

**Social Firms** **Scotland**

# **The Way To Work**

## **A guide to finding a job.**

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## Introduction



Thinking about work can be frightening if you have never worked or if you have not worked for a long time. Talk to your friends and family or your support worker about starting work. Ask them to help and encourage you.



Work makes you feel better about yourself because it gives you confidence. You will earn money and make new friends at work.



This guide tells you how to get ready to work and how to get a job. It tells you about the help you can get.

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## Taking the first step

If you do not feel ready look for a job yet, there are other things you can do to learn new skills and get used to going out and meeting people.

### **You can join a group.**

You can get a list of local groups at your library. Think about your hobbies and interests.

### **Will I have to pay to join a group?**

Some groups are free. Ask the group leader.



### **You can volunteer.**

Your local volunteer centre can help you. Volunteering is a good way to meet new people.

### **Will I have to pay to volunteer?**

No. You will get back the money you spend on travel. Some places will give you lunch or money for lunch. You will need to keep receipts and tickets. This money is called **expenses**.

**You can do a course to learn something new.**

Find out more from your council's adult learning department or any college.

**Do I need to pay to do a course?**

Some courses are free if you are on benefits. Your local council can tell you about free courses in your area.

**I have learning difficulties. Can I still do a course?**

Yes. You will get support from the college or community centre.

**You can take part in an employment project.**

You can learn job skills at employment or training projects. Ask your social work department or Jobcentre Plus for details.

**You can join a Social Firm.**

A Social Firm is a business that employs people who find it hard to get work. There is more information about Social Firms on page 17.

If you start something you do not like, it is OK try something else. You learn from everything you do.

## Things you might be worried about

### **I have some problems at the moment.**

It is better to wait until some things in your life are settled. Taking small steps towards work can be good for you.

### **I cannot get up in the morning, so how can I work?**

Try to get into a **routine**. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day. Plan to do something every morning, like go for a walk or phone a friend. If your medicine makes you tired in the morning, ask your doctor if you can take it another time.

### **I have not worked for a long time. I worry about meeting people.**

Getting on with the people you work with is important. Some colleges or community centres can teach you how to become more confident.



### **What if I cannot cope when I start work?**

Everybody finds it hard when they start a new job. Talk to your manager.

### **I have days or weeks when I am not well. Does this mean I cannot work?**

If you are disabled, your employer has to make sure that the place you work is suitable for you. This might mean that you can reduce your hours when you are unwell.

### **I cannot afford to pay for childcare.**

Most people find it hard to find childcare and pay for it. To find out about local childcare, contact your council.

### **I am worried about using a computer.**

You can learn to use a computer at many libraries. Your local college may also have courses for beginners.



## **Money and Benefits**

### **What will happen to my benefits when I start work?**

Some benefits do not change when you work. You will lose some benefits but you may get new ones. Ask your Jobcentre Plus for a **Better Off Calculation**.

### **What information do they need?**

You will need to take:

- Your National Insurance number. It is on your benefit book or DWP letters.
- A list of all the benefits you get. It is a good idea to take your benefit book or letters that tell you how much benefit you get.
- A list of other money that you get. If you work, take your payslip.
- A list of any money you have in the bank, building society or post office. It is a good idea to take bank statements.
- A note of how much you pay for your rent or mortgage. It is a good idea to take your rent book or mortgage statement and your council tax bills.

You will need to tell Jobcentre Plus if you get help from a support worker or if you live with your partner. If you live with your partner, take your partner's payslips, bank statements and benefit letters.

## What will happen to my benefits when I volunteer?

Your benefits stay the same.

## What happens if I have to give up work?

If you get incapacity related benefits, apply for the **Linking Rules** at your Jobcentre Plus before you start work. That way, you may be able to go back to your old benefits if you fall ill again or if you give up work because of your disability.



## **I am ready to look for a job. What do I do now?**

Employment and training projects can teach you new skills. Ask your social work department for details.

If you want to try a real job for a few days or weeks, ask an employment worker about work placements.

Social Firms are companies that employ people who find it hard to get a job. You may be able to volunteer in a Social Firm. The people who work there will understand your difficulties. Call 0131 225 4178 to see if there is a social firm near you.

### **What type of work can I do?**

Full-time work	This is paid work that you do for 16 hours a week or more.
Part-time work	This is paid work that you do for less than 16 hours a week.
Temporary work	This is work that only lasts for a few days, weeks or months.
Voluntary work	This is work that you do not get paid for.
Permitted work	This is work that you do for less than 16 hours a week. You can usually keep some incapacity or disabled benefits. You can only do permitted work for a certain amount of time. Check with Jobcentre Plus.

## **Who can support me to get a job?**

Lots of organisations employ people to help you to find a job. At Jobcentre Plus, these people are called Disability Employment Advisors. At other places, they might be called Job Brokers or Employment Support Workers. We will call the person who helps you find work an Employment Worker.

## **Have I got the right skills?**

An employment worker can tell you what job skills you need. They can tell you how to improve your skills.

## **I have no qualifications. Can I get a job?**

You do not need qualifications for every job.

## **What do employers want?**

Employers want people who can work in a team. They want people who turn up on time and are smartly dressed. They want polite and helpful people.



## Applying For Jobs

### **How do I look for a job?**

Jobcentre Plus has a list of jobs. You can also look in the newspaper or on the internet. If you want to work at a Social Firm, you can phone or visit it.

### **How do I apply for jobs?**

Many jobs ask for a **CV**. This is a list of your skills and the jobs you have done before. Your employment worker can help you to write a CV.

For some jobs, you will need to fill in an application form. Always read the instructions properly. It is a good idea to photocopy the form at the library and practise filling it in. Keep a copy of the form or letter you send.

If you need an application form in a different format, just ask.



## **How long will it take to find a job?**

There is no easy answer to this question. Sometimes you will find a job quickly and sometimes it can take a long time. It is important to keep trying. You can look at other kinds of jobs or volunteer to get experience.

## **Who can help me fill in forms?**

An employment worker can help you do this.



## **Going For An Interview**

### **What will I say in an interview?**

Talk about courses you have been on or any voluntary work you have done. Talk about the things you are good at.

Your employment worker can help you to decide what to say.

### **What if I do not want to talk about something?**

If you do not tell the truth, you may get into trouble later. It is important to be honest.



If you have a disability, you can get extra help at interviews and when you start work. If you do not say that you have a disability, you will not be able to get extra help.

### **I do not have much interview experience.**

Have a practice interview with your employment worker. Everyone gets nervous at interviews. If you do not understand a question, ask the interviewer to repeat it.

### **I do not have anything to wear to an interview.**

Ask your Jobcentre Plus if you can get money to buy clothes for an interview.

## **I would like to work, but I have a disability.**

If you see this symbol, it means that the company is a good place for disabled people to work.



## **What if I need changes made at work?**

If you have a disability, you can get things changed in your workplace to make it easier for you. Your employment worker can give you more information.

## **I do not want to do what I did before.**

### **It made me unwell.**

If you have a disability, talk to a Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus about work you can do.

## **Will I get extra money when I start to work?**

If you are disabled, ask your employment worker if you will get extra money.

## **Getting The Right Job**

### **How will I know if it is a good place to work?**

Find out as much information as you can about the company. If you get an interview, ask lots of questions about what you will be doing and how the company supports its staff.

### **How much will I get paid?**

You will get paid at least £5.52 per hour if you are over 21. This is the minimum wage. There is a different minimum wage if you are under 21. You may get paid every week or every month.

### **What will my employer expect?**

You must get to work on time every day. You should try to get on with the people you work with. Be polite, clean and tidy. You must not break any rules, especially ones that are there for health and safety. You should do your best work and take part in training.



## **Social Firms**

### **What is a Social Firm?**

A Social Firm is a company that employs people who find it hard to get a job.

### **What kind of Social Firms are there?**

There are lots of different kinds of Social Firms. Some cafes and gardening companies are Social Firms.

### **How do I find a job at a Social Firm?**

Social Firms advertise their jobs at Jobcentre Plus. You can also phone a Social Firm to ask if there are any jobs.

### **What kind of work can I do at a Social Firm?**

You can volunteer at a Social Firm. If you volunteer, you will get back the money you spend on transport.

You can train or do a work placement at some Social Firms.

You can work full time or part time at a Social Firm. You will get paid the minimum wage or more.

## **How many hours can I work at a Social Firm?**

You can talk about this with the Social Firm. Always see a benefits advisor at Jobcentre Plus before you start any type of work.

## **What is different about a Social Firm?**

Social Firms are like other businesses, but many people who work at Social Firms have disabilities, mental health issues or other problems.

Social Firms are very supportive places to work  
No-one will judge you.

## **Is there a Social Firm near me?**

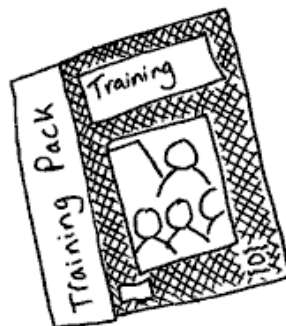
There are Social Firms across Scotland. See if there is one near you by calling 0131 225 4178.



## What training and support will I get at a Social Firm?

When you start, you will get an **induction** and you will meet your manager. You can talk about any support you need.

You will have regular meetings with your manager to talk about how you are getting on.



## Disclosure Check

You may need a **disclosure check** to work at a Social Firm. This is a check to see if you have carried out any crimes and to make sure you are who you say you are. You can talk to your employment worker about this.

## How long can I work at a Social Firm for?

If you train, volunteer or do a work placement at a Social Firm, you will be there for a certain amount of time. If you are employed, you can work there for as long as you want.

## Will working there help me to get another job?

Working in a Social Firm will help you to get new skills. If you want to use these skills in another job, the Social Firm will help you to do this.

## **Will I lose my benefits if I work at a Social Firm?**

Always visit Jobcentre Plus before you start work to see if your benefits will change.

Volunteering at a Social Firm will not change your benefits.

## **What if there are no Social Firms in my area?**

Social Firms are a new idea. There are more starting all the time. If you have an idea for a new Social Firm in your area, phone Social Firms Scotland on 0131 225 4178.



## Starting Work

It takes time to get to know the people you work with and learn what to do. Everyone will know that you are feeling nervous. Talk to people and be polite.

### **What should I take on my first day?**

Take some money for lunch or drinks and your bus or train fare. Make sure that you get there on time. You can practise doing the journey so you know how long it takes. Leave early in case it takes longer than you think.

### **What will happen in my first week?**

You will be given an **induction**. This means that you will meet the people you work with and you will be told about health and safety. Do not worry if you forget people's names. Ask them to remind you.

If there is anything you do not understand, you must tell somebody.



## What support will I get when I start work?

Ask an employment worker if you can get support when you start work.

Your manager will have meetings with you to make sure things are OK.

## I am worried about money.

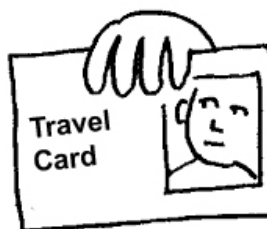
Coming off benefits can be hard. But people who have done it say that it feels better to earn money by working.

Ask Jobcentre Plus if you can get any benefits when you start work.

A monthly travelcard is usually cheaper than paying bus or train fares every day. Ask at Jobcentre Plus if you can get help to pay for this.

If you get incapacity related benefit, ask your employment worker about **Linking Rules**.

That way, you may be able to go back to your old benefits if you fall ill again or if you give up work because of your disability.



## **Keeping a job**

You can still get support from your employment worker after you start work.

## **Training**

You will get trained to do your job. If you do not understand something, it is important to tell someone.

## **Support**

You will have regular meetings with your manager. You can talk about difficulties at work or ask for extra support or training.

## **What if things go wrong?**

If you are unhappy at work, you must tell someone. Most things can be easily sorted out. It is against the law for people to bully you because you have a disability. If you are being bullied, talk to:

- Friends and family
- A support worker
- Your manager
- Your trade union



## **Useful Contacts**

Here are some organisations that can help you.

### **To find local Social Firms:**

[www.socialfirms.org.uk](http://www.socialfirms.org.uk)

or call 0131 225 4178

### **For information about volunteering:**

[www.volunteerscotland.org.uk](http://www.volunteerscotland.org.uk)

or look in the phone book for details of your local volunteer centre.

### **For information about benefits and money:**

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) \*

[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) (Department of Work and Pensions) \*

[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk) (Citizens Advice Bureau). \*

\* You'll find the number for your local council, Jobcentre Plus office, DWP office or Citizens Advice Bureau in your phone book.

## **For support to start work:**

[www.shaw-trust.org.uk](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk)

(employment service for people with disabilities)  
or call 0800 085 1001

[www.momentumscotland.org](http://www.momentumscotland.org)

(employment service for people with disabilities)  
or call 0141 221 2333

[www.yes2work.org.uk](http://www.yes2work.org.uk)

(supports disabled people to get and keep a job)  
or call 0808 145 2503

## **Other useful contacts:**

[www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk](http://www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk)

(for information about childcare)

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

(for information about public services)

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

(Equality and Human Rights Commission – advice  
about the rights of disabled people)  
or call 0845 604 5510

## Support organisations:

[www.scottishrecovery.net](http://www.scottishrecovery.net)

(information about recovering from mental health problems)

or call 0141 240 7790

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

(information about mental health)

or call 0845 766 0163

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

(24 hour support for people in despair)

or call 08457 90 90 90

[www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk](http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk)

(information about dealing with depression)

or call 0800 83 85 87

<http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/>

(information about alcohol use and abuse)

or call 0141 572 6700

[www.sdf.org.uk](http://www.sdf.org.uk)

(information about drug use and support services)  
or call 0141 221 1175

<http://scotland.shelter.org.uk>

(information about homelessness)  
or call 0808 800 4444

[www.enable.org.uk](http://www.enable.org.uk)

(information about learning disability)  
or call 0141 226 4541

[www.capability-scotland.org.uk](http://www.capability-scotland.org.uk)

(information about disability)  
or call 0131 313 5510

[www.sclid.org.uk](http://www.sclid.org.uk)

(information about learning disability)  
or call 0141 418 5420

## **Action Plan – reaching your goals!**

Keeping an action plan can help you to meet your goals. Break each goal down into small steps. If you do not reach your goal, do not worry. Think about what did not work and then try again.

**Here are some action plans you can fill in.**

**What is my goal?**

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**What steps do I need to take?**

**Date completed**

**Step 1:**

**Step 2:**

**Step 3:**

**I reached my goal on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)**

**I feel \_\_\_\_\_**

**What is my goal?**

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**What steps do I need to take?**

**Date completed**

**Step 1:**

**Step 2:**

**Step 3:**

**I reached my goal on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)**

**I feel \_\_\_\_\_**

## What words mean

**Expenses** – this is money that you have to spend, like bus fares. If you volunteer, you will get this money back.

**Routine** – this is when you do the same things every day or week.

**Better Off Calculation** – a benefits advisor at Jobcentre Plus will tell you how much money you will get when you start work and what benefits you will get.

**Linking Rules** – if you give up incapacity benefits to start work and then have to stop because of your disability, you may be able to go back to your old benefits. This is complicated, and you should ask Jobcentre Plus for more information.

**CV** – this is short for “curriculum vitae”. It is 1 or 2 sheets of paper with your details, any qualifications, your skills and the jobs you have done before.

**Disclosure Check** – this is a check to find out if you have ever carried out a crime.

**Induction** – this happens when you start work. You will be told about health and safety and other important things.



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