

# REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FUND FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



**FÁS**  Ability in the Workplace

ALL FÁS SERVICES ARE OPEN TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

FÁS has responsibility for **providing labour market services** for disabled people, **assisting** them with finding paid **employment** or preparing them for employment through a training or **employment** programme. FÁS can also help you as an **employer** or an **employee** to take appropriate measures.

# FÁS REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FUND FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

FÁS has responsibility for providing labour market services for disabled people, assisting them with finding paid employment or preparing them for employment through a training or employment programme.

FÁS can also help you – as an employer or an employee – to take appropriate measures to enable a disabled person to have access to employment by providing the following grants and schemes under the FÁS Reasonable Accommodation Fund,<sup>1</sup> which are:

## 1 Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant (WEAG)

## 2 Job Interview Interpreter Grant (JIIG)

## 3 Personal Reader Grant (PRG)

## 4 Employee Retention Grant (ERG)

**If you are a disabled person you should contact FÁS if:**

- \* you wish to take up paid employment and you need assistance or supports to find employment
- \* you wish to prepare for employment by undertaking a vocational training programme or by participating on an employment programme
- \* you are in employment or have been offered employment and require a more accessible workplace or adapted equipment to do the job

**If you are an employer you should contact FÁS if:**

- \* you wish to offer employment to a disabled person or are currently employing a disabled person and require supports to assist them with their work or make the workplace more accessible.

1. Equal Status Act 2000 4.—(1) For the purposes of this Act discrimination includes a refusal or failure by the provider of a service to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability by providing special treatment or facilities, if without such special treatment or facilities it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail himself or herself of the service.

# FÁS REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FUND FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant (WEAG)

If you are a disabled person who has been offered employment or are in employment and require a more accessible workplace or adapted equipment to do your job, you or your employer may be able to get a grant from FÁS towards the costs of adapting workplace premises or equipment.

Examples of adaptations for which a grant may be given are:

- \* Minor building modifications such as ramps or modified toilets
- \* Alarm systems with flashing lights
- \* Equipment adaptation such as voice synthesisers for computers or amplifiers for telephones

A maximum grant of €6,350 is available towards the cost of adaptations to premises or equipment.

This grant can also be used to upgrade adapted equipment funded previously.

## Who can apply ?

**You or your employer can apply for this grant if you:**

- \* have been offered employment in the private sector and will require an adaptation to equipment or premises to undertake the duties required
- \* you are already in employment, or have recently changed jobs and require an adaptation to equipment or premises to undertake the duties required
- \* are self-employed

## How does the grant work ?

**The applicant identifies the equipment and/or adaptation needed**

The employer or employee contacts their local FÁS office to obtain a Reasonable Accommodation Fund Application Form or download the form from the FÁS website at:

[www.fas.ie/en/Forms/default.htm](http://www.fas.ie/en/Forms/default.htm)

For items over €635 two quotations must be obtained; and for items over €1,270 three quotations must be obtained. All quotations must accompany application form.

## Application

- Complete Section 1 – **Applicant and Employer** Information
- Complete Section 2 – Grant Application for the **Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant**
- Specify the equipment and/or adaptation for which the grant is to be used
- Describe and justify why it is needed and submit quotations together with both forms
- FÁS and the applicant review the application
- FÁS will pay a grant to the applicant to cover the costs agreed (you can also download the VAT Reclaim Form)

## Job Interview – Interpreter Grant (JIIG)

An employee or a jobseeker who is deaf, hard of hearing or has a speech impairment may apply for funding to have a sign language interpreter or other interpreter to attend the interview with them.

- \* Funding can also be provided to cover the costs of an interpreter during an induction period when the employee starts work
- \* FÁS will pay a fee as per the standard rate for a 3-hour period using a professionally qualified interpreter. Travel costs for the interpreter are paid at a set rate. Rates will be differentiated between professionally qualified interpreters and others

## Who can apply ?

An employee can apply for the Job Interview Interpreter grant if they:

- are deaf or hard of hearing or have a significant speech impairment
- are actively seeking employment or just started employment
- feel you would benefit from having a sign language interpreter and/or other interpreter present at job interviews or for an induction period

## The Interpreter

The jobseeker or current employee sources and selects the sign language interpreter or other interpreter as appropriate. Interpreters can be friends, family members or professionally qualified sign language interpreters. Sign language interpreter services may be sourced locally or provided through:

Irish Sign Link, Hainault Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24

work Tel/Minicom: +353 (01) 4139670

work fax Fax: +353 (01) 668 5029

signlink@indigo.ie

## Application

The employer or employee contacts their local FÁS office to obtain a Reasonable Accommodation Fund Application Form or downloaded from the FÁS website at:

[www.fas.ie/en/Forms/default.htm](http://www.fas.ie/en/Forms/default.htm)

- Complete Section 1 – **Applicant and Employer Information**
- Complete Section 2 – Grant Application for **Job Interview Interpreter Grant**
- The Application Form is brought to the interview or the induction programme and signed and stamped by the employer and interpreter
- On return of the application form, payment is made directly to the interpreter or to Irish Sign Link as appropriate

## Personal Reader Grant (PRG)

If an employee is blind or visually impaired and they will need assistance with job-related reading, they may be entitled to a grant to allow them to employ a Personal Reader.

FÁS will pay a fee per hour, in line with minimum wage. It will be paid up to a maximum of 640 hours per annum.

## Who can apply ?

An employee can apply for a Personal Reader grant if:

- \* they are in employment in the private sector and need assistance with work-related reading
- \* they have recently become visually impaired and are in danger of losing their job
- \* they have a disability
- \* they are returning after absence to their original employer to do new or different work
- \* the employee's prospects for promotion are being restricted because of reading difficulty due to their visual impairment

## Application

- The employee contacts their local FÁS office to obtain a Reasonable Accommodation Fund Application Form or downloaded from the FÁS website at:  
[www.fas.ie/en/Forms/default.htm](http://www.fas.ie/en/Forms/default.htm)
- Complete Section 1 – **Applicant and Employer Information**
- Complete Section 2 – Grant Application for the **Personal Reader Grant**
- FÁS, the employee and the employer agree the number of hours based on the amount of reading required
- FÁS pays a grant to the employee to pay the costs of their personal reader based on a Claim Form

**Please note that the personal reader must not be replacing any reading help normally given by work colleagues, relatives or friends.**

## Employee Retention Grant Scheme (ERGS)

This scheme is to assist in the retention of an employee who becomes disabled. Unlike the other supports which are administered by FÁS Employment Services, the scheme is administered by FÁS Services to Business.

- \* Your company has spent time, effort and money in recruiting, training and developing your staff
- \* You value them and realise that it makes economic sense to maintain their loyalty and retain their valuable expertise and knowledge of how your company operates
- \* You are aware of the time and cost of recruiting replacement staff and training them to achieve full productivity

### Who is eligible ?

All employers in the private sector are eligible to apply for this grant.

The aim and purpose of this grant scheme is to encourage employers to retain employees who acquire an illness, condition or impairment which impacts on their ability to carry out their job and, in that context, to explore their continuing capacity to operate as a productive member of the workforce.

It will assist in maintaining the employability of the employee when they acquire an illness, condition or impairment, by providing funding to:

- Identify accommodation and/or training to enable him/her to remain in his/her current position, or
- re-train him/her so that s/he can take up another position within the company

### How does it work ?

It involves two processes:

- the development of a Retention Strategy for the employee
- the implementation of the Retention Strategy

## Stage I

Facilitates employers by enabling them to 'buy in' external specialist skills and knowledge needed to develop an individualised 'Retention Strategy' for the employee who acquires a disability.

Funding of 90% of eligible programme costs is available to companies up to a maximum of €2,500 towards the development of a retention strategy for any one employee.

## Stage II

Provides funding to the employer towards the implementation of the written Retention Strategy, including re-training, job coaching and/or hiring an external co-ordinator to oversee and manage its implementation.

Funding of 90% of eligible programme costs is available to companies up to a maximum of €12,500 towards the implementation of a Retention Strategy for any one employee.

Funding for the specialist personnel is limited to a set number of hours. Application may not be made without the support of the individualised Retention Strategy at Stage I.

## How to apply

There are two Application Forms for Stage I ERGS and Stage II ERGS respectively. These can be accessed under Forms on the FÁS website at [www.fas.ie](http://www.fas.ie)<sup>2</sup>

On completion they should be returned to the nearest FÁS Services to Business office.<sup>3</sup>

There is no requirement for the Reasonable Accommodation Fund Application form to be completed in this case as all the information is captured on the Stage I and Stage II Application Forms.

2. Direct link to FÁS Forms is <http://www.FÁS.ie/en/Forms/default.htm>

3. Addresses of FÁS Services to Business offices are available on the FÁS website at <http://www.FÁS.ie/en/> by accessing FÁS STB Office at the end of the Employer section of the opening page. A direct link to this page is <http://fascms1.fasoffice.com/en/Employer/One+Step+Up/Contact+FÁS/default.htm>

## Other FÁS Schemes and Grants

The Reasonable Accommodation Fund is just one of a range of schemes and grants provided by FÁS to assist disabled people and employers to find and keep employment in the private sector. Others include:

- Wage Subsidy Scheme
- 
- Supported Employment
- 
- Disability Awareness Training

## Other FAS programmes and services include

- FÁS Training Courses
- 
- Apprenticeship
- 
- Community Employment
- 
- Traineeships
- 
- Jobs Clubs
- 
- eCollege

If you are a disabled person or an employer and you need further information, contact your local FÁS Employment Services Office or Local Employment Services (LES) office.

Information is also available on the FÁS website at:

**[www.fas.ie](http://www.fas.ie)**

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## FÁS – Training & Employment Authority

27-33 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4, Ireland

Telephone +353 (0)1 607 0500 Fax +353 (0)1 607 0600

For more information visit [www.fas.ie](http://www.fas.ie) or e-mail [info@fas.ie](mailto:info@fas.ie)



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