

## Employment advice in BSL

- Hello and welcome to this Citizens Advice BSL film about employment.
- You have lots of different rights at work. This film tells you about:
  - your basic rights at work
  - extra help you can get as a disabled person
  - discrimination at work.
- You can find lots more information about other issues to do with employment on our website at [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk).
- Or you can go to your local Citizens Advice Bureau. You can find your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau by searching online at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk).
- To find out more about making an appointment at your local Citizens Advice Bureau, see our BSL film that gives an introduction to Citizens Advice.

### Your rights at work

- When you are working you have rights. These are about things like what you are entitled to and how your employer can treat you.
- Your rights at work might be different depending on what kind of worker you are, for example if you are a temporary worker you might have different rights to someone on a permanent contract. Your contract might also give you different rights.
- There are also rights at work that the law gives you, that your employer can't change. These are about things like:
  - pay
  - hours and breaks
  - holidays
  - sick leave
  - changes in your job
  - redundancies.
- For example, if your employer wants to make people redundant, they have to follow a certain process to make sure it's as fair as possible.
- You are entitled to maternity or paternity leave, and time off work to deal with unexpected problems for people that you care for. This might be, for example, if they have an accident.

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

- You also have the right to join a **trade union** if you want to. But you also shouldn't be treated badly if you decide not to join a union.
- You can find out more about trade unions on the TUC website at [www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk).

## Access to Work

- You might have found it difficult to get a job, or had problems when you are at work. Citizens Advice has helped many Deaf clients who have been in this situation.
- For example, there might be issues with things like:
  - going to meetings
  - needing special computer equipment
  - needing training
  - needing communication support at an interview for a new job.
- The government wants to make it easier for Deaf people to get and keep good jobs. If you are looking for a job, your local **Jobcentre Plus** can help you.
- There is also a government scheme called **Access to Work**. They work with disabled people and employers to work out what changes are needed to help the disabled person do their job. They might be able to provide some money to pay for changes.
- Access to Work might be able to help with providing things like a textphone, minicom or computer equipment, or a BSL interpreter for an interview.
- It is your responsibility to contact Access to Work. When you apply to them, they will contact you and your employer to work out the best support for you.
- If you are starting a new job, you should contact Access to Work as soon as you can.
- You can find out more about Access to Work, and find your nearest Jobcentre Plus by searching on the Directgov website at: [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk).
- You might also want to think about asking your employer to organise deaf awareness training for your workplace.

## I think I have been discriminated against at work. What can I do?

- The law says that your employer must not discriminate against you because of your disability. This means that your employer must not treat you worse than other people because you are Deaf. An employer also must not discriminate against you if you are looking for work and apply for a job with them.
- Discrimination can happen in lots of different ways. For example, one Citizens Advice client was made to work facing the wall, away from everyone else, because her boss thought that she couldn't communicate so there was no need for her to face her colleagues.
- The employer must not treat you worse than other people just because you are Deaf. They also must not let other people bully you because you are Deaf.
- Sometimes disabled people have difficulties with parts of their work because of their disability. The law says that your employer must make changes to help you do your job. These are called **reasonable adjustments**.
- Reasonable adjustments might be things like:
  - being allowed to work flexible hours
  - having a BSL interpreter for meetings
  - allowing you to work from home sometimes
  - moving you to a different job.
- Sometimes it might be too difficult or expensive for an employer to make changes to help Deaf and disabled people. Then the law says they might not have to. But employers must always try their best to find a way to help you. Access to Work might also be able to help with the costs of reasonable adjustments.
- If you think you are being discriminated against at work, you could try talking about it informally with your employer.
- If this doesn't help, you might want to submit a grievance to your employer. This means formally telling your employer what the problem is.
- Employers often have a written grievance procedure which you should follow.
- If you can, put your grievance in writing. You should keep a copy of your grievance and any response from your employer.
- If the situation is not resolved through a grievance, you might want to think about taking your case to an **employment tribunal**. This is like a court that can decide on employment problems.

- Don't wait too long before taking action. There are strict time limits for submitting claims to the employment tribunal. Usually under the law you have less than three months after the event to take action.
- If you are thinking of submitting a grievance or going to an employment tribunal you should get more information and advice. You can find more information on our website at: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk).
- You can also go to your local Citizens Advice Bureau. You can find your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau by searching online at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk).
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### To sum up

- When you are working the law gives you rights about what you are entitled to and how you should be treated.
- As a disabled person, there is extra help you can get to find and keep a good job.
- You can get help from your local Jobcentre Plus, Access to Work and your local Citizens Advice Bureau. We've helped lots of people in similar situations, so don't worry about coming to ask for advice – we're here to help.

**This information is produced by Citizens Advice, an operating name of The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. It is intended to provide general information only and should not be taken as a full statement of the law on the subject. Please also note that the information only applies to England and Wales.**