

Permitted work – Factsheet



Department
for Work &
Pensions

What is permitted work?

It's well known that doing some kind of work is generally good for your physical and mental wellbeing and confidence.

Permitted work can help you learn new skills, help build your confidence and help you start thinking about types of work you could do.

You may be able to do some work if you have a disability, illness or health condition and still have the security of keeping any of the following benefits payments and National Insurance credits:

- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Incapacity Benefit (IB)
- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA).

Permitted work lets you:

- work for less than 16 hours each week
- earn up to £120 **every week** after tax and receive your normal amount of benefit
- build up your skills and experience
- be supported while you work – we call this *supported permitted work*
- do voluntary work – there is no limit on how many hours a week you can do voluntary work for.

There is no limit on the number of weeks you can do permitted work for.

What you must do if you want to work

Before you start any work, whether paid or unpaid, you should fill in a **PW1** and send it to the Jobcentre Plus office that deals with your benefit.

We will then let you know if the work you want to do meets the permitted work conditions. If you do any kind of work that doesn't meet the conditions, you could lose your benefit.

If you can't tell us before you start work, you should fill in a **PW1** and send it to the Jobcentre Plus office that deals with your benefit as soon as possible after starting work.

The quickest and easiest way to get a copy of the **PW1** is to visit www.gov.uk and search for **PW1**. Or call Jobcentre Plus on **0345 608 8545** for a copy.

If you don't tell Jobcentre Plus straightaway about any work that you are doing, then you could be paid more ESA than you should. The law states we can take back any money we shouldn't have paid you and you may have to pay a financial penalty on top of this amount.

What is supported permitted work?

Supported permitted work is work that is supervised by someone because you have a disability, illness or health condition which means you can't work for more than a few hours per week over a long period of time. The supervisor is normally employed by a public or local authority, or a voluntary organisation. This could be work done in the community or in a sheltered workshop. It also includes work as part of a hospital treatment programme. There is no limit on how many hours you can do supported permitted work for.

If you think the work you want to do is supported permitted work your professional support worker must fill in the supported permitted work section on the **PW1**.

How can permitted work change your other benefits?

If you're getting another benefit because you're not working (for example, Income Support, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction), then your benefit may be reduced or stopped if you do any sort of work. Please talk to your Jobcentre Plus work coach before you start any work.

If you get Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction and you're thinking of starting permitted work, you must talk to your local council straightaway, as the amount you get could change.

To contact your local council, visit www.gov.uk/find-local-council

More information

If you need this questionnaire in Braille, large print or audio please call **0345 608 8545**.

Call charges

Calls to 0345 numbers cost no more than a standard geographic call, and count towards any free or inclusive minutes in your landline or mobile phone contract.

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