



Employment supports for disabled people

⇒ Information about the types of supports that disabled people can use to find and keep jobs



■ Work and Income

Work and Income wants to help people into work. If you need help to find a job and want to know more about the employment programmes and subsidies available, you should:

- freephone Work and Income on 0800 559 009
- go to www.workandincome.govt.nz/individuals/index.html
- visit your local Work and Income or Community Link centre.

If you are deaf, hearing impaired or find it hard to communicate by phone, you can:

- email MSD_Deaf_Services@msd.govt.nz
- call the Teletypewriter telephone (TTY) on 0800 111 113
- free-fax 0800 621 621.

■ Workbridge

Workbridge is an employment placement agency for people with all types of disability, illness or injury. Freephone on 0508 858 858, or free fax on 0800 080 715. This will put you in touch with your nearest centre. Workbridge also runs the Support Funds on behalf of Work and Income. These funds can be used to support disabled people into open employment, training or self-employment, for example by helping someone learn how to use public transport or by supplying a support person to help someone keep a job.

■ Supported Employment Agencies

There are Supported Employment agencies in all the big towns and cities of New Zealand. These agencies help disabled people to get a job and to keep it. You can find the agency closest to you by going to www.asenz.org.nz on the internet, or by phoning ASENZ on 06 342 3899 or fax them to 06 342 3899.





■ Mainstream

The Mainstream Employment Programme provides a package of wage and training subsidies to help people with significant disabilities get work experience in the State sector. Clients are placed in jobs for a two-year period to gain the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to get a job on merit in the future. The positions created are tailored to the skills and abilities of the person and the needs of the employer. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ Business Enterprises (previously known as 'Sheltered Workshops')

Business Enterprises are organisations that specialise in creating and providing employment opportunities with support primarily for disabled people. If you are interested in working at a Business Enterprise, or other types of disability employment services then you can contact New Zealand Federation of Vocational and Support Services, Inc (VASS) www.nzvass.org.nz or phone 04 384 2000, to find out about a Business Enterprise closest to you.

■ Minimum Wage Exemptions

The minimum wage is an hourly rate of pay set by the Government. To see the latest minimum rate visit www.dol.govt.nz. This is the lowest rate that employers can legally pay their employees unless a Labour Inspector issues a Minimum Wage Exemption. Labour Inspectors can only issue a Minimum Wage Exemption if the employee has a disability which significantly prevents them from earning the minimum wage. Labour Inspectors will not issue an exemption unless the worker has been fairly and thoroughly assessed and has agreed to the rate being offered. The exemptions are usually issued for 12 months and may be re assessed and re issued if the employee changes their job or employer. To find out more about Minimum Wage Exemptions and the processes involved please contact the Department of Labour on 0800 20 90 20.

■ Modification Grant

This can be used to make it easier for disabled people to get and keep a job by paying for equipment or changes to the place where they work. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ Income Exemption

The amount of income a person earns from their job can affect how much benefit they receive. Work and Income can grant an income exemption for a person who is blind or who

has a severe disability so that they can keep more of their benefit payments while working. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ Skills Investment Subsidy

The Skills Investment Subsidy is a subsidy paid to an employer for wages and/or training so people can get the skills they need to do the job. In general, the subsidy will be paid for a maximum of 52 weeks. This period can be extended for people with ill health or disabled people who may need a longer time before they can do all that the job requires. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ Invalid's Benefit Employment Trial

Invalid's Benefit clients, with the agreement of their case manager can work 15 hours or more a week for an agreed period of up to 26 weeks, without losing their entitlement to Invalid's Benefit. At the end of the trial when the Invalid's Benefit will stop being paid to the worker, the worker may be paid Employment Transition Assistance on top of their wages so that their level of income doesn't fall. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ Transition to Work Grants

Transition to Work assistance provides support to help people on benefits, students and low-income earners moving between jobs or entering the workforce. It can help pay for job search, interview and placement costs. Debt repayments to Work and Income can also be suspended for people entering full-time employment. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ PATHS

PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions) is for people who get the Sickness or Invalid's Benefit and who want to work, but need support to achieve this. PATHS provides health services and interventions, such as small operations, to help people gain a job. PATHS is a partnership between Work and Income, District Health Boards and community organisations. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

■ Civilian Amputee Assistance

This assistance is paid to ensure that people are not prevented from attending a Limb Centre to have an artificial limb fitted, adjusted or repaired because they are unable to meet the cost of travel and accommodation. It applies equally to amputees or people who were born without a limb. To find out more, contact Work and Income.

⇒ More information
www.dol.govt.nz

0800 20 90 20

For more information on employment relations visit our website www.dol.govt.nz or phone 0800 20 90 20.

For more information on finding a job visit www.workandincome.govt.nz or phone Work and Income on 0800 559 009. If you're deaf, hearing-impaired or find it hard to communicate by phone you can free fax Work and Income on 0800 621 621.