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?
In many ways! Here are some examples of what they can provide:

- communicators for interviews
- note takers
- special equipment for the work place such as FM systems
- alterations to existing equipment
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.
- Maximum employer contribution is £1000 before ATW 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 £40,800 per year:

- for all new grants given from 1 October 2015
- from 1 April 2018 for all grants given before 1 October 2015

**How do I apply?**

**Contact Access to Work** – see [www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work) for more information.

In your application, you may need:

- Your National Insurance number
- Your workplace address, including your 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](http://www.gov.uk/new-enterprise-allowance) (if you have one)

**Contact Details:**

atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Operational Support Unit
Harrow Jobcentre Plus
Mail Handling Site A
Wolverhampton
WV98 1JE

Telephone: 0345 268 8489
Textphone: 0345 608 8753
Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 18:00
It may be helpful to contact you 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

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We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site.
For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

**Other formats:**

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.

Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.

**Document history**

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