

**Employment Support Allowance – basic overview and criteria for support component.**

Employment Support Allowance (ESA) is an out of work benefit for people who have limited capability for work or work related activity. It is means-tested which involves looking at a person’s income, and their partner if they have one, before entitlement is decided. Job Centre Plus also have a role in administering it. To start a claim call: 0345 605 6055.

To decide what amount a person receives, on an ongoing basis, an individual will be assessed using the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). This will determine whether a person receives a ‘work-related activity group’ (WRAG) component or the ‘support component’.

Below are the criteria for the ‘support component’. If you are affected by one of more of the following criteria then you may be eligible to receive the 'support component' of this benefit: For more information about ESA or WCA, please contact Grapevine (see details below).

1. **Mobilising unaided by another person with or without a walking stick, manual wheelchair or other aid if such aid can reasonably be used:**

Cannot either:

1. mobilise more than 50 meters on level ground without stopping in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion; or

b) repeatedly mobilise 50 meters within a reasonable timescale because of significant discomfort or exhaustion.

1. **Transferring from one seated position to another:**

Cannot move between one seated position and another seated position located next to one another without receiving physical assistance from another person.

1. **Reaching:**

Cannot raise either arm as if to put something in the top pocket of a coat or jacket.

1. **Picking up and moving or transferring by the use of the upper body and arms (excluding standing, sitting, bending or kneeling and all other activities specified in this schedule):**

Cannot pick up and move 0.5 litre carton full of liquid.

1. **Manual dexterity:**

Cannot press a button, such as a telephone keypad with either hand or cannot turn the pages of a book with either hand.

1. **Making self understood through speaking, writing, typing or other means normally used unaided by another person:**

Cannot convey a simple message, such as the presence of a hazard.

1. **Understanding communication by:**
   * 1. Vernal means (such as hearing or lop reading) alone;
     2. Non-verbal means (such as reading 16 point print or Braille) alone, or
     3. A combination or (i) and (ii), using any aid that is normally, or could reasonably, be used unaided by another person.

Cannot understand a simple message due to sensory impairment, such as the location of a fire escape

1. **Absence or loss of control whilst conscious leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or voiding of the bladder, despite the presence of any aids or adaptations normally used or could reasonably be worn or used:**

At least once a week experiences:

1. Loss of control leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/ or voiding of the bladder; or
2. Substantial leakage of the contents of a collecting device sufficient to require the individual to clean themselves and change clothing
3. **Learning tasks:**

Cannot learn how to complete a simple task, such as setting an alarm clock, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.

1. **Awareness of hazard:**

Reduced awareness of everyday hazards, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder, lead to significant risk of:

1. injury to self or others; or
2. damage to property or possessions, such that the claimant requires supervision for the majority of the time to maintain safety.

1. **Initiating and completing personal action (which means planning, organisation, problem solving, prioritising or switching tasks):**

Cannot, due to impaired mental function, reliably initiate or complete at least 2 sequential personal actions.

1. **Coping with change:**

Cannot cope with any change, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder, to the extent that day to day life cannot be managed

1. **Coping with social engagement, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder:**

Engagement in social contact is always precluded due to difficulty relating to others or significant distress experienced by the individual.

1. **Appropriateness of behaviour with other people, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder:**

Has, on a daily basis, uncontrollable episodes of aggressive or disinhibited behaviour that would be unreasonable in any workplace.

1. **Conveying food or drink to the mouth**

a) Cannot convey food or drink to their own mouth without receiving physical assistance from someone else;

b) Cannot convey food or drink to their own mouth without repeatedly stopping; stopping; experiencing breathlessness or severe discomfort;

c) Cannot convey food or drink to their own mouth without receiving regular prompting given by someone else in the customer's physical presence; or

d) Owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, fails to convey food or drink to the customer's own mouth without receiving:

(i) physical assistance from someone else; or

(ii) regular prompting given by someone else in the customer's presence.

1. **Chewing or swallowing food or drink:**

a) Cannot chew or swallow food or drink;

b) Cannot chew or swallow food or drink without repeatedly stopping, experiencing breathlessness or severe discomfort;

c) Cannot chew or swallow food or drink without repeatedly receiving regular prompting given by someone else in the customer's presence; or

d) Owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, fails to:

(i) chew or swallow food or drink; or

(ii) chew or swallow food or drink without regular prompting given by someone

else in the customer's presence.

Last updated: July 2016

**Contact details**

Tel: 0131 475 2370 (Monday-Thursday 10am-4pm)

Email: grapevine@lothiancil.org.uk

Website: www.lothiancil.org.uk

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