

Back to Work Benefits

no. 11

This information provides information on the help which is available for people who want to get back to work.

If, after reading this leaflet, you still have unanswered questions please contact Social Security on **222500**.

The leaflet which should be read with Leaflet 50, contains all the current benefit payments and contribution rates and is available from **www.gov.gg**, **is for guidance only and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law.**

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Back to Work Benefits

General

Back to work benefits may be provided at the discretion of Social Security on the recommendation of the Administrator and are aimed at people who are getting **sickness benefit, incapacity benefit, industrial injury benefit, Industrial Disablement Benefit, unemployment benefit** or **income support** and would like some help in getting back to work.

If, after reading this leaflet, you still have unanswered questions, please contact us using the following telephone contact numbers.

Helpline Numbers

Incapacity Benefits 222507

Employment Benefits 222511

Income support 222508

Job Centre 222516

Short-term training

What is it?

This is training which Social Security agrees a person can undertake while they are unemployed or recovering from a long term illness.

Can I do it?

If you have been unemployed or are off work because you are sick, you can ask for Social Security's agreement to start some training. You should not start training without Social Security knowing.

Who pays?

If you need training before you can do any type of work, or re-training following an accident at work, Social Security may also cover the cost if there is no grant or funding assistance available from any other source.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are not in work and claiming Income Support please call 222508

Basic skills training

What is it?

Basic skills training is a way for people on benefit to get help with basic I.T., reading and number skills to improve their chances of finding work.

How does it work?

Social Security can make arrangements to refer you to the Guernsey College of Further Education for help. The training is provided in a relaxed and friendly manner.

Who Pays?

If you need Basic Skills Training and you are on benefit Social Security may pay for it.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are not in work and claiming Income support please call 222508

Voluntary work

What is it?

While you are still claiming an incapacity benefit your doctor may suggest that you undertake a small amount of work to help with your recovery from long-term illness. You can also do voluntary work while you are signing on as unemployed or claiming income support as a job seeker. But if you are claiming a benefit because you are unemployed you must be prepared to give this work up in favour of paid employment if a job opportunity arises.

How does it work?

If you are recovering from an illness and wish to do some voluntary work you must get Social Security's agreement and also obtain your doctor's agreement before you start. If you are signing on as unemployed or claiming income support as a job seeker you must discuss your plan to do voluntary work with a member of the Social Security Employment Benefit team before you start.

How long can I do it for?

If you are recovering from an illness the purpose of allowing you to do voluntary work is to help you get one step closer to some form of paid work. If you are signing on as unemployed Social Security would not expect you to carry on with voluntary work if it interferes with your job seeking or prevents you from starting paid work.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are not in work and claiming Income Support please call 222508

Therapeutic work

What is it?

Therapeutic work is work which you can do if it forms part of a treatment plan designed to improve your health or increase your capacity for paid employment following long-term illness.

How does it work?

You must get Social Security's agreement and also your doctor's support before you start. There are strict rules about therapeutic work and Social Security considers each case on its own merits as the purpose of this would be to allow you to use the opportunity as a stepping stone to permanent, paid employment with the expectation that the therapeutic work will be unpaid.

However, in certain, restricted situations it is possible to receive limited earnings without it affecting your claim for sickness benefit, industrial injuries benefit or incapacity benefit. The current limit is less than half of the Lower Earnings Limit which is set out in Leaflet 50 (Benefit Payment & Contribution Rates). If you are in receipt of income support which is means tested, this may affect the earnings disregard level or it may mean you exceed the benefit limitations. In all cases this is something that would need to be discussed with Social Security staff before you start.

How long can I do it for?

An action plan would be agreed with you before the start date. Depending on your progress some changes to the benefit arrangements may be required once the therapeutic work is underway.

How can I find out more?

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are off work and claiming Income Support please call 222508

Work trial

What is it?

When a job vacancy exists, a work trial is a way for you to show an employer what you can do without having to close your claim for benefit.

Can I do it?

If you have been unemployed or off work sick for at least 8 weeks you can do a work trial. But you must get Social Security's agreement before you start.

How does it work?

A work trial would normally last for up to 4 working weeks. It gives an employer the chance to try you out in a particular job before deciding whether to employ you. It also gives you the chance to show an employer what you can do.

What if the work trial is unpaid?

If the work trial is unpaid you can still receive your benefit. But if the employer takes you on after the trial, then the payment of benefit will end.

How can I find out more or if you need help until you receive your first wage or salary payment?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are off work and claiming Income Support please call 222508

Gradual Return to Work

What is it?

This is a scheme aimed at helping you return to either your current job or a new job if you have been off work sick and claiming an incapacity benefit for at least 8 weeks.

Can I do it?

If you have been off work sick for 8 weeks or longer and you have your doctor's support, you can try a Gradual Return to Work. But you must get Social Security's agreement before you start. You will also need to have the employer's agreement.

How does it work?

A member of Social Security's staff will discuss the circumstances of the proposed gradual return to work with you beforehand and, where appropriate, you may be offered either of the following:

Option 1 – for employees

Over a period of up to 8 weeks, you may do some paid work. Any day that you undertake work will not be counted as a day of incapacity. Any day on which you do not work can be counted as a day of incapacity and benefit may be payable.

Option 2 – for self-employed people and in some limited situations this will also be offered to employees.

Over a period of up to 13 weeks you may start some paid work on a gradually increasing basis. While you build up your hours, your benefit stays in payment but will cease when either the hours worked exceed 18 hours per week or, on expiry of the 13 week time limit – whichever occurs first. You will be asked to keep a formal record of hours worked and the tasks carried out.

Do I still need a sick note?

If you are going to try a Gradual Return to Work and you want Social Security to carry on paying you some incapacity benefit, you should still submit medical certificates during the return to work period.

What if my Gradual Return to Work fails?

If your Gradual Return to Work fails because of your ongoing health problems, the full payment of benefit should be reinstated straight away. But if the job comes to an end for any other reason you may have to make a new claim for benefit.

How can I find out more?

Please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507

Return to Work Plan

What is it?

A Return to Work Plan is a form which is used when you are engaging in either Option 1 or Option 2 of the Gradual Return to work Scheme. A member of staff will fill in this form with you. It is the formal agreement between you and Social Security which will record any training or any work you are going to do to help you back into employment.

Who else will see my Return to Work Plan?

If you are hoping to start some work your doctor may need to read the Plan and agree it before you start. Part of your Plan may also be copied to your employer to confirm the agreement for you to start some work.

You do not need to fill in a Return to Work Plan if you are already signing on as unemployed at the Job Centre. If you are starting work simply fill in your orange card (which is pre-addressed) and return it to Social Security.

Weekly work log

What is it?

A work log is a written record which Social Security will ask a person carrying out a planned gradual return to work will need to complete on a weekly basis. It applies for the agreed period that the person is engaged in their return to work plan. It is used to record exactly what work is done every day and how much time it has taken. It has to be signed and given back to Social Security each week before any benefit due for the period worked can be paid.

What is the log used for?

The work log is used by Social Security to monitor the progress being made. It contains a signed declaration that no other work has been carried out. It also contains a warning that a person may be prosecuted if they knowingly provide false information.

Back to Work Bonus

What is it?

A Back to Work Bonus is a lump sum of money paid to you when your claim ends because you have started a new job.

Will I get it?

If you have returned to a new job after being sick or unemployed for 6 months or longer, you may qualify for the Back to Work Bonus. But you must be in paid work for at least 15 hours per week and you can only receive 1 bonus payment in any period of 12 months.

Who won't get it?

A person going back to a job which has been held open for them will not be able to get the bonus. Nor will a self-employed person returning to an employment or a business which has continued to operate during their absence. The bonus payment does not apply to a person who is starting work on the Community & Environmental Projects Scheme, Kick Start or any other such Sates funded work schemes.

When will I get it?

Normally the Back to Work Bonus is payable once you have been working for at least 15 hours per week for 4 weeks. All you have to do is complete a simple claim form which you can get by calling one of the helpline numbers listed below.

How much is it?

If you return to work for at least 25 hours per week you will be able to claim the full Back to Work Bonus of £500. If you are working between 15 and 24 hours per week you will be able to claim a reduced Back to Work Bonus of £300.

When should I claim?

You cannot claim before you have been back at work for 4 weeks. But you should claim within 4 months of starting the new job or you may lose out.

How can I find out more?

If you were unemployed or claiming income support please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you were off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

Recruitment Grant for employers

This is available to an employer. If the employer recruits someone who has been claiming an incapacity or job seeking benefit for more than 6 months, a Recruitment Grant may be payable. The employer can contact Social Security's Job Centre for assistance and information about how to make a claim by contacting the Job Centre helpline on 222516.

Job start expenses

What is it?

If you have been out of work or in receipt of benefit for a long time you may need help with some of the costs connected with getting back into work. Each request is decided on its own merits. This means that Social Security may agree to pay some or all of the costs involved. They may also decide that the request cannot be accepted.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507

Community & Environmental Projects Scheme (CEPS)

What is it?

CEPS is a scheme which exists to provide a paid work opportunity for unemployed people and anyone trying to get back into work following a long-term illness. Fit and able bodied people are given the more physically demanding jobs. Less fit people or those recovering from long-term illness are given jobs more suited to their current ability. The work carried out is of benefit to the island.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

Kickstart

What is it?

Kickstart aims to provide hands-on training by placing a person with an employer for up to 13 weeks. The placement will be reviewed regularly by both Social Security and the host employer.

How does it work?

During the placement the employer is expected to provide hands-on work and show the person new skills. The person is employed through Social Security and receives a weekly wage. The employer gets the benefit of having an extra pair of hands for the 13 week placement.

Do I get paid?

Yes, whilst in the placement you will be issued with a contract and you will be paid at minimum wage rates. The number of hours per week will be agreed in advance but can be increased if agreed.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are not in work and claiming Income Support please call 222508

Work2Benefit Scheme

What is it?

Work2Benefit is a mandatory work and training placement providing a variety of different tasks. You will carry out work on projects which are of benefit to the community or the environment.

Placements are unpaid but your benefit will remain in payment, in the normal way, providing you remain in regular attendance and you comply with the requirements of the placement. While you are undertaking Work2Benefit activities, you will continue to be subject to the conditions of receiving your benefit. Your placement should always be given up in favour of paid employment.

Referrals to Work2Benefit placements are made with a view to achieving suitable employment; the placement in itself will not count as suitable employment. You will be expected to keep up your job seeking efforts while on a placement.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are not in work and claiming Income Support please call 222508.

Guernsey Employment Trust (GET)

What is it?

GET is a charitable organisation which offers a range of employment services to help disabled people who may need extra help to find and keep a job. The employment support is also available for the employer and employee to give advice and guidance, to help the employee set realistic and achievable employment goals. If you think GET might be right for you please ask for more details by calling GET on telephone number 247999.

Social Security can also make arrangements to refer your case to the scheme.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employments Benefits helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507

Other help

Social Security also provides other help for people wishing to make a return to work such as a referral to a Work Rehabilitation Officer.

The Work Rehabilitation team provides one to one assistance for people who are no longer able to return to their previous employment. They can help provide support and guidance to those who have been out of employment for some time, whether through illness, redundancy or personal circumstances. In certain circumstances this may also include support such as job coaching, working alongside the person for an agreed period of time to help them settle into their new job.

How can I find out more?

If you are unemployed please call the Employment Benefit helpline on 222511.

If you are off work sick please call the Incapacity Benefits helpline on 222507.

If you are not in work and claiming Income Support please call 222508

How do I make a complaint?

For further information

If you are unsure of the meaning of any particular point in this leaflet, please contact Social Security, or the Alderney States Office, where staff will be pleased to help you, and from where copies of other leaflets may be obtained.

More information is also available on the States website here: www.gov.gg

How we collect and use information

The Committee *for* Employment and Social Security will process any personal data which you provide, in accordance with the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2017.

Further information about how your personal data is processed can be found at www.gov.gg/dp or alternatively you may call 222500 and request a paper copy.

This leaflet is for guidance and must not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law.