

# Press release: Increased funding announced for disabled people with the greatest barriers to work

Today the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Esther McVey, has announced increased funding to support businesses that provide extra employment support for disabled people with the greatest barriers to work.

When the Work Choice employment programme ends in March 2019, ongoing support will be offered to individuals working in “supported businesses” through specially designed new elements of the government’s Access to Work scheme.

For 2 years from April 2019, supported businesses will receive increased funding of £5,000 a year from Access to Work for each individual in a Work Choice Protected Place.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Esther McVey, said:

Supported businesses can provide employment opportunities for those disabled people who want to work but may otherwise find it difficult to secure a suitable role.

That’s why we’re increasing the funding for each person working in a supported business, ensuring that disabled people who want to work have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits that work can bring.

Minister for Disabled People, Work and Health, Sarah Newton, said:

We’re committed to ensuring that disabled people have the necessary support to thrive in the workplace and Protected Places plays a big part in helping thousands to reach their full potential.

Access to Work already provides tailored, personalised support to people up and down the country and this announcement will ensure that many more will benefit in the years to come.

The increased payment will not only be available for existing employees but also for businesses to employ more disabled people, enabling a total of over 2,000 disabled people across England, Scotland and Wales to access support.

Disabled employees working for supported businesses can currently benefit from a mix of holistic support, including:

- adapted working practices

- additional HR support
- job coaches
- aides and adaptations
- extra supervision through the existing Work Choice Protected Places scheme

In parallel, the government will work with the Supported Business Alliance (SBA) and The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) to:

- help them develop a new quality mark for supported businesses
- to develop a new long term element of Access to Work to continue support for those already working for a supported business, and help more disabled people to join them

Martin Davies, Supported Business Alliance, Chair of the Supported Business Steering Group, said:

I welcome today's announcement which will secure the future of thousands of job for disabled employees.

We have been working alongside the DWP for over 12 months on this and will continue to collaborate with them to develop a quality assurance 'mark' for supported employers and a long-term funding model.

We're committed to supporting the government getting more disabled people into sustainable employment and ensuring the supported business sector can flourish.

Huw Davies, Chief executive of the British Association for Supported Employment, said:

BASE welcomes the announcement on future funding for individuals working in supported businesses.

Along with the Supported Business Alliance, we welcome this increased certainty around funding so that these businesses can plan more sustainably for the future and continue to develop employment opportunities for people who have a disability.

We look forward to working with DWP to ensure a long-term future for the businesses and their thousands of employees.

Follow DWP on: