

**Benefits & Work – a brief overview**

This factsheet is aimed at disabled people and covers very brief details of benefits and how they are affected by employment status/work. If you do require further information and advice on these areas and live in Edinburgh please call Grapevine disability information and advice (see details below).

**Disability benefits:**
Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Attendance Allowance (AA) are all payable whether you are in work or not. They are paid based on a person’s ability to carry out a daily living activities, and need for help from other people. Mobility is also part of the assessment for these benefits.

**Employment and Support Allowance (ESA):**

If you start work, or are considering taking a job, it’s important you inform Job Centre Plus as your ESA will most likely stop, unless work is agreed under Permitted Work rules (see more information below).

### However, if you come off ESA to start paid work, you can protect your right to return to benefit for up for up to 12 weeks.

### \*Although most people have now been transferred over to ESA who were on Incapacity Benefit, if you are still claiming Incapacity Benefit and have any payments associated with this benefit, they will stop and you will have to make a new claim for ESA instead.

**Carer’s Allowance:**

You can work and claim carer’s allowance at the same time if your earnings (less any National Insurance and Tax) are no more than £110 per week. There is no limit on the numbers of hours you can work, although you must continue to provide care for at least 35 hours a week.

**Income Support:**

You can stay on income support if work is *permitted* or you are eligible for *permitted work* or you are eligible for a reason other than incapacity for work. (See below on permitted work).

**Housing benefit:**

Existing housing benefit can be paid for the first four weeks of coming off income related benefits (including ESA, JSA or Income Support).

**Job Seekers Allowance (JSA):**

Any new claims who meet criteria may be asked to claim Universal Credit (see informiaotn below). It’s important if you sign-on for JSA, your ‘Claimant Commitment’ reflects your circumstances, e.g. if you have caring responsibilities or a health condition/impairment which impacts on the work you can do and how much time you can spend actively looking for work.

**Tax Credits (WTC):**

Tax Credits will eventually be abolished and you may need to make a new claim for Universal Credit (please see below). You may qualify for Tax Credits if you are in work and on a low income and/or have dependent children (called Child Tax Credits). If you qualify for tax credits you are unlikely to be worse off in work, but it is worth getting advice before taking a job so you know how your income will be affected.

You can claim both child tax credit and working tax credit on the same form, TC600, which comes with a booklet of notes called Getting your tax credits claim form right (TC600 notes). You can download a copy of this form from the Grapevine category of the E-library.

**Disability element of WTC:**

If you are working at least 16 hours a week and you satisfy two tests, one relating to disability and one to your receipt (or recent receipt) of a qualifying benefit, then you may be entitled to additional tax credits. This also includes individuals whose partner is a disabled person.

**Universal Credit:**

Universal Credit is being introduced in stages across the UK and will eventually combine most means-tested working age benefits for people in and out of work (e.g. tax credits, income based Job Seekers Allowance, housing benefit, income related Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and income support).

A number of factors are taken into account before a person is put onto Universal Credit. For example, local authority area, housing tenure, marital status, and whether a person is claiming other benefits, such as disability and carer’s benefits. People will make a claim online and money will be paid to households to manage on a monthly basis. Alternative Payment Arrangements can be put in place for those who are deemed ‘vulnerable’. For more informiaotn see the end of this factsheet.

**Access to Work**

Access to Work is a UK Government programme that can provide practical and financial support to disabled people and people with long term conditions to start or remain at work, and to employers so that they fulfil their responsibilities. Find out more about this on Grapevine’s factsheet called Access to Work.

 **Permitted work – the basics**

If you receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), incapacity benefit (IB), severe disablement allowance (SDA), national insurance credits or income support (IS) because of incapacity for work you are allowed to do some permitted work.

You do not need the permission of a doctor to do permitted work but it is it advisable to tell the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) if you are working. You have a choice of permitted work options depending on your circumstances:

* Permitted Work Lower Limit - under this option you can earn up to £20 a week for an unlimited period.
* Permitted Work Higher Limit - You can work for up to 16 hours a week and earn up to £101.00 after tax and national insurance under certain circumstances.
* Some permitted work has no restriction on the hours you work and can also be for an unlimited period. However, you cannot earn more than £101.00 a week after tax and national insurance deductions.

**For more information, contact on benefits and work contact:**

**Grapevine** – disability information service covering Edinburgh. Available on 0131 475 2370 or email: grapevine@lothiancil.org.uk

**Midlothian residents:** Midlothian Council Welfare Benefits Advice: 0131 271 3201

**East Lothian residents: East Lothian Welfare Rights Advice:** 0131 653 5230

Capability Scotland Advice and Support Team for West Lothian residents: 01506 674 955 or Freephone 0800 820 3820

**Anywhere in Scotland:** Citizens Advice Direct - Telephone Advice: 0808 800 9060

### National Jobcentre Enquiry Line Telephone: 0345 604 3719 or Textphone: 0345 608 8551

## Existing claims:

## Jobseeker’s Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit or Employment and Support Allowance

Telephone: 0345 608 8545

Textphone: 0345 608 8551

## Universal Credit

Telephone: 0345 600 0723
Textphone: 0345 600 0743

**If you’re not eligible for Universal Credit,** call the contact centre. Telephone: 0800 055 6688

**More informiaotn about Universal Credit is available at:** [**https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/overview**](https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/overview)

**Jobcentre Plus new claims:** 0800 055 6688

**Access to Work Telephone: 0345 268 8489** or visit: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply>

**Tax Credits Helpline**: 0345 300 3900 (textphone 0345 300 3909

Online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/tax-credits-enquiries>

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**Grapevine Contact details**

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(Monday-Thursday 10am-4pm)

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