

Public appointments: impact on benefits for disabled people

- √ Incapacity Benefit
- √ Income Support
- √ Working Tax Credit
- √ Housing Benefit
- √ Council Tax Benefit
- √ Disability Living Allowance

The Government is committed to improving the diversity of the boards of public bodies and to increasing the participation of disabled people.

Many public appointments are now remunerated. This has an effect on entitlement to benefits. The actual impact depends on individual circumstances, the type of benefit and the type of appointment.

It is important that applicants in receipt of benefits seek advice from the Department that pays the benefit.

Earnings limits

There is an upper limit on the amount that can be earned while receiving income replacement benefits (such as Incapacity Benefit, Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance). These are linked to other benefits (such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit). Payment of both income related and any linked benefits may be reduced or cease if remuneration from a public appointment is over the permitted limits.

Hours

There is also a limit on the number of hours that can be spent on a remunerated appointment whilst receiving certain benefits. Where a public appointment involves work averaging more than sixteen hours a week over an extended period entitlement to Incapacity Benefit ceases. However appointees may become eligible for Working Tax Credit.

Mobility allowances

Disability Living Allowance is assessed on the basis of care or mobility needs arising from a person's illness or disability. It is paid irrespective of whether that person is working and earning or not. Anybody whose care or mobility needs have increased or

decreased must advise the Disability Contact and Processing Unit which may reassess and adjust the allowance.

Expenses

The reimbursement of reasonable expenses does not affect the payment of benefits, provided these are wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in fulfilling public duties.

Further information

More information about benefit conditions is available from the Directgov website:

This site includes information about 'Linking Rules' (these apply if you leave benefit for work but are unable to continue because of ill health or disability) and 'Voluntary Work'.

Working Tax Credit:

www.direct.gov.uk/workingtaxcredit

Explains what tax credits are and how to claim them if you have been receiving an incapacity benefit.

Housing Benefit:

www.direct.gov.uk/housingbenefit

Council Tax Benefit:

www.direct.gov.uk/counciltaxbenefit

Disability Living Allowance:

www.direct.gov.uk/disability-dla

This information has been agreed with the Department for Work and Pensions.