

Understanding benefits

Self-directed support for small business

Case studies developed by
Moray Count Me In small business network



Pam Potts

Pam enjoys gardening, crafts, nature and spending time with people. Pam's mental health fluctuates, which can present as a barrier for entering into employment. Pam lives with her husband and her dog in a small village 27 miles from the nearest big town. Pam is in receipt of self-directed support and a Community Psychiatric Nurse and visits regularly.

Benefit's Pam receives

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) – Support Group - £108.15

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is for people who:

- can't work because of sickness or disability, and
- aren't getting Statutory Sick Pay.

Pam is in the Employment and Support Allowance Support Group. Pam is in this group, as she has been assessed as being incapable of work at present, due to her fluctuating mental health. However Pam can expect to be re-assessed when there is a change of circumstance.

This means she is not expected to go to any formal work focussed interviews and her Employment and Support Allowance is not time limited. However she may be asked to meet with a personal advisor from the Department of Work and Pensions.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) – Mobility & Care – (£21.55+£21.55)

Pam is in receipt of the lower rates of Disability Living allowance for both mobility and care, as she requires some support when out and about and also at home when cooking meals etc.



To promote her recovery, Pam has a business idea to upcycle funky plant and garden pots



Employment

Pam has used her self-directed support to employ a personal assistant who has small business experience.

Pam wishes to start her own small business, upcycling plant pots. She only plans to work for a few hours per week to start with. Pam can earn no more than £20 per week, and this would be recorded as permitted earnings. Pam must tell the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) that she has started her small business, as this is defined as a change of circumstance. Pam's Employment and Support Allowance isn't affected by this, as Pam is in the Support Group. The Department of Work and Pensions will send Pam out a PW1 form (Permitted Work 1), which she must fill out and send back. This lets them know that Pam is doing permitted work, but earning no more than the disregard rule (£20).

Pam must not do any work that would conflict with the benefits that she is receiving. For example, Pam could not start cooking meals for people, as she is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance low rate care, which means she has been assessed as unable to cook meals without support and supervision.

Notes

Individuals can do permitted work and benefits are not usually affected. However, with the current changes to the benefits system, there is a risk that an individual's Employment and Support Allowance might be re-assessed. When the re-assessment happens, if Department of Work and Pensions question your ability to work, and you have been working for any amount of hours over a period of time, this may be taken into consideration. Individuals must always get support and advice from impartial services, for example their local Citizens Advice Bureau, and seek advocacy where appropriate.

Individuals can challenge any decision they feel is not right, and again there is support out there to do so.

Benefit amounts are only examples, based on case studies provided and presumptions that individuals are on benefits. Financial income would differ for each person, depending on the benefits they are in receipt of and what their household income is. You can get a more detailed list of benefits, eligibility and how much you will receive at www.gov.uk, www.adviceguide.org.uk or www.turn2us.org.uk

Local Advice and Support

Business Advice

The Moray Council

Carmen Gillies
Development Officer for social and micro enterprise
carmen.gillies@moray.gov.uk
07976494866

Role: a point of initial contact to support you to develop your business idea. To offer friendly and supportive feedback and to direct you to other organisations who can support and assist your idea.

Business Gateway

17 High st, Elgin
01343 563634
www.bgateway.com

Role: to offer free business skills workshops for start up businesses. To offer experienced business advisers who can help with your idea and worries as well as sign posting useful contact and other support.

Third Sector Interface Moray (Tsi)

30/32 High St Elgin
01343 541713

Role: provides support, information and services to individual volunteers, social enterprises and community groups in Moray. To promote and advertise small businesses with a social and or environmental purpose.

info@tsimoray.org.uk

www.voluntaryaction-moray.org.uk

Financial Advice

The Moray Council

Local Authority Access Team
01343 563999

accesscareteam@moray.gov.uk

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_79481.html

Role: a single point of contact for community care in Moray. Making it easier and quicker for people to get the information and support they need to help themselves to live independently in their homes for as long as possible.

If you need social care assistance this is your first point of contact.

The Moray Council

Benefit Advice Team

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_41488.html

Role: to offer personal one to one advice on your benefit situation.

01343 563456

Job Centre Plus

21 Trinity Rd

Elgin

01343 528000

Susan.thomson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Role: Assisting people to find work through its networks, volunteering programme, identifying training and support needs.