



## **Paid Work Myth Buster!**

Myth:

***I can't get a paid job because I have a learning disability***

Myth busted:

People with learning disabilities have just as much right as everyone else to be paid for the work they do. There's also lots of support available to help you find and keep paid work.

Some employment/job finding support is available through your local council (including learning disabilities and other 'mainstream' services) but there are also lots of other opportunities and types of support, including:

- **Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES)** [link](#)

IPES supports people who are:

- *16 or over*
- *Unemployed and live in Wales*
- *Disabled, with complex barriers to work*
- *Able to work for 16 hours or more each week*

- **Working Wales** [link](#)

- **Mencap** [link](#)

- **Down's Syndrome Association (Workfit)** [link](#)

- **Engage to Change** [link](#)

- To find out about more employability support projects in your area, you can check the **Dewis website** [link](#) or contact your local council or voluntary services council.

If you might need any adjustments or extra support to make sure a workplace will be safe and accessible for you, you can also apply for 'Access to Work' funding [link](#) .

You can also talk with your social worker or support worker about how direct payments may be able to help in similar ways.



Look out for the Disability Confident logo, which tells you that an employer is committed to being positive about recruiting people with disabilities. You might also want to encourage employers to sign up [link](#)

Myth:

***I'm on benefits because of my disability, so I'll automatically lose them if I get a job***

Myth busted:

Because there are still lots of types of jobs you can do, if you receive **Employment Support Allowance (ESA)**, The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) allows you to apply for '**Permitted Work**'.

There are different types of permitted work, depending on the kind of job you are doing, and the kind of support you have to do your job. You must fill this in this form [link](#) and have it approved by DWP before you start a job.

You can ask your support worker for help with this, visit your local Benefits Advice shop, or ask the DWP for advice. Citizens Advice explains more about permitted work here [link](#).

Things are a bit different if you are on **Universal Credit**. You won't need to apply for permitted work in the same way - instead you will be encouraged to do some work, even if only for a few hours a week, if you can.

Disability benefits, including Disability Living Allowance (DLA) / Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and attendance allowance, are not affected by your earnings – but you will need to **speak to the DWP before starting work**, as this may be considered a

change of circumstances. It is a good plan to talk to the DWP as early on as you can, so you can make the best decision for you.

This 'Better Off' calculator [link](#) may also help you see how your income might change if you find a paid job. After you have entered all of your details and have your results, you can click on 'change your earnings' at the bottom of the page, to see how your income could change.

Myth:

***If someone is on benefits, they can only earn £20 a week before their benefits stop.***

Myth busted:

The amount you can earn very much depends on your circumstances. There are different types of permitted work, depending on the types of benefits you receive, and the kind of support you have to do your job. For example, if you are on Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and you receive support to do your job from someone from a local council or voluntary organization whose job it is to arrange work for disabled people, this is called '**supported permitted work**'. The Down's Syndrome Association provides a handy summary about different types of benefits and permitted work here [link](#).

Rules about how much of your earnings you get to keep are different if you are on Universal Credit or Employment Support Allowance, which Citizens Advice explain here [link](#).

If you receive disability benefits such as Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or attendance allowance, your earnings will not affect the amount that you get. But remember, if you are on disability benefits, you need to speak to the DWP about permitted work (as above).

Benefits Advice Shop [link](#) can provide advice about your own circumstances. It's usually best to get advice about your own personal circumstances, especially if you/your household receives a number of different types of benefits.