

Additional Work Coach Time: Health: Guidance

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Policy principles of support

Evidence from delivery of Additional Work Coach Time has indicated that having a consistent work coach is crucial and helps build trust. It is important to understand the customer circumstances and then personalise support based on the customer needs, being flexible in delivery approach in terms of appointment channel.

Customers may have complex barriers and knowledge of local tangible practical support will help, as support may not initially be work-focused but could have value as part of the longer journey. Health and wellbeing focused conversations are valued by customers where work is a long way away.

Work coaches should utilise the support available to them through colleagues, Work Coach Team Leaders, Employer and Partnership teams, Disability Employment Advisers and Work Psychologists.

Introduction

Additional Work Coach Time (AWCT) Health is an opportunity to support disabled claimants and claimants with health conditions, towards, and into work through increased work coach support.

AWCT provides work coaches with more time to:

- get to know the claimant, something which is important to this claimant group
- tailor personalised activities on claimant commitments and work plan using the Tailoring-up approach, encouraging claimants to progress at their own pace
- help claimants to identify and overcome obstacles which otherwise may stop them from moving towards or into work

- enable claimants who are ready and able to access employment and wider skills support, and our employment programmes earlier
- access further support through Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) support (indirect, direct and case conferencing) Work Psychologist interventions, Employer Advisers and partner organisations to support the claimant

AWCT is support for new and existing Health journey claims with the following work capability assessment (WCA) status:

- pre-WCA: Intensive Work Search group
- limited capability for work (LCW): Work Preparation group
- limited capability for work and work-related activity (LCWRA): No Work-Related Requirements group (voluntary)

Pre-WCA claimants must have a fit note or medical evidence to participate in AWCT.

A self-certification is not acceptable evidence for the work coach to consider eligibility/suitability for AWCT. However, if after 7 days a claimant presents with a fit note or other medical evidence, the work coach must review the claimant's eligibility and suitability for AWCT.

AWCT Health can be considered at any time in the Health journey.

AWCT can be resumed or started for claimants reporting a change in their health condition or circumstances if the change means they can now actively participate in support if eligible and suitable.

There is no time limit on how long a claimant can take part in AWCT. Work coaches can end support if they decide the claimant no longer benefits from AWCT.

AWCT Health can be delivered by multiple channels: face to face, by video and over the phone. AWCT Health appointments should be delivered using the most suitable method for the claimant. Delivery of appointments can change throughout the journey.

See Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats.

Safety measures

Claimants with safety measures may participate in Additional Work Coach Time, provided it is appropriate.

Administrative Earnings Threshold

Claimants with a Pre-WCA, LCW or LCWRA decision, who are working and have earnings:

- below the Administrative Earnings Threshold are eligible for Additional Work Coach Time support
- above the Administrative Earnings Threshold are **not** eligible for Additional Work Coach Time support

Claimants taking part in Additional Work Coach Time support, who start work and have earnings above the Administrative Earnings Threshold, can receive in-work support for up to 13 weeks at the discretion of their work coach.

DWP National contracted provision

Claimants who are taking part in DWP National contracted provision are not eligible for Additional Work Coach Time.

Claimants can be referred to DWP National contracted provision at any time while taking part in Additional Work Coach Time. When a claimant starts DWP National contracted provision, they are not eligible for AWCT.

When claimants have completed the DWP National contracted provision, AWCT can then be reconsidered and resumed.

Locally Led Initiatives

Additional Work Coach Time can be delivered alongside locally-led offers such as WorkWell and local Inactivity Trailblazer initiatives (in England and Wales) and No One Left Behind (in Scotland).

Connect to Work

AWCT claimants can be signposted to Connect to Work and support can be delivered alongside each other where it is beneficial to the claimant.

Where the claimant accesses both AWCT and Connect to Work support, the work coach should use their discretion around their appointment length and frequency.

If a claimant has engaged with Connect to Work, the expectation is they may not need AWCT but they should not be prevented from accessing AWCT support if the work coach considers it appropriate.

Jobcentres in Local Supported Employment pilot areas

Claimants participating in the 'Local Supported Employment (LSE)' contracted provision are not eligible for Additional Work Coach Time Health.

Restart

Claimants participating in Restart are not eligible for AWCT.

Local office provision

Claimants participating in the local provision listed below, **can** continue to receive AWCT support:

- local provision
- provision sourced through the Flexible Support Fund or Dynamic Purchasing System
- if they are referred to a Sector Based Work Academy Programme
- if they are receiving support from the National Careers Service (England), My World of Work (Career Advice in Scotland) and Careers Wales
- if they are taking part in work preparation courses, voluntary work, work experience and work trials

Individual Placement Support (IPS)

Claimants taking part in Individual Placement Support (IPS) are not eligible for Additional Work Coach Time.

Claimants aged under 25 years and the Youth Offer

Claimants aged under 25 years can receive Additional Work Coach Time.

Where a claimant is eligible for AWCT and the Youth Offer, the work coach has discretion to offer the most suitable support offer based on the claimant's circumstances.

The increased time can be delivered by all work coaches who have completed the AWCT self-paced learning, including through a Youth Employability Coach or through a Youth hub, as capacity allows.

Pre-work capability assessment or limited capability for work claims

Claimants are not eligible to participate in Additional Work Coach Time if they:

- are terminally ill / end of life (those treated under Special Rules End of Life (SREL))

- are taking part in DWP National contracted provision
- are taking part in Local Supported employment (LSE)
- are receiving SSP
- earning above the relevant thresholds
- have a short-term illness and likely to return to work without support
- are gainfully self-employed
- have a compulsory easement applied, for example for bereavement or domestic emergency

Note: Claimants who have had their conditionality requirements switched off due to temporary easements can receive AWCT once these have ended (this does not apply to the 14 day switch-off applied at the beginning of a claim if a person is unfit).

Claimants who have previously been considered ineligible can be considered for AWCT when or if their circumstances change. This includes when DWP National contracted provision has ended, or their easement has ended. Claimants can be eligible at any point in their journey, even if they were previously ineligible.

Considering Additional Work Coach Time suitability

AWCT may not be suitable for some claimants on the Health journey. Consideration should be given to the impact of health condition, disability and personal circumstances on a claimant's ability to engage with more intensive support.

Work coach discretion should be used to determine if AWCT mandatory appointments are appropriate for individual claimants.

Considering claimant suitability may take more than one appointment.

When considering AWCT health, work coaches should ensure the claimant meets **at least one** of the following criteria.

The claimant, with support:

- can demonstrate a willingness to move forward, for example claimants who:
 - show an interest in receiving support and willing to engage in the conversation
 - respond positively (for example verbally or non-verbally) to the idea of support

- can reflect (with support where appropriate) on their own employment situation (experience, ambitions, concerns) to identify what they could work on, to move forward
- can identify appropriate goals and agree actions that may take them closer to work, for example claimants who:
 - are able and prepared to talk about their interests and explore their strengths
 - are able and prepared to talk about what they can do and undertake new/appropriate steps towards their goals
 - have an idea of the job they would like to do but say they are unsure or anxious when they think about this
 - may have a work history and employment assets or strengths (for example skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience) that can move them closer to work
- could become more able to independently perform job search tasks, for example claimants who:
 - have ideas about where they could look for work
 - know where to look for work but need further guidance
 - indicate they know how to apply for jobs but may need more support. For example, help improving or updating their CV writing and digital skills

If the claimant is considered unsuitable for AWCT, it can be reconsidered at any point in the journey.

Additional Work Coach Time appointments

Claimants who are pre-WCA and LCW are booked 30 minutes 'Work Coach Support: health' appointments every 2 weeks (fortnightly).

The first AWCT appointment should be booked within 14 days of the claimant being identified as eligible and suitable for AWCT.

The first 6 AWCT health interventions are fixed 30 minute 2-weekly appointments.

Flexible appointments can be conducted after 6 interventions have been completed.

Flexible appointments (appointment 7 onwards)

Appointments can be split into 15-minute weekly appointments once the claimant has reached the 7th appointment; this includes if the claimant has failed to attend any of the initial six appointments.

Flexible appointments:

- 1 x 30-minute appointment every 2 weeks
- 2 x 15-minute appointments every 2 weeks
- 3 x 10-minute appointments every 2 weeks

Appointment duration times and frequency should be reviewed on an ongoing basis and tailored to the individual circumstances of claimants.

Ending Additional Work Coach Time mandatory support

Additional Work Coach Time can be ended when:

- the claimant reports a change in their health condition or circumstances that limits their ability to actively participate in support
- the claimant starts DWP National contracted provision
- the claimant moves into work above the AET threshold and declines 13-week AWCT in-work support
- the work coach determines the claimant no longer requires or benefits from the support

Self-employment

Claimants who are **not** gainfully self-employed are eligible for AWCT Health.

Self-employment can be a positive route into employment for claimants with health conditions, this is due to the flexibility and control over the number of hours worked. Where an AWCT claimant shows an interest in self-employment, or it is identified as a consideration, it is important:

- to advise how self-employment is managed within Universal Credit
- that claimants are fully informed and understand the implications of being gainfully self-employed

Work coaches are not trained to give business development advice.

Claimants can be signposted to National and local support such as business advice, mentoring or training, where available, to help them grow their business.

They can also signpost to other government support, such as the Start Up Loans scheme, which delivers support to people who might struggle to get a commercial bank loan, the Business Support Helpline, and Local Growth Hubs in England, alongside Business Wales and Fair Start Scotland.

The District Provision Tool (DPT) contains links to self-employment help and information for your local area.

Where claimants are required to meet work search and work availability conditions, their claimant commitment and work plan may be tailored to take account of limited self-employment activity, but the expectation is that they will primarily search for work.

If a claimant decides to pursue self-employment, they must continue to be supported on the AWCT journey until they reach a stage where referral to an enhanced work coach is appropriate.

It is essential claimants are fully informed and understand the implications of being gainfully self-employed.

Note: The claimant must always make business decisions on their own.

For more information see Self-employment.

Limited capability for work and work-related activity claims

Claimants found to have limited capability for work and work-related activity (LCWRA) can receive Additional Work Coach Time support on a **voluntary** basis.

AWCT will support LCWRA claimants who:

- the jobcentre proactively identifies and engages with
- ask the jobcentre for more support to move forward
- are an existing Pre-WCA or LCW AWCT claimant who receives a LCWRA decision
- are already engaged with a work coach but not on AWCT

LCWRA claimants

When a work coach is proactively identifying LCWRA claimants for AWCT support, they must consider if the claimant is appropriate to contact.

It is inappropriate to contact the following claimants, as we do not want to cause unnecessary stress:

- have the most severe and lifelong health conditions
- are terminally ill / end of life (those treated under Special Rules End of Life (SREL))
- where there is an indication of having a compulsory easement applied, for example, bereavement or domestic emergency
- where the claimant is treated as having LCWRA.

LCWRA claimants are not eligible for AWCT if they are taking part in DWP National contracted provision.

LCWRA claimants are suitable when with work coach help and support they could actively engage in AWCT.

All voluntary participation should be agreed with the claimant.

AWCT Health support should be delivered using the most suitable method of contact for the claimant.

Claimants with a LCWRA decision outcome can receive 30 minutes work coach contact time every month.

The initial 'Work coach support - Health (voluntary)' appointment is 30 minutes.

After the initial appointment

Work coaches have the discretion to decide the appointment length and frequency based on individual claimant circumstances.

Flexible appointments:

- 1 x 30-minute appointment per month
- 2 x 15-minute appointments per month
- 3 x 10-minute appointments per month

Ending Additional Work Coach Time voluntary support

Work coach discretion can be used to end voluntary engagement if it becomes clear that the support is not currently suitable for the claimant.

Voluntary Additional Work Coach Time support can be ended when the claimant:

- fails to attend the same rebooked appointment
- does not demonstrate a continued commitment to engaging with their tailored labour market activities
- starts DWP National contracted provision

- moves into work above the AET threshold and declines 13 weeks AWCT in-work support

Change of circumstances - all work capability decisions

New or changed WCA decision outcomes

Work coaches providing support to health journey claimants should have regular discussions about continuing Additional Work Coach Time. These discussions should continue whilst awaiting the decision outcome and also if the claimant receives a new decision outcome.

Work capability reassessment

Claimant participation in AWCT Support will not automatically trigger reassessment or determine the outcome of the Work Capability Assessment.

If a claimant has a future Work Capability Assessment or reassessment all available evidence will continue to be taken into account.

Claimant appealing WCA outcome decision

Claimants on AWCT support who lodge an appeal on their WCA outcome decision stay in their post-WCA group. If they have been found fit for work they are no longer eligible for AWCT support and they should continue to receive BAU support in their new conditionality group and support tailored to their health condition. If their health changes then they can be reconsidered for AWCT.

Follow the guidance on the action to take to end AWCT.

If the claimant has moved into either LCW or LCWRA, they can continue to receive AWCT support, if they are still eligible and suitable.

Follow the guidance on the action to take if a claimant moves into LCW or LCWRA.

Ending Additional Work Coach Time: fit for work

When the work capability assessment outcome decision is 'No limited capability for work (fit for work)' the claimant will no longer be eligible for Additional Work Coach Time Health.

Claimants who declare themselves fit for work are no longer eligible for Additional Work Coach Time Health.

Changing labour market regime

Health claimants who move between regimes can continue to receive Additional Work Coach Time providing eligibility and suitability are met.

In-work support

In-work support (IWS) is continued support to claimants who have been successful in securing paid employment and are either no longer receiving Universal Credit or have moved into light touch support. It is voluntary and for up to 13 weeks once a claimant has moved into work.

In-work support should be used to help claimants transition into work. Adjusting to work can be particularly challenging for people with health conditions and disabilities, have issues around confidence and managing their condition alongside the new requirements of work.

Maintaining contact for the initial employment period can help claimants to adapt to the change in circumstances and who may otherwise struggle to adapt and fall out of work. It is important for claimants to know that they have someone to support them, who they have a trusting relationship with.

In addition, in-work support can help employers to create a workplace that is inclusive and supportive of the claimant's needs. Work coaches, DEAs, Employer Advisers should all work together to support employers, such as providing reasonable adjustments which can make work and the workplace more accessible for their employee.

In-work support is claimant led. The work coach will not be expected to schedule regular meetings with a claimant on in-work support unless this is requested by the claimant. The frequency and contact method should be agreed between the work coach and claimant. When supporting a claimant using IWS, the 'Work coach support - Health (voluntary)' appointment must always be used.

Failure to attend

The 'Work coach support - Health' appointments are mandatory for eligible and suitable AWCT claimants in the Intensive Work Search or Work Preparation regimes.

Work coaches must review the failure to attend reason(s) claimants provide to consider continued suitability for AWCT Health.

After reviewing the reasons for failure to attend, work coaches can:

- continue AWCT Health support by rebooking the 'Work coach support - Health' appointment
- end AWCT Health support by creating the to-do and updating the end reason

Note: Universal Credit labour market regime appointments will continue for claimants whose AWCT Health has ended. The claimant can be reconsidered for AWCT support in the future.