



Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant (WEAG)

The aim of the Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant (WEAG) is to increase the job opportunities for people with a disability by supporting any additional costs, related to the disability, incurred by:

- ◆ private sector employers employing or retaining an employee with a disability;
- ◆ self-employed people with a disability.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ◆ This scheme applies only to the additional costs of adapting workplace equipment or of provision of equipment arising from the individual's disability. It should not be used to provide support usually provided by employers or supports required under legislation for employees who do not have a disability.
- ◆ The WEAG is a contribution towards the cost of an adaptation or of equipment up to a current limit of €6,350. It can also be used to upgrade adaptive equipment which may have been funded previously. Application in excess of this sum will be considered on an individual basis up to a maximum of €9,523 if specialist training for the assistive technology is required.
- ◆ WEAG is not intended to meet the usual costs of setting up and running a business either for an employer or a self-employed person.
- ◆ WEAG funding will be treated as a grant.
- ◆ Part of the grant may be used for training in the use of the grant-aided equipment.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any person with a disability who is about to take up employment with a private sector employer, change job as a result of re-deployment or promotion, or become self-employed, and who requires assistive technology or an adaptation to the workplace in order to undertake the duties required.

Any person employed by a private sector employer who acquires a disability whilst in employment, whose employer is participating in the Employee Retention Grant Scheme (ERGS), and who requires assistive technology or an adaptation to the workplace in order to retain his/her employment.

Any person with a disability who is employed by a private sector employer, whose condition deteriorates so that he/she requires new assistive technology or a further adaptation to the workplace in order to retain his/her employment.

Under the Disability Act 2005, the term “disability” in relation to a person, means “a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business, or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment”.

TYPES OF ELIGIBLE EMPLOYMENT/SELF-EMPLOYMENT

- ◆ Full or part-time contracted employment, whether permanent or temporary, or self-employment, for a minimum of 8 hours per week.
- ◆ Apprenticeship, where the applicant is receiving training but is in paid employment and receiving the usual apprenticeship rates.

Unpaid voluntary work and/or sheltered employment where on-going state support is already provided are not regarded as employment for the purpose of this grant.

DEFINITION OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Operating a business on your own account or in partnership, working for an employer on a self-employed contractual basis, or operating a franchised business on a self-employed basis.

EXAMPLES OF EQUIPMENT/ADAPTATIONS FOR WHICH A GRANT MAY BE GIVEN

- ◆ Minor building modifications, such as ramps or modified toilets.
- ◆ Alarm systems with flashing lights.
- ◆ Equipment adaptation, such as voice synthesizers for computers or amplifiers for telephones.

OWNERSHIP OF EQUIPMENT

In all cases, the person with a disability will retain ownership of the equipment or adaptation unless it has been incorporated into the premises or standard equipment of the employer. Where the person with a disability is self-employed, the equipment/adaptation remains in his/her ownership.

DEASP will not be responsible for insurance, repair nor maintenance of the equipment/adaptation. It is anticipated that while the person is in employment the insurance, repair and maintenance will be covered by the employer.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

The WEAG Application may be made by an employee or prospective employee with a disability, by his/her employer or prospective employer, or by a self-employed person with a disability.

Amended: 24/10/16 (Final Version)

The application should be made by the employee or prospective employee if the equipment in question is for his/her sole use and benefit and will remain in his/her ownership after that employment ceases.

The application should be made by the employer or prospective employer if the equipment/adaptation in question is to be incorporated into their premises or standard equipment, for example, a wheelchair ramp, modified toilets, etc. and if it will remain in their ownership after the employee ceases working for them.

The application should also be made by the employer or prospective employer if the equipment is bought over the internet, so that the VAT number is supplied and VAT can be reclaimed.

The applicant should complete a **Reasonable Accommodation Fund for the Employment of People with a Disability Application Form – Section 1** with the employee and employer details.

The applicant should also complete a **Reasonable Accommodation Fund for the Employment of People with a Disability – Section 2 – Grant Application for Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant Scheme Form**, identifying the equipment/adaptation needed and making a justification as to why it is needed.

All applications should be accompanied by medical evidence that due to the nature of the disability the equipment/adaptation is needed in order to undertake the duties required.

All applications should also be accompanied by quotations showing the VAT component separately. One quotation is required if the total cost excluding VAT is under €700, two quotations are required if the total cost excluding VAT is over €700 and under €1,500 and three quotations are required if the total cost excluding VAT is over €1,500. Where this is not possible, justification must be given.

In the case of workplace adaptation proposals, plans should accompany the proposals and a timescale for completing the work should be indicated.

Adaptations to premises should comply with Building Regulations and recommendations set out in Technical Guidance Document M Access for People with Disabilities:

www.environ.ie/en/DevelopmentHousing/BuildingStandards/PartMDocuments/.

Information on aids, appliances and assistive technology is available from the Citizens' Information Board's Assist Ireland website: www.assistireland.ie/eng/.

Advice on procuring workplace equipment and adaptations is available from the following publication from the National Disability Authority:

Procurement and Accessibility: <http://nda.ie/Good-practice/Guidelines/Procurement-and-Accessibility/>

APPRAISAL OF NEEDS

The Case Officer meets the applicant to review the application. The Case Officer will consider the following:

- ◆ Has the applicant provided medical evidence that due to the nature of the employee's disability the equipment/adaptation is needed in order to undertake the duties required?
- ◆ Does the employee's disability affect his/her ability to do the job? If so, how?

Amended: 24/10/16 (Final Version)

- ◆ What does he/she need to do the job and overcome these problems?
- ◆ Is this solution readily available?
- ◆ Is the employer required to provide the equipment/adaptation as standard under Health & Safety Legislation (for example, Evac Chairs)?
- ◆ What is the standard equipment for this job? Can it be adapted?

Where the Case Officer identifies that further professional advice is needed, a suitably qualified individual or an appropriate agency can be contracted to review the application and to make a recommendation in relation to equipment and adaptations. Information on aids, appliances and assistive technology is available from the Citizens' Information Board's Assist Ireland website: www.assistireland.ie/eng/.

- ◆ The Case Officer makes a recommendation (WEAG Appraisal of Needs Form), which is then approved by his/her Assistant Principal.
- ◆ The Case Officer notifies the applicant of the outcome of the application in writing, giving a reason for the decision. He/she informs the applicant of the documentation that will be required to process the payment and that the applicant may be entitled to a VAT refund.

PROCEDURE FOR PAYMENT

On receipt of the original invoice, the Case Officer and his/her AP submit details of the approved application, as well as the other documentation specified below, to DEASP, WEAG Payment, Accounts Payable, Accounts Branch, Floor 2, Government Buildings, St Alphonsus Road, Dundalk, Co Louth.

Accounts Payable requires the following in order to process the payment:

- Original typed claim payment authorisation form signed by the Case Officer and his/her AP.
- Original EFT Mandate from the applicant (either employer or employee).
- Copy of Tax Clearance Certificate or a Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN) and a printout of the Tax Clearance Application Result for electronic tax clearance from the applicant (either employer or employee).

If the employee does not have tax clearance he/she should apply to Revenue on a TC11 form or apply on-line at: www.revenue.ie/en/online/tax-clearance.html

- Copy of application form (sections 1 and 2).
- Copy of appraisal of needs form.
- Copy of letter of approval.

- Copy of quotations (1 quotation if total claim excluding VAT is under €700, 2 quotations if total claim excluding VAT is over €700 and under €1,500, and 3 quotations if total claim excluding VAT is over €1,500).

The Case Officer must be satisfied that the quotations are from a genuine supplier or provider of the equipment/adaptation being applied for and that they are for similar products. Genuine quotations should be written on company notepaper with VAT details/Tax Registration number supplied. VAT must be itemised separately in each quotation.

If the cheapest quote is not selected justification must be given.

If the supplier is the sole supplier of the approved assistive technology evidence of this must be attached.

- Copy of invoice for goods/services.
- Copy of receipt to show that payment was made by the applicant (either employer or employee). This is required because the grant is made payable to the applicant rather than to the supplier of the goods/services, as the applicant may be able to claim VAT back from the Revenue Commissioners.
- When the Case Officer and AP approve payment in advance to purchase the goods/services, the responsibility for ensuring that a receipt for same is on file (to confirm actual delivery) rests with them. In this case, a memo signed by the Case Officer and AP stating that the division will take full responsibility for ensuring that a receipt is received and held on the divisional file must be attached to the claim.

Where the grant is approved to an employee with a disability, the grant is paid less the VAT due. It is up to the individual to make a claim to the Revenue Commissioners for a refund.

Where the grant is approved to an employer or a self-employed person with a disability, it is also paid less the VAT. Employers and self-employed persons who are registered for VAT can claim this back from the Revenue Commissioners.

The VAT reclaim form should not be submitted to Accounts Payable with the WEAG claim.