

Guidelines launched to help staff succeed at work and get businesses growing

- New guidance will help employers support disabled people and those with long-term health conditions thrive at work
- Firms will be given advice on retaining staff as many businesses face recruitment difficulties

Disabled people and those with long-term health conditions will get more support from employers to help them succeed in the workplace thanks to new guidance.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Great Britain's workplace regulator, has issued guidelines that state what employers can do to support staff.

The UK has record rates of employment, but disabled people are less likely to be employed than non-disabled people and are twice as likely to fall out of work.

The [new guidance](#) stresses the importance of making sure workplaces are accessible, that staff communication is clear and inclusive, and appropriate occupational health support is available.

Helping people succeed at work is critical to growing the country's economy, especially as firms are finding it more difficult to fill vacancies.

The new guidance was launched today (November 15) on the eve of Disability History Month.

Sarah Albon, Chief Executive of HSE, said: "The aim of this guidance is to provide clarity to employers about what they should be doing to support their staff. This can be a sensitive, complex area so we want to give employers confidence to act.

"We have to make the workplace better for disabled people and those with long-term health conditions. Not only is that the right thing to do but doing so will also bring big economic benefits at a time when we have high employment and firms are struggling to find staff."

Mims Davies MP, Minister for Social Mobility, Youth and Progression, said: "We want to grow our economy and that means we need more of us to be productive and economically active. We cannot afford to have people who have skills, experience and talent feeling left behind, and even worse shut out of the workplace because they have a disability or health condition.

"This key guidance from HSE and other work across government is part of our plan to support employment, cut ill-health related job loss and make sure employers have the teams they need to grow, and their employees are able to

progress in work and truly thrive.”

HSE worked with disability charities, unions, and business representatives to develop the new guidance.

Kamran Mallick, Chief Executive at Disability Rights UK, said: “We welcome this new guidance to support businesses to do things differently and remove the barriers that stop disabled people from flourishing in work. Keeping disabled talent in your business is good business.

“The lived experience of disabled people is an asset, and by making small changes everyone benefits through inclusive cultures.”

The guidance will help employers retain talent at a time when many businesses are struggling to fill vacancies. For workers, the guidance will help them thrive and perform at their best in the workplace. And we know staying in work can help individuals on many levels, such as giving them financial independence and providing a sense of purpose and wellbeing.”

An estimated 149.3 million working days were lost because of sickness or injury in the UK in 2021, equivalent to 4.6 days per worker. Cutting this number will help grow productivity in the UK.

The guidance is aimed at small-to-medium sized businesses who employ 61% of all UK employees. The Federation of Small Businesses found 51% of small businesses have employed a disabled person or someone with a health condition in the last three years.

The guidance helps workers understand what they might expect from, and should discuss with, their employers while makes it clear how employers can help their staff. Among the recommendations is making sure managers and workers feel confident talking about health and disability, and that any requests for changes to working patterns or modifications in the workplace are dealt with quickly.

The guidance focuses on early and supportive action that employers should take, outlines employers’ responsibilities, and preventative steps they can take to help people stay in work and be a productive team member.

The central part of the guidance outlines seven steps employers should take to support disabled workers and those with long-term health conditions:

[Create a supportive and enabling workplace](#)

[Take an inclusive approach to workplace health](#)

[Understand the work barriers that impact on workers](#)

[Make suitable workplace adjustments or modifications](#)

[Develop skills, knowledge and understanding](#)

[Use effective and accessible communication](#)

[Support sickness absence and return to work](#)

Notes to editors:

The Department for Work and Pensions has also issued guidance for employers and managers offering support with employee health and disability. To find out more: [Support with employee health and disability – GOV.UK \(dwp.gov.uk\)](#)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. [hse.gov.uk](#)

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