any practical problems.

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



Head Office:
Holyer House, 20-21 Red Lion Court, London, EC4 3EB.
Tel: 020 7822 8700
Fax: 020 7822 7001
E-mail: hdec@habinteg.org.uk
Website: www.habintegdec.org.uk



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- a communicator at a job interview, if you are interviewing a person who is deaf or has a hearing impairment and needs a communicator with them at an interview;
- a support worker e.g. a reader at work, if a person is blind or has a visual impairment;
- specialist equipment to suit a disabled persons particular needs in work;
- adaptations to premises or to existing equipment;
- help with travel to, or in work, if a disability prevents the use of public transport.

AtW Advisers speak with the employer and employee, to arrive at the most effective solution. Sometimes this may need specialist or technical advice which the Adviser will arrange.

They aim to provide the help that the disabled employee needs in the shortest possible time. However, if it is likely to take some time, an alternative temporary solution may be sought by the Adviser, the employer and employee whilst a permanent solution is sorted out.

Usually it is the employer who arranges to buy the support that has been agreed. The employer then claims back a grant from AtW.

How much is the AtW grant ?

AtW pays a percentage of the total cost of approved support depending on how long the disabled employee has worked for the employer and what support is needed. For example, **AtW pays 100% of the approved costs for:**

- **unemployed people starting a job;**
- **all self-employed people; and**



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- **people working for an employer who have been in the job for less than six weeks.**

Whatever the employment status of the disabled person, **AtW** pays **100% of the approved costs of help with:**

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

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

Grants available for employers	
Approved Cost	Maximum Access to Work (AtW) contribution
Less than £300	Nil
Between £300 and £10,000	80% of cost over £300
Over £10,000	80% of the cost between £300 and £10,000 and 100% of cost over £10,000

All help is for a maximum period of three years after which Jobcentre Plus reviews the circumstances. If the employee continues to be eligible



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for help under the rules that then apply, AtW may provide help for a further period.

How to apply for AtW

Within our business, the disabled employee should first discuss with their Line Manager. They or the Manager should then contact an AtW Adviser, who will tell them more about AtW and how it could help in their particular circumstances. Details of the DST local to the employee's place of work, can be obtained from the local Job Centre or at the following website: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Other services/programmes available through the DSTs:

Job Introduction Scheme (JIS)

JIS can help an employer thinking of recruiting a disabled person, who has the skills and potential to do the job, but where there are a few concerns about the individual's ability to manage a particular job because of a disability. Contact the local DEA, who will decide whether JIS will be available in the circumstances. An employer must apply for JIS before the disabled person starts work.

New Deal for disabled people (NDDP)

This is part of the Government's Welfare to Work agenda. It aims to help people who have a disability or long-term health condition, return to work following a long period of sickness or unemployment. It can also help people who are at risk of losing their job because of their disability, by helping them to overcome difficulties that are affecting their work.

Further information from:

NDDP website: www.newdeal.gov.uk/nddp

NDDP helpline on tel: 0800 137177 or textphone: 0800 435550



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WORKSTEP

This is the new name for the modernised Supported Employment Programme, introduced from 1 April 2001. WORKSTEP provides job support to over 22,000 disabled people who face more complex barriers to getting or keeping a job, and who can work effectively with the right support. It enables eligible disabled people to realise their full potential to work within a commercial environment, giving them, wherever possible, an opportunity to progress into open employment. The programme also offers practical assistance to employers.

If you require this information in an alternative format, please contact Habinteg at hdec@habinteg.org.uk.



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