

# Help with job interviews

jobcentreplus

Part of the Department for Work and Pensions



After you apply for a job you may be invited for an interview. This is usually with the person or company you want to work for, or it may be with an employment agency. This leaflet gives you advice on and practical help on interviews.

## **At the interview**

At the interview you may meet more than one person. You may be asked why you want the job and what skills you have that are suited to the job. Your Jobcentre Plus adviser can give you an idea of what your interview will be like and what you can do to prepare for it.

You should always dress smartly for your interview. Make sure you turn up on time and that you know a bit about the job and the person or company you would be working for.

## **If you need an interpreter**

If you have trouble speaking or hearing, you could get someone to interpret for you in an interview. We can arrange this as part of our Access to Work programme. Ask your Jobcentre Plus adviser to tell you more.

### Stay safe when you go to an interview

Most job interviews go to plan. However, it's always your responsibility to protect your safety. You should remember these few simple common-sense rules when going to interviews.

- Find out as much as you can about the company or the person the interview is with.
- Sort out how you will get to the interview and back.
- Tell a friend or relative where you are going and what time you expect to be back.
- For jobs that offer accommodation with them, always check out the accommodation before accepting the job. If possible, don't go alone to view the accommodation, even if this means a friend or family member has to wait outside for you.
- If the interview takes place outside normal working hours, try to arrange for someone to meet you there afterwards.
- Make sure the interview is at the company's place of work or in a suitable public place.
- Don't allow the interview to take place in your own home.
- Never give an employer your personal financial details until you actually start the job.

- Don't talk about personal matters that have nothing to do with the job.
- Don't agree to continue an interview over drinks or a meal, even if it seems to be going very well.
- Don't accept a lift home from the person interviewing you.

If you have any concerns (for example, you think that the company is offering too much money for that particular type of work), or you are not sure about the company, ask a Jobcentre Plus adviser for advice.

To find out more, contact Jobcentre Plus by visiting [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) or you can find our address and numbers in your local phone book.

### **Help from programme centres**

You may be able to get free help with job applications at one of our programme centres. Many offer training to improve your interview skills and phone techniques, and to develop your experience in how to find out about, apply for and get a job.

To find out whether there's a centre near you and whether you are eligible to use it, contact Jobcentre Plus.

### **The travel-to-interview scheme**

#### **What is the travel-to-interview scheme?**

We can't pay travel costs for all interviews, so the following rules apply.

#### **Can I use the travel-to-interview scheme?**

We can't pay for all interviews, so there are the following rules.

- You must be out of work and on benefit.
- You must have been invited to go to an interview for a specific job.
- You must have been living in your area for at least four weeks.
- The interview must be in the UK.
- The interview must be outside your local area (check with us if you are not sure).
- The interview must be for a job that will be for 16 hours or more a week and will last more than three months.

### **How do I get help with travel costs?**

You should apply for help with costs before you go to your interview. Your Jobcentre Plus adviser will have to check some points with the person you are meeting so we can decide if we can help you.

If we can, we will usually give you a rail warrant to cover the journey.

### **What if I prefer to go to my interview by car?**

We may help with mileage costs but may limit the amount you can claim to the cost of getting there by public transport. We will pay you only after confirming that you attended the interview.

### **What if I need to stay overnight?**

We may pay you the costs of one or two overnight stays if there is no other option. We must agree these costs before you go, and you must give us receipts before we pay you. There is a fixed limit for each night.

### **What if I don't go to the interview?**

We will only help you if you go to the job interview. We have to check with the person you meet that you went to the interview. If you don't go, you must repay us any costs we have paid.

To find out more, contact Jobcentre Plus by visiting [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) or you can find our address and numbers in your local phone book.

### **Important information about this leaflet**

This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. We have done our best to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct as of April 2009.

It is possible that some of the information is oversimplified, or may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes to the law.

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

Jobcentre Plus is committed to applying the principles of equal opportunities in its programmes and services.

Produced by Jobcentre Plus, part of the Department for Work and Pensions

ISBN 978-1-84763-052-0

**DWP1016** | v2.0 (April 2009)

