



EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a benefit paid to people who are too sick or disabled to work and who meet certain conditions. It's paid by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). For most new claims, it replaces Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid to people who aren't well enough to work. If you're already getting Incapacity Benefit or Income Support, you can carry on getting it but your claim will be converted into ESA at some point.

There are two types of ESA. You may be able to get either or both, depending on your circumstances. The two types of ESA are:

Contributory ESA, which you can get if you have paid enough national insurance contributions. In some circumstances, payments of contributory ESA will stop after one year.

Income-related ESA; which is paid if your income and capital are low enough.

Who can get ESA You can get ESA if:

- you're 16 or over and under state pension age, and
- you can't work because of sickness or disability, and
- you're not entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), and
- you have satisfied certain tests – such as a medical assessment.

Following your **medical assessment you may be put in:**

- **Work related activity group** –as it has been decided that with extra support you can work. You will be required to go for regular interviews at the Job Centre, if you don't attend you can be sanctioned.
- **Support group** – where it has been decided that your illness or disability severely limits your ability to work. You won't have to attend regular interviews.

You cannot claim ESA if you or your partner are getting Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Pension Credit. You must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

How to apply for ESA

You can claim ESA by telephoning Jobcentre Plus. Their telephone number is: 0800 055 6688 or textphone: 0800 023 4888. When they've spoken to you, they'll send you a statement of your situation to check but you don't need to sign or return this. You can also download or complete a claim form online on the gov.uk website.