

USEFUL CONTACTS.

Registered Charity No. 1053933

THE BULLETIN

Winter Issue
2004

Community
Legal Service



Welcome

In this, our fourth edition, we will be focusing on providing information in direct response to readers feedback.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to send back their feedback forms. Accompanying the Bulletin is a new feedback sheet, if there are any issues you would specifically like us to cover in the next issue, please send it back to us. If you would prefer you can ring, our free phone Helpline and leave a message on 0800 970 7202.

We look forward to hearing from you and providing you with useful information and contacts.

Incapacity Benefit and Work

If you are claiming Incapacity Benefit and are thinking about going back to work, you may want to see if you can cope with working again or you may want to ease yourself into it. If so, you could do some work and still get your benefit paid. I am talking about "Permitted Work". It used to be called Therapeutic Work, but this term is no longer used. There are three main types of permitted work, each with slightly different rules.

Permitted Work Lower Limit

Allows you to earn up to £20 a week without a time or hours limit. The £20 limit means that the work should not interfere with entitlement to means-tested benefits such as Income Support, Housing Benefit, or Council Tax Benefit.

Permitted Work Higher Limit

Allows you to work for less than 16 hours a week and earn no more than £78 a week. This is for a fixed period of 26 weeks.

Supported Permitted Work

Allows you to work and earn no more than £78 a week. There is no limit on weekly hours. The work must be supported by a public or local authority, or voluntary organisation which arranges work opportunities for people with disabilities. If you are getting means-tested benefits (Income Support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit) normally only £20 a week of your earnings are disregarded. The rest will be taken into account. One other type of permitted work allows you to try Permitted Work Higher Limit (PWHL) again, after you have had a gap of 52 weeks from the end of your previous spell of PWHL. The rules are the same as before (less than 16 hours and earnings up to £78), but you can work for a further 52 weeks. There must be some evidence that this work will improve your chances of getting a full-time job.

Before you start permitted work you must get permission from your local Social Security office. This will avoid any problems with your benefits. In all cases it is worthwhile talking to the Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) at your local Jobcentre.

Disability Employment Advisors

Disability Employment Advisors (DEA) provide specialist support to people who are recently disabled, or those whose disability or health condition has deteriorated and need employment advice.

They provide support to disabled people who are having difficulty in getting a job because of their disability, and also to employed people who are concerned about losing their job because of a disability.

Access to Work Advisers (AtW) have specialist knowledge of the Access to Work programme, which provides support to disabled people and their employers, to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from a disability.

What kind of help can a DEA offer?

DEA's can provide a range of support, advice and information including:

- Employment Assessment, which can help you to find out how your disability or health condition affects the type of work or training you want to do.
- Referral to a period of Work Preparation, which is an individually tailored programme designed to help disabled people, or those with health conditions, return to work following a long period of sickness or Unemployment.
- Job seeking advice and support.
- Training advice and information.
- Advice and information on keeping your job.
- Information on the Job Introduction Scheme which pays a grant to your employer for the first few weeks in a job, helping to pay towards wages or other employment costs.
- Information on WORKSTEP, which provides supported job opportunities for disabled people facing more complex employment barriers.
- Information on the Disability Symbol, which enables employers to show their commitment to the employment, training, retention and career development of disabled people.
- Details of the New Deal for Disabled People to help sick or disabled people on health related benefits who want to work, find work. It is voluntary and you decide whether or not you want to join it.

What kind of help can an Access to Work Adviser offer?

- In-depth information on the Access to Work programme including advice, which can help disabled people and their employers overcome work, related obstacles resulting from disability.
- An assessment of your needs and whether Access to Work is appropriate for you.
- Details of the grant that may be available, through the Jobcentre Plus, towards any extra employment costs, which result from your disability.

How can I make an appointment with a DEA or Access to Work Adviser?

Contact your Jobcentre Plus Office or Jobcentre to make an appointment with a DEA.

Bromsgrove	Jill Clarke	01527 483652
Redditch	Louise Bethell	01527 483993
Kidderminster	Richard Lycett	01527 623893

Moving with the times

Motability is an independent non-profit organisation that provides mobility solutions for disabled people.

To be eligible for Motability you must be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance High Mobility or the War Pensioners Mobility Supplement, for the full length of the agreement you choose, plus an extra eight weeks for processing.

There are three main ways in which Motability can help you.

- 1.** A new car on a three-year contract hire lease from a Motability Accredited dealer. You also get comprehensive insurance and routine servicing and breakdown assistance included in the package. All you pay for is the fuel and oil you use. Some cars have a deposit to be paid on them, which has to be paid first. Any adaptations made to the car have to be paid for, and removed at the end of the three-year period. If the average mileage exceeds 12,000 miles a year, a charge will be made. You can apply for a renewal car before the end of the agreement, but you must return the original car.
- 2.** A new or used car on hire purchase, over a term of two to five years from a Motability Accredited dealer. You are responsible for negotiating the price of the car with the dealer and arranging the insurance cover.
- 3.** A new or used powered wheelchair or scooter on hire purchase, over a term of one to three years from a Motability Accredited dealer. The Mobility Wheelchair & Scooter is Scheme is operated by Route2Mobility and are under contract to Motability.

If money is a problem when financing the car or adaptations, Motability may be able to provide a grant through their own charitable fund or the special vehicle fund, which is administered by the government.

You can apply for a car on behalf of a child aged three or older, who is entitled to the appropriate allowance, in households with one or more persons who are eligible to apply, it is possible to use both allowances.

You can apply for a car as a passenger and propose two suitable people as drivers. Proposed drivers must not have any serious driving convictions, disqualifications, or endorsements within the last five years. There are also restrictions on drivers under 25 and those with provisional licences.

Motability Car Scheme can be contacted at:

Goodman House
Station Approach

Harlow

Essex

CM20 2ET

Tel: 0845 456 4566

Fax: 01279 632 000

Web: www.motability.co.uk

Route2Mobility Wheelchair & Scooter Scheme can be contacted at:

Enham Place

Enham Alamein

Andover

Hampshire

SP11 6JS

Tel: 01264 384480

Fax: 01264 384482

Useful Contacts.

Social Services Area Offices

Kidderminster **01562 822511**

Redditch **01527 597710**

Bromsgrove **01527 575855**

To Register as Disabled

Physical Disability Team **01527 570530**

Hospitals

Kidderminster Hospital **01562 823424**

Princess of Wales Community Hospital
Bromsgrove **01527 488000**

Alexandra Hospital Redditch **01527 503030**

Tenbury & District General Hospital
01584 810643

Worcestershire Royal Hospital
Worcester **01905 763333**

NHS Direct **0845 4647**

Worcestershire Carer's Unit **0800 389 2896**

Disability Living Allowance / Attendance
Allowance Helpline **08457 123456**

Benefit Agency Line **0800 88 22 00**

Taking the toll

M6 Toll Road

Disabled people who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance High Mobility or Organisations who have vehicles recognised by the DfT for the specific use of carrying disabled people, can claim the mobility exemption pass for sole use on the new section of the M6 Toll motorway in the midlands. The cost is £5 for the Mobility Exemption Pass and it lasts for up to 3 years. Application forms are available by calling **0870 850 6262** or by visiting the Website: **www.m6toll.co.uk**

Disabled people using other toll roads, bridges and tunnels are sometimes entitled to other concessions, provided they meet certain conditions set by the owners or operators. In most cases, to qualify for a concession an application has to be made in advance to the relevant bridge, tunnel or local authority. It is, therefore, generally advisable to check with owners or operators first.

Other examples for exemption;

Blue badge holders have exemption from the charges for crossing the Severn Bridge and Second Severn crossing.

Exemption from the City of London Congestion charges are available to blue badge holders. You must register with Transport for London (TfL). Who operate the charge on behalf of the Mayor of London, before travelling. Application forms are available from TfL by calling **0845 900 1234** or from their website **www.cclondon.com**

There is a one off £10 administration charge and it has to be renewed every 12 months.

NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE D.I.A.L.

NW DIAL can help with your queries about all manner of issues related to impairment /disability, access, holidays, support organisations both local and national, discrimination, transport etc. We can also refer you to our benefits service which undertakes benefit health checks, form filling and representation at appeals.

Helpline: 0800 970 7202

Fax & Minicom : 01562 68248

Office: 01562 60241

Email: northworcs.dial@virgin.net

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