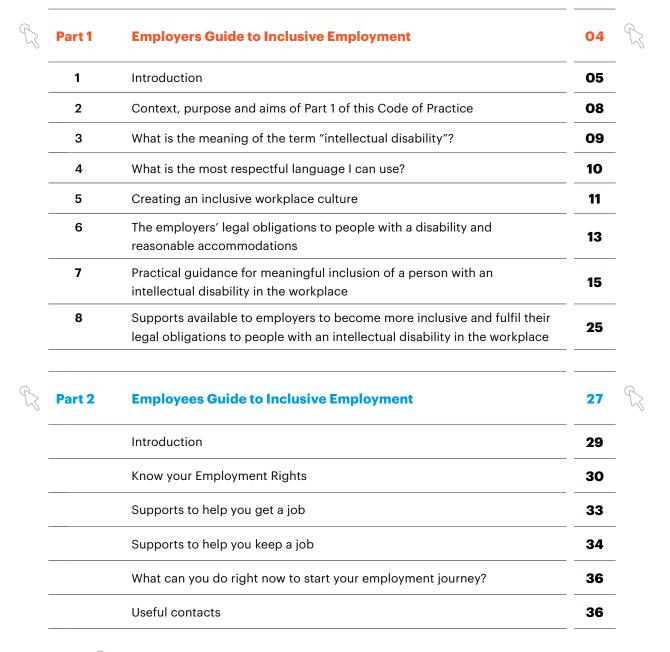
Employment Code of Practice

Practical guides for employers and employees





Contents





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At Indeed, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging is a business imperative, integral to our mission and the responsibility we have to positively impact society by making work more equitable and accessible for all. Our mission is to help all people get jobs. We know that talent is universal, but opportunity is not. Now more than ever, we are committed to removing barriers and helping all people find meaningful work.

Misty Gaither (She / her / hers) Vice President, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging - Indeed

indeed



Employers Guide to Inclusive Employment

1. Introduction

This Code of Practice was developed by the Inclusion Ireland Employment Rights Working Group in 2023, supported by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

The Employment Rights Working Group consisted of five members, all with lived experience of intellectual disability. The five members applied for their place on the Working Group through an application and interview process and committed many hours of their time to support the employment rights of people with an intellectual disability.





I joined this working group as we want to kick open doors for employment for people with an intellectual disability to have the same opportunities as everyone else.

Fiadhnait Canning, Working Group Member





The reason why I took the role was to help other people to have a voice and stand up for themselves to help them to get a job.

Ed Byrne, Working Group Member

The working group worked together over nine months to learn about their employment rights and organised two events to share this learning with others (people with an intellectual disability and employers).





I want people with an intellectual disability to find a job. What I have learned is that people with an intellectual disability deserve to have a job and to be employed.

Fionn Crombie Angus, Working Group Member

The working group also conducted research on the employment experiences of people with lived experience of intellectual disability from across Ireland through round table consultations. Furthermore, the working group also facilitated an event where employers and employer support services shared their experiences of employing people with an intellectual disability across Ireland.





I like the fact that we are actually getting to give people with an intellectual disability a voice about their employment rights.

Bryan McLoughlin, Working Group Member





Do not look at us just as people with disabilities. Look at us as people who can bring power, people who can bring amazing things to your company. You do not know if the world will turn around one day, and you could be asking us for a job!

Lydia Fisher, Working Group Member

United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

Article 27 (Work and Employment) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of person with disabilities (UNRCPD) states the following and is the guiding principle for this code of practice.

"States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities."

It is imperative that people with an intellectual disability are supported to understand their right to work on an equal basis with others. However, we are aware that knowing one's rights is only one part of the solution to ensuring inclusive and accessible employment for people with an intellectual disability.



Working Group - Fionn Crombie Angus, Fiadhnait Canning, Ed Byrne, Bryan McLoughlin and Lydia Fisher

2. Context, purpose and aims of Part 1 of this Code of Practice

Part 1 of this Code of Practice is aimed at employers and co-workers supporting people with an intellectual disability. They play a key part in ensuring people with an intellectual disability's right to inclusive and accessible employment.

Aims

- Provide employers with an understanding of the term 'intellectual disability' and what language to use.
- Provide information for employers about their obligations under the law to be inclusive employers.
- Provide some practical guidance for supporting a person with an intellectual disability to
 get and keep a job, including real life examples that demonstrate the positive impact of
 reasonable accommodations within a work culture that embraces diversity and inclusion.
- Give an overview of the supports that are available from the government to help employers become more inclusive of employees with an intellectual disability.



3. What is the meaning of the term "intellectual disability"?

An intellectual disability is a neurodevelopmental condition that develops in childhood. It is a lifelong condition that can affect a person's intellectual skills. It can include differences in communication, memory, understanding, problem-solving, self-care, social and emotional skills and physical skills.

There are often generalisations made about people with an intellectual disability. We know that every single person is different and therefore their accommodation needs and preferences are different. It is important to move beyond the medical model which involves labelling a person's issues without considering the barriers that society has put in their way.

Historically, people with an intellectual disability were not supported to meaningfully participate as equals in society through the way systems were set up to exclude them from education, work and more generally all public spaces.

We now know that these systems were and continue to be, in breach of the human rights of people with an intellectual disability. Through listening to the voices of people with an intellectual disability and their supporters and following the UNCRPD, society is learning how to become inclusive of everyone, including within the world of work.



Work provides a sense of purpose and meaning for all of us, unemployment is an issue for everyone in society and is a main driver of social exclusion.

The number of people with intellectual disability in paid employment is very low and often there is a perception that they are not in a position to contribute. As employers, if we are truly committed to being reflective of the communities and society we serve, this must include equitable access to employment and opportunities for all.

Sandra Healy, CEO, Inclusio

What is the most respectful language I can use?

Employers often tell us that they are fearful of getting language "wrong". This can lead to unintended consequences like stifling conversation and stopping people getting to know each other.

This is what people with intellectual disabilities tell us:

- Talk to the person about what words or terms they like to use.
- Use human language, the language used in the UNCRPD. However, it is best to have a conversation and find out how people working with you would like to be addressed.
 - For now, people with intellectual disabilities generally prefer "person first" language.
 E.g., "I am a person with an intellectual disability". Many other disabled people prefer identity first language e.g., "Deaf person" or "Disabled person". It is possible to respect and value both choices in an inclusive workplace.
 - Some people might prefer the term Self-Advocate
 - Some people don't want to mention their disability at all.
- Always use respectful language. Never use outdated or upsetting language that could make people feel they are worth less than others.
- Remember that a person's disability doesn't define them.
- Some people don't like to be labelled by their disability, some people do.

5. Creating an inclusive workplace culture

An inclusive culture is one where everyone is accepted and valued. Our research has shown that sometimes employers can be fearful or apprehensive about recruiting people with intellectual disabilities in case they "get things wrong" or "say the wrong thing". It is important that these concerns are acknowledged and addressed so that things can progress and a culture of openness to learning can be fostered. The most inclusive workplaces are ones that are open to learning and open to not always getting it right but willing to try.

Inclusive cultures acknowledge that diversity is a progression of the modern workplace, and creating an environment where the inherent worth, dignity and strengths of all people are acknowledged and welcomed is a good business decision.

Creating a work environment where difference and diversity are acknowledged and accepted will give people with an intellectual disability and their supporters the confidence to seek employment in your company as well as create a culture of understanding and acceptance from potential coworkers.

Inclusive cultures have explicit and open policies about reasonable accommodations. They are open to exploring what works for each employee so that they can thrive and flourish in the workplace.

Providing disability awareness training as part of a general programme on inclusion and diversity can help with this (see section 8 for more information on how to access disability awareness training).



Tips to support cultures of openness and inclusivity:

Be open about why you want an inclusive workplace and why it's important to employ people with intellectual disabilities. This will help everyone feel valued for their contribution. Having an accessible and easy to understand reason which is visible for all staff to see can help to create a sense of ownership. Even better if this "why" is created with the team together e.g an accessible colourful poster in the staff kitchen saying, "Around here we value difference, we love that we all have different ways of learning, that's what makes our team great".

Have a policy on how staff can request reasonable accommodations which is accessible and visible. Make sure everyone understands what accommodations are (see section 6 on reasonable accommodations)

People may be nervous about asking for support and help. Normalise being open about support as a leader by talking about what you find works for you (e.g., I work best when i have 15 minutes pause between my meetings so I can gather my thoughts, I am more of a visual learner so appreciate when people use pictures in their presentations)

Openly talk about when we don't get things right. This will mean that all team members feel confident to say when things go wrong and what they learned.

Give people as much time as you can and listen to what people are telling you they need. Sometimes you might have to listen by observing; "I noticed you like when everyone gets called on at a meeting to give an idea, I will make sure to do that at all future meetings"



6. The employers' legal obligations to people with a disability and Reasonable Accommodations.

The key to ensuring that employers 'level the playing field' for all their employees is to understand their obligations through the provision of *Reasonable Accommodations*. It is important to create an open supportive workplace where individuals feel they can explain the accommodations that they need at the beginning of their employment and as their role progresses.

The Employment Equality Acts oblige employers to make reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities. An employer must take 'appropriate measures' to meet the needs of disabled people in the workforce. This means they must make arrangements that will enable a person who has a disability to:

- have equal opportunities when applying for work
- be treated the same as co-workers
- have equal opportunities for promotion
- · undertake training.

Much work is currently being carried out in this area including the launch of the Reasonable Accommodation Passport Scheme through Employers for Change, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and IBEC. The passport system provides a confidential live record of the barriers people face and the accommodations that have been agreed to prevent or reduce the impact in the workplace.



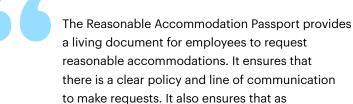




For more information click on the images above to go to the relevant webpage

The focus of this Code of Practice is at specific reasonable accommodations for people with an intellectual disability and these could be used in conjunction with the Reasonable Accommodation Passport mentioned above.





employees or managers change positions, the person's accommodations are provided without repeatedly sharing their needs with people in the organisation. There is a clear review process too so that accommodations that are longer working or required can be changed.

Christabelle Feeney, Director, Employers for Change

It is important to acknowledge that not every person with an intellectual disability will understand reasonable accommodations. The more an organisation can be explicit about what they do to support their team members, the better. People might need to be shown examples of reasonable accommodations, test things out and try them before they know what is right for them. It's important that employers give people lots of opportunity to learn on the job about what suits them.

7. Practical guidance for meaningful inclusion of a person with an intellectual disability in the workplace

How to be an inclusive employer for people with an intellectual disability at the recruitment phase.

Findings from the Employment Working Group consultation regarding the recruitment stage.



The findings from the working group round table consultation event with 60 people with an intellectual disability from all over Ireland are presented below. From this event we captured the experiences of people with an intellectual disability at the recruitment stage of employment and there was a strong emphasis on two areas where employers could be more inclusive at the recruitment phase.

Inclusion Ireland Employment Rights Working Group

Experiences around awareness:

"Good support system between key worker, employer and me" "Have colleagues who support me and understand my needs"

"A job coach, especially at the start"

"Have employers who give people a chance"

"Employers need a better understanding of reasonable accommodations for people with an intellectual disability in the workplace"

"A buddy system so I can have someone to rely on especially at the start"

"Have a job coach who can speak up for me if I need something"

What can employers do to increase their awareness and become a more inclusive employer at the recruitment stage?

It was clear from the feedback that people with an intellectual disability are struggling at the recruitment phase due to a lack of disability awareness on the part of employers (see section 8 for further information on Disability Awareness Training).



Therefore, it is important for employers be aware that services such as EmployAbility can help. Employability is a supported employment service, supporting people with a disability or health issue to access and maintain employment and part of their role is to support employers to improve their disability awareness (see section 8 for further information). Furthermore, job coaches are also employed within some day services where people with an intellectual disability attend.

Opportunities for work experience: an alternative recruitment pathway.



Tips for inclusive recruitment:

- Try to make advertisements jargon and acronym free using plain English.
- · Give plenty of time between advertising and the closing date
- Consider sending out the interview questions to the job seeker in advance of the interview, this gives people every chance of performing well.
- If a person is not successful get back to them as soon as possible and where possible offer feedback for their learning.

What can employers do to increase work experience opportunities for people with an intellectual disability?

A lack of work experience opportunities was discussed at length during our consultation. This was also considered to be a huge challenge for people when looking for a job. The traditional 'in person' job interview does not give a person with an intellectual disability the opportunity to properly sell themselves, especially when they have not had any opportunity to gain work experience in the past.

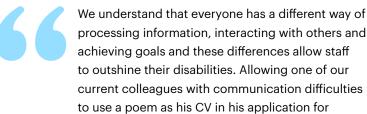
EmployAbility are always looking for work experience opportunities for people with an intellectual disability. EmployAbility encourages employers to contact them as they have people waiting for an opportunity to cover holidays and busy periods for work experience. Work experience is a great way to train in a new employee as well as providing the opportunity for employers to scout for future positions. It is also a fantastic opportunity for individuals to develop skills and experience as well as further developing their CVs. Work experience can last anything from 1-7 weeks, a minimum of 8 hours per week, full insurance cover is provided, it is of no cost to the employer, and a €20 top up to the standard social protection payment per week is offered to the participant on the programme.

Case Study: Mr. Price Branded Bargains

Mr. Price Branded Bargains have changed their approach to the traditional job interviews and have incorporated their learnings from Disability Awareness Training, which is undertaken by all staff in their company.

Poetry is the new curriculum vitae!





Edel McSorley, Operations Director, Mr Price Branded Bargains

employment or making small accommodations for our colleagues makes such a big difference.

This is an extract from the poem mentioned above, which captures the importance of looking beyond the traditional ways of recruiting people.

'My dream life came after I stopped to hear its call

I was once a lone man lost in a storm,

the wind was intense much so I couldn't find home,

but I knew that so soon I would find my way out,

as I heard my dream life calling once I stopped to hear its maiden call

'It was then I realized that I'm good at many things,

one of the mains of which is called "helping"

helping myself, helping other people,

helping is what makes me happy and as such lets me be normal'.

Written By; DJ Kelleher

Retention of employees with an intellectual disability

Findings from Employment Rights Working Group consultation of those in employment.

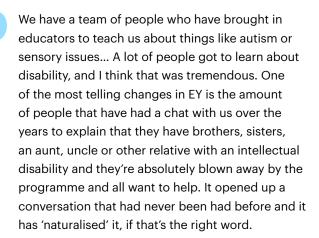
During our consultation with people with an intellectual disability, we asked them what they would need from employers to ensure they felt supported to stay in employment in the long term. Several key areas were highlighted and included lack of awareness on the part of employers and the need for employers and employees to know how to access a job coach through EmployAbility or through their day service if they attended one.

(a) Need for more awareness raising

"Employers need more information about "Employers need more disability especially information about intellectual disability" "Employers need to give people EmployAbility and with an intellectual disability a other support services?" chance, but they only see our disability" "Employers and employees "We need all staff to have need a better understanding good disability awareness" of reasonable accommodations" "Employers need to understand what supports I need"

Lived experience example of the importance of disability awareness training





Colin Farquharson, Director in the EY Transactions and Strategy Division

What steps can an employer take to increase awareness and become a more inclusive employer to ensure they hold on to employees with an intellectual disability long term?

Our consultation highlighted that a lack of awareness is a huge challenge to people with an intellectual disability in the workplace. As stated above, Disability Awareness training is available through the Department of Social Protection and further information is available in section 8. In addition to this, it was clear from our consultation, that there needs to be more awareness of the support services available such as EmployAbility (see section 8 for further information).



(b) The importance of being supported on the job

"Good support system between key worker, employer and me"

"A job coach, especially at the start"

"Have employers who give people a chance" "Have colleagues who support me and understand my needs"

"Employers need a better understanding of reasonable accommodations for people with an intellectual disability in the workplace"

"A buddy system so I can have someone to rely on especially at the start"

"Have a job coach who can speak up for me if I need something"

An example of on the job support



My first day I was scared. But Colin and Brenda (the 'Buddies' who were assigned to support me) were really nice and they knew I was nervous, and they stayed close to me. When I started, I was sitting beside them, and at first, I was only working with them but then after a while I started to work with other people too. Now I don't get nervous, and I come in and say hello to everyone. I think it's really important to be honest, be yourself and have confidence in your abilities. Be open to say 'Yeah, I do have a disability, I need some changes made and some extra support' and don't feel like you have to 'hide' your disability.

Margaret Turley, self-advocate and EY employee

What steps can an employer take to become more inclusive in offering on-the-job support to employees with an intellectual disability and ensure they hold on to employees with an intellectual disability long term?

EmployAbility strive to create the ideal job match, matching the employee's skills, experience and abilities with the position and the employer.

The role of a job coach is to ensure that the employee is supported by reasonable accommodations to do their jobs. Job coaches are also available through some day services and other funded services across the country for people with an intellectual disability.

The following are examples of reasonable accommodations for a person with an intellectual disability.

Reasonable accommodations for a person with an intellectual disability

On the job support from a job coach: The job coach will keep in touch with both the employee and employer over a 6 – 18-month period to make sure both employee and employer are happy. The door is always open after this time to reconnect if any support is required. On the job support is phased out only when both the employee and employer are satisfied and confident with the placement.

Buddy system: this is where a person is paired with an existing employee to learn from and have someone show them around the new environment.

Work placement/experience: this can be done in place of the traditional job interview.

Time: More time to complete tasks.

Building the role in stages: instead of giving a list of everything to be done the first day an employee starts, build the role over a period of time.

Check lists: This gives something for the person to reference as they go through their day (a job coach can support with the development of check lists).

Shorter working days: Not everyone can work long hours in one go.

Make time for feedback: Communication is important, take time with the employee so they can say if they need a different type of support.

Assistive technology: There are many different kinds of assistive technology which can support a person in their work e.g screen readers to read written material out loud.

Using accessible communication in the workplace:

What is accessible communication?

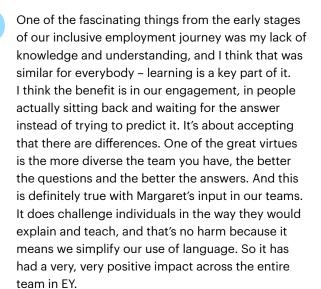
It is a way of communicating that meets the needs of a diverse workplace. It incorporates use of plain English, easy to understand materials and supports the development of cultures where jargon is minimised and there is greater clarity for employees. Whilst we focus in particular on people with intellectual disabilities, it has been shown that using principles of accessible communication can also benefit:

- New recruits who are not used to the internal business speak in an organisation and who may struggle with acronyms and jargon.
- Team members where English is not their first language.
- Neurodivergent people such as dyslexic people, ADHD people, Autistic people and people with intellectual disabilities.
- In more general terms if an organisation communicates in clear and easy to understand ways, it can improve employee engagement, provide clarity on decision making, support managers communicating employee expectations and provide clarity on goals and deliverables.

Top tips for communicating clearly:

- Try not to use acronyms. If you do, explain what they mean.
- Try to use plain English where possible. This means minimising jargon and communicating clearly.
- Step by step breakdown of tasks: create a step-by-step breakdown of the tasks in easy-toread format (a job coach can support with this).
- Information in advance: If there is a scheduled meeting, give the person the information a
 few days before so they have time to go through it and plan how they can participate on the
 day. This ensures that the person has an opportunity to show up as an equal participant at
 the meeting and can contribute.

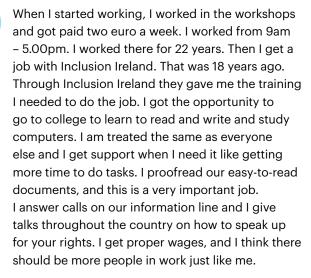




Colin Farquharson, Director in the EY Transactions and Strategy Division

The importance of reasonable accommodations





Paul Alford, Inclusion Ireland employee

8. Supports available to employers to help them to become more inclusive and fulfil their legal obligations to people with an intellectual disability.

A. In person support services

- 1 EmployAbility job coaches and other service funded job coaches, provide an employment support service for people with an intellectual disability.
- Job coaches are also a recruitment advice service for the business community. Job coaches give employment advice to employers as well as giving employers access to a willing pool of potential employees.

More specifically, EmployAbility job coaches and other service funded job coaches also deliver:

- A professional job-matching service to help ensure successful recruitment. Reasonable
 accommodations are often necessary at the recruitment stage to ensure equality of access
 to employment for people with an intellectual disability.
- In employment support for both the employer and the employee. Reasonable
 accommodations are often necessary at this stage to ensure that a person with an
 intellectual disability can stay in a job.
- · Advice and information on additional employment supports and grants (see section B below).

B. Financial Supports

A lot of the reasonable accommodations described above can cost very little to put in place. Where there is a cost involved, employers may get some financial support towards this. Employers can contact their local Employment Services Office or Citizens Information Centre to inquire about the following schemes. Further information can also be found at www.welfare.ie.

Some of the options available:

Workplace Equipment Adaptation Grants can be accessed by employers in the private sector to meet the needs of employees with disabilities.

The Wage Subsidy Scheme offers financial incentives for employers in the private sector to employ people with disabilities who work more than 20 hours per week.

The Disability Awareness Training Support Scheme is a grant that employers can access to source disability awareness training for their staff. The purpose of the training is to deliver clear and accurate information about disability and to address questions or concerns that employers and employees may have about working with people with disabilities.

The training is aimed at providing participants with an understanding and awareness of the issues surrounding disability, including:

- An overview of relevant anti-discrimination and equal opportunities legislation.
- General and specific information on disabilities, perceptual awareness exercises and disability etiquette.

C. Information and advice

EmployAbility Services



Citizens Information Service



Employers for Change Initiative



Workplace Relations Commission





For more information click on the images above to go to the relevant webpage



Employees Guide to Inclusive Employment



Introduction Employees Guide to Inclusive Employment Introduction Endough Employment Rights Supports to help you get a job Supports to help you get a job Supports to help you keep a job What can you do right now to start your employment journey? 36 Useful contacts

Introduction



Many people with an intellectual disability told the Employment Rights Working Group that they are afraid to look for a job because they don't think employers understand their needs or believe they are able to work.



The Inclusion Ireland Employment Rights Working Group made this guide so that people with an intellectual disability will no longer be afraid.



The Inclusion Ireland Employment Rights Working Group want this guide to make you feel stronger by knowing your human rights, understanding the law and knowing the supports that you are entitled to that will help you to get and keep a job.

Know your Employment Rights



All humans have the same rights. In Ireland we have laws that say this.



But sometimes the human rights of disabled people are not understood or respected.



This booklet will help you to understand your rights and provides information on how to get a job and how to keep a job.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities UNCRPD) is an agreement between many countries.

Ireland agreed to respect the Convention in 2018. This means that Ireland must do what the UNCRPD says.



Article 26 is one of the points in the UNCRPD, this is about Access to Services.

This says Ireland should include and support people to participate in services and programmes around education, employment, health and social services.



Article 27 is another part of the UNCRPD and this is about Inclusive employment.

It says you should not be discriminated against during recruitment or at work. This means workplaces should not treat you differently to others because of a disability.



You should not work for free unless it's your free will or you want to volunteer.



You should be able to get training.



You have the right to work in the community.

You have the right to work in the public sector, in places like a government department or a library.



You should have access to reasonable accommodations.



A reasonable accommodation in employment is when the employer makes changes to the way a person can get a job and changes to the way a job is usually done to make sure people with disabilities can keep their job.



You have the right to have a fair wage and **good working conditions**. This means you should get the same money other people get for your job, have a nice place to do your work and be part of the team.

You have the right to get promoted if you do a good job.

This means you can apply for a job like a management role if you want.



The UNCRPD Committee wrote some new advice on employment, and this is called General comment 7. This gives more information about a person's right to employment and tells Ireland how to make sure that employers respect these rights.



In the past, people with an intellectual disability were made to work long hours for very little money, away from their community in places called sheltered workshops. Their rights were not respected, this is called discrimination. Employers are not allowed to do this by law, this is why sheltered workshops were closed in Ireland.



"In the workshop, they used to give us 2 euros a week for working in the shop for 10 hours. They used to make sure that you were back in time. If you were getting back late, they used to give out to you and telling you that you are not getting paid."





The Employment Equality Acts say that employers must take reasonable steps to support the needs of all employees with disabilities.

Supports to help you get a job



A job coach can help you to get a job. Some job coaches work within day services for people with an intellectual disability and other job coaches are employed by the government through an organisation called EmployAbility.



Job coaches give employment support for both the employer and you as the employee especially with reasonable accommodations.



Examples of reasonable accommodations to support you to get a job

A job coach to help match your interests and skills to a job A job coach can advocate or speak up for you to an employer to give you a job.



A job coach can train you to use transports from your house to your workplace.



Work placement instead of a job interview so you can show the employer your skills and make a plan if you need supports to do the job.

Supports to help you keep a job



Examples of reasonable accommodations that can support you to keep a job.

A job coach can give you support in your job for up to 18 months and afterwards if you need it.



A work buddy can show you where to go, what to do and answer any questions you may have. This is called a buddy system.



"In EY, I was lucky I had my buddy. You have someone you can go to when you start. Your buddy would meet you. In the beginning, they weren't sure of what I would be able to do but now gradually they know that I am able to do more and more. Sometimes, they know that I can do things that I didn't know that I could do."

Margaret Turley, Self-advocate and EY employee



"At the beginning, I was very nervous going into work because you're working for a big law firm in a big office. People showed me around, what to do, where the stationary press is, where everything is, how everything works. Once you get used to that after time goes on, you get into a routine"

Tomás Murphy, A&L Goodbody Employee, Inclusion Ireland Board Member





Easy to Read instructions on how to do your tasks.



More time to do tasks.



Checklists to help you check all your tasks are completed.

What can you do right now to start your employment journey?



You can get a job coach to help you.

You can contact EmployAbility and make a self-referral which is when you tell them you want help yourself.

Or

If you attend a day service, ask your key worker if there is a job coach in your service that can support you to get a job or help you to contact EmployAbility.

Useful contacts



EmployAbility

gov.ie - List of EmployAbility Organisations (www.gov.ie)



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InclusionIreland.ie









