



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

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Ó Cuív – ‘Supports for People with disabilities and for employers’

Minister for Social Protection, Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, today (28th January 2011) said that people with a disability face “particular challenges in taking up work, training and development opportunities.” The Minister made his remarks when launching a new information leaflet which sets out both the range of supports available for people with disabilities - who wish to take up employment - and the various supports that are available for employers.

Speaking at the launch of the leaflet in the FÁS Employability Service, Ballybane, Galway, Minister Ó Cuív said: “Both my Department and FÁS are committed to supporting people to participate more fully in society and to become more self-sufficient by providing supports that address barriers that they may face. One of our objectives is to engage meaningfully with people of working age and provide services directly and in co-operation with other relevant agencies to encourage and support people in taking up relevant work, training and education or development opportunities. This leaflet is designed to provide information to both people with disabilities and to employers on the various supports available.”

The new leaflet - **Supports for people with disabilities and for employers** – (SW131) was jointly produced by the Department of Social Protection and FÁS and it includes details of

- **The Wage Subsidy Scheme** which encourages the employment of people with disabilities by providing a wage subsidy to employers.
- **The Supported Employment Programme** which helps people with disabilities get and keep a job with the support of dedicated Job Coaches.
- **The Reasonable Accommodation Fund** which includes supports to employers to retain employees who have acquired a disability and to make workplace adaptations.
- **The Back to Education Allowance** which provides a second chance opportunity to secure educational qualifications.

The Minister said: “The leaflet contains information about the Supported Employment Programme which involves the support of dedicated job coaches and I am pleased to be here in Galway at the FÁS Employability Service, one of the companies funded under the programme.”

Over 4,470 people with a disability participated in the FÁS Supported Employment Programme in 2010.



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The Minister added: "This leaflet initiative is an example of how the recent integration of the Employment Services and Community Employment Services programmes of FÁS into my Department will enhance the delivery of employment services for people."

Minister Ó Cuív also highlighted a new scheme which will be introduced by the Department of Social Protection later this year. "The Partial Capacity Scheme will provide an opportunity for people with disabilities, assessed to have an employment capacity which is restricted when compared to the norm, to avail of employment opportunities while continuing to receive an income support payment," he said.

The scheme will be open to people who are in receipt of Invalidity Pension or who have been in receipt of Illness Benefit for a minimum of six months. Participation in the scheme will be voluntary and the scheme will address a limitation of the current welfare system by explicitly recognising and responding to the reality that some people with disabilities will have a capacity to engage in open market employment while continuing to receive some income support from the State.

The leaflet: Supports for people with disabilities and for employers (SW131) is available at:

<http://www.welfare.ie/en/publications/sw131>

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