



Supports for people with disabilities and for employers

The Department of Social Protection and FÁS provide various supports for people with disabilities and for employers.

Supports for Employers

Wage Subsidy Scheme

This is a financial assistance scheme paid to employers to encourage them to employ people with disabilities. For more information, log on to www.fas.ie.

Reasonable Accommodation Fund

Comprises of:

- **Employee Retention Grant**

This grant helps employers in the private sector to retain at work employees who have acquired a disability whether occupational or not. It provides funding to identify accommodation or training to enable the trainee to remain in their current position or retrain them to take up another position within the organisation's.

- **Workplace Equipment and Adaptation Grant**

This grant is available to employers in the private sector who need to adapt equipment or workplace to accommodate a disabled employee.

- **Personal Reader Grant**

This grant provides funding to private sector employers to employ a personal reader to help a blind or visually impaired person in their work. The grant is paid based on fee per hour based on minimum wage.

- **Job Interviewer Interpreter Grant**

This grant is available to cover the costs of an interpreter for interview and induction purposes where an interviewee or new staff member is deaf, hard of hearing or has a speech impediment.

For more information on Reasonable Accommodation Fund, log onto www.fas.ie.

Disability awareness training for employers

FÁS provides grants to employers to help pay for staff training on integrating people with disabilities in the workplace and addressing the concerns that employers and employees may have about working with people with disabilities. For more information, log on to www.fas.ie.

Supported Employment Programme

This is an open labour market initiative providing disabled people with supports to help them access the open labour market. It is implemented by sponsor organisations on behalf of FÁS who employ Job Coaches to provide a range of supports tailored to the individual needs of a jobseeker. The ultimate outcome is that the employee becomes independent of Job Coach support. For more information, log on to www.fas.ie.

Employer Job (PRSI) Incentive Scheme

This scheme, which commenced in 2010 and was extended to 2011, provides exemption from employer's PRSI in respect of any new and additional employees who were in receipt of certain social welfare payments. The exemption is for twelve months from the date that the employment is approved by the Department of Social Protection. For more information, log on to www.welfare.ie.

Supports for people with disabilities looking for work

Your local FÁS Employment Services Officer or Mediator can provide information, advice and guidance in relation to training and employment.

The following gives short descriptions of supports most frequently accessed by people with a disability.

Supported Employment Programme

This programme helps people with disabilities get and keep a job. It operates through a range of organisations and provides for job coaches who assist in the employment of people with disabilities.

Workplace Equipment and Adaptation Grant

This grant provides funding for an employee with a disability to make their workplace equipment more accessible by grant aiding assistive technology.

Personal Reader Grant

This grant provides funding for a personal reader to help a blind or visually impaired person in their work up to 640 hours max per annum.

Job Interviewer Interpreter Grant Scheme

This grant provides funding for an interpreter to accompany a person with a speech or hearing impairment to a job interview.

Specialist Training Provision

FÁS provides specialist training throughout the country to enable people with disabilities access vocational training which supports their needs. This training can assist people with disabilities achieve national qualifications leading to employment, further education or skills training.

Community Employment Programme

This employment and training programme helps long term unemployed people (including people with disabilities) to re-enter the active workforce by breaking their experience of unemployment through a return to work routine.

Persons with a disability, who meet the entry criteria, are able to participate in the full range of FÁS programmes and services, other supports include:

- Mainline training provision
- Jobs Clubs
- Apprenticeship
- Traineeship
- eCollege

For more information, log on to www.fas.ie.

Supports for people with disabilities returning to education or employment

Back to Education Allowance

The Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) aims to give people who left school early and those without third level qualifications a second chance to attain educational qualifications so as to reduce their risk of long term unemployment. BTEA is paid at a standard weekly rate. In addition, an annual Cost of Education Allowance of €500 is payable. Education programmes can range from basic foundation courses through to third level postgraduate courses. **You must get the agreement of the Department of Social Protection before taking up a place.** For more information, log on to www.welfare.ie.

Back to Work Enterprise Allowance

This scheme encourages people getting certain social welfare payments to become self-employed. People taking part in the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance scheme can keep a percentage of their social welfare payment for up to two years. For more information, log on to www.welfare.ie.

Working while receiving disability or illness payments

If you are getting a disability payment such as Disability Allowance, Illness benefit or Invalidity Pension, you may be allowed to take up employment that is considered rehabilitative or therapeutic. **You must get the agreement of the Department of Social Protection before taking up employment.** For more information, log on to www.welfare.ie.

Family Income Supplement (FIS)

This is a weekly payment for families (with dependent children) at work on low pay. It is not subject to income tax and does not affect whether you can get a medical card. You cannot get FIS if you are taking part in a Community Employment Scheme or any other FÁS schemes (except Job Initiative). For more information, log on to www.welfare.ie.

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For more information:

- Log on to www.welfare.ie.
- LoCall Information Line **1890 66 22 44** (from the Republic of Ireland only) or **+353 71 91 933313** (from Northern Ireland or overseas).
- Drop in to your local Social Welfare Office or Citizens Information Centre.

**The information in this leaflet is correct at the time of going to print.
This leaflet is intended as a guide only and is not a legal interpretation.**