



London Borough
of Hounslow

EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE

From 27th October 2008 there is a new benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, for people who are claiming because they are sick or disabled and unable to work.

It replaces Incapacity Benefit.

October 2008

What is this new benefit?

From 27 October 2008, there is a new benefit called Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for people who claim benefit because they are sick or disabled.

If you are already getting Incapacity Benefit or Income Support due to illness your benefit will not change straight away on 27 October 2008.

There will be a new test called the **Work Capability Assessment**, to see if you are well enough to work.

If you already claim because you are sick, you will in the future have to do the new test and change to ESA. For young people under age 25 this is likely to happen in 2009, but for people aged 25 or over this will probably be in 2010 or even later.

How do you get the new Employment and Support Allowance?

- You can claim if you are ill and not being paid Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) by an employer – either because you are not working or your SSP has ended.
- You must be age 16+ and under pension age.
- You phone the Jobcentre Plus office on 0800 055 6688 (for Hounslow area) to start a claim. They fill in the form on the phone with you and send it to you to check and sign and return to them.
- Ask your GP for a medical certificate to send with your claim.

There are two parts of ESA – contributory and income-related.

Some people will get ESA because they have paid the right amount of National Insurance Contributions in the last 2-4 years before their claim. This is called contributory ESA.

If you cannot get contributory ESA because you do not have the right National Insurance contributions you may still be able to get income-related ESA.

Income-related ESA is a means-tested benefit. This means it depends on what money you have coming in and what savings you have. If you have a partner, their income and savings are also counted. It is claimed on the same form as contributory ESA.

How will Employment and Support Allowance be worked out?

For the first 13 weeks of your claim:

There will be an assessment period when you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about your illness and may be asked to go to a medical examination. You will receive a flat rate of £60.50 week if you are single and aged 25+ (2008/9 rates).

From the questionnaire and the medical, the Jobcentre Plus will see what work they think you can do, this is known as the **work capability assessment**. If the Jobcentre Plus feels you cannot work at the moment because you have “limited capability for work” you will get ESA.

If the Jobcentre Plus feels that you can work, you will need to change your claim to Jobseeker’s Allowance **OR** you must appeal the decision within one month. You will continue to get the basic allowance while you are waiting for your appeal.

Example

Mohammed has broken his leg and has just made a new claim for ESA.

He receives £60.50 per week basic allowance.

What is in the work capability assessment?

The work capability assessment (the test) looks at your health problems.

You score points depending upon what problems you have and how your illness or disability affects you doing things. You need to score 15 points to get ESA. If you have physical **and** mental health needs, your 15 points can be made up of a mixture of these.

For more information on the test and how the points are made up phone our leaflet line on 020 8583 5014 to order a copy of the point scoring checklist.

The test decides whether you can work, and if not whether you could work with support and help, or whether you are too ill to work at all.

The chart opposite explains the stages of the assessment.

What do you have to do if the Jobcentre feels that you could work with the right support? (i.e. you are in the work related activity group)

You will need to go for work focused health assessments or work-focussed interviews.

The work-focused interviews will look at what training you need, and whether you can be helped back into work.

If you are too ill to take part in a work-focused interview, you can ask for the interview to be delayed.

If you do not go to the interview or to the health assessment, your benefit can be cut unless you have a good reason for not going. The extra money you get because you are trying to get back into work (the work-related activity component) can be cut by 50% and if you still do not take part within 4 weeks the extra money can be cut all together.

However once you go to the work-related interview or health assessment, your benefit will be paid in full.

Examples

Jim has bad arthritis in his knees and made a claim for ESA four months ago.

He has been assessed as having limited capability for work related activity, but may be able to work in the future. He has not been placed in the Support Group, but in the work related activity group. Therefore he needs to have regular work-focussed interviews at the jobcentre and he may have to do some work related activity. He receives £60.50 basic ESA + £24 a week.

Employment and Support Allowance

You will need a medical certificate from your doctor to make a claim. Call 0800 055 6688 to make your claim
Basic ESA rate paid for the 1st 13 weeks unless found fit for work.
For a single person aged 18-24 this is £47.95, Single person aged 25 or over - £60.50, couple where both are 18 or Over - £94.95 (2008/09 figures)

Assessment Phase Week 1-13

Work Capability Assessment (WCA)
Will look at how your illness or disability stops you from carrying out day-to-day activity
Carried out by a doctor or nurse around week 8 at a local medical centre and takes 75 minutes

Limited capability for work assessment
Looks at all of your disabilities

Yes

Limited capability for work related activity
Looks at your ability to do some form of activity to help you get back into work

No

Work-focused health related assessment
Identifies the activities and health related support which can help you back into work

Found not incapable of work (you can work)
Appeal or claim
Jobseekers Allowance

Yes

Support Group - can't work
People with the most severe illness or disability

- Will receive extra amount (support component) of £29/week
- Will not have to attend work-focused interviews

Work - related activity group
(might be able to work in the future)

- People expected to prepare for a move into work
- 5 further work focussed interviews with their personal adviser
- Will receive extra amount (work-related activity component) of £24.00

Main Phase Week 14

Sunita has been severely depressed since her husband died last year.

She has been assessed as having limited capability for work and for work related activity. She receives £60.50 basic ESA + £29 a week support allowance. Therefore she will not be expected to do any work related activity.

Can I do some work and still get ESA?

Some work is allowed but it must be less than 16 hours a week and there are other strict rules - Phone our Helpline for more information

Contributory ESA for young people

Young people can claim contributory ESA if they are under 20 when they become ill or disabled – even though they have not paid enough National Insurance Contributions.

The age limit is raised to 25 if they have stayed in education or training after age 20.

The young person must have been ill for the last 28 weeks to get contributory ESA – **but** the 28 weeks can be before their 16th birthday if their doctor gives a medical certificate. The young person can claim income-related ESA in the first 28 weeks of illness before moving on to contributory ESA

The young person must not be in full time education of 21+ hours a week – but special education can be ignored. (Call our helpline for more information about this)

The young person must not have immigration restrictions on their stay in the UK.

Call 0800 055 6688 to make a claim.

Appeals

- You can appeal the decision if you are refused ESA because the Jobcentre say you are well enough to work.
- You can also appeal the decision about whether you have been placed in the support group or the work-related activity group.
- You can appeal if your work-related activity component is reduced because the Jobcentre Plus decide that you did not take part in work-related activity.

You can appeal on form GL24 and you need to appeal within one month of the decision from Jobcentre Plus.

Most appeals are heard in the Hounslow borough.

For more information on ESA or other benefits:

Hounslow Welfare Benefits and Money Advice Unit:

Helpline telephone: 020 8583 5016

Fax: 020 8583 5020

Email: wbmau@hounslow.gov.uk

Minicom: 020 8583 5013

Hounslow Citizens Advice Bureau

Telephone: 0870 1269 500

Disability Network Hounslow

Telephone: 020 8758 2048 **Fax:** 020 8758 2014

Hounslow Law Centre

Telephone: 020 8570 9505

Hounslow Community Advice Service

Telephone: 020 8583 2525

To make a claim for ESA

Telephone: 0800 055 6688

For existing ESA claims

Telephone: 0845 603 6347

Ta broszurka wyjaśnia zasady nowego zasiłku o nazwie Employment and Support Allowance, który od 27-ego października zastąpił zasiłek - Incapacity Benefit. Aby otrzymać więcej informacji proszę dzwonić pod numer: 020 8583 2299.

Polish

Warqaddanu waxay kuu sharxaysaa dheefta cusub ee la yidhaaho Gunnada shaqada iyo taageerada (Employment and Support Allowance) oo marka laga bilaabo 27kii Oktoobar 2008 lagu beddelay dheeftii xanuunka (Incapacity Benefit). Wixii macluumaad dheeraad ah soo wac 020 8583 2299.

Somali

يشرح هذا المنشور جميع الامور الجديدة في الاعانات والتي تسمى العمل واستحقاقات الدعم Employment and Support Allowance والتي حلت محل اعانات العجز عن العمل Incapacity Benefit منذ 27 اكتوبر 2008. للمزيد من المعلومات اتصل على 020 8583 2299.

Arabic

این نشریہ اطلاعات دربارہ حقوق جدیدی بہ اسم کمک فوق العادہ استخدام (امپلائمنٹ اند سٹپورٹ الونس) میباشد کہ بہ عوض حقوق ناتوانی (انکیستی بنفت) از تاریخ 27 اکتوبر 2008 معرفی و تعین شدہ است. برای اطلاعات بیشتر لطفاً با خدمات ترجمہ بہ شمارہ تیلیفون 020 8583 2299 تماس بگیرید.

Farsi

ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਵਿਚ 27 ਅਕਤੂਬਰ 2008 ਤੋਂ ਇਨਕਪੈਸਿਟੀ ਬੈਨੀਫਿਟ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਏ ਨਵੇਂ ਬੈਨੀਫਿਟ ਐਂਪਲਾਇਮੈਂਟ ਐਂਡ ਸੁੱਪੋਰਟ ਅਲਾਉਂਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਵਧੇਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ 020 8583 2299.

Panjabi

یہ لیفلٹ اُس نئے بینیفٹ کے متعلق ہے جسے "ایمپلائمنٹ اینڈ سپورٹ الائنس" کا نام دیا گیا ہے جو کہ "انکیسٹی بینیفٹ" کا متبادل ہے اور اسے 27 اکتوبر 2008 سے تبدیل کر دیا گیا ہے۔ مزید معلومات کیلئے اس فون نمبر 0208 583 2299 پر رابطہ کریں

Urdu

Welfare Benefits & Money Advice

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