



# Parental Employability Support Fund – PESF

## Employer Recruitment Incentive (ERI) Information for Employers

The PESF ERI programme offered by Argyll and Bute Council is funded by the Scottish Government. ERIs play an important role in supporting those with the greatest barriers to employment, to enable them to obtain and remain in sustainable employment.

The ERI is available to use as a contribution to the additional costs of recruiting and sustaining eligible participants in employment. The ERI can be utilised in several ways such as for additional supervisory costs, training, initial travel to work costs, specialist in work support, or wages.

### Participant Eligibility

Parents entitled to receive support through the PESF Employer Recruitment Incentive (ERI) must fall under **one** of the following groups:

- Lone Parents
- Parents with a disability or who have a disabled child
- Families with 3 or more children
- Minority ethnic families
- Families youngest child under 1 year
- Parents age 25 years and less

### And

- Have the right to live and work in the UK
- Aged between 16 and 67 years up to 67 years (Pensionable age) who are experiencing barriers to employment;
- Resident in Argyll and Bute
- are **\*unemployed** (or on a paid work experience programme such as Kickstart and Community Jobs Scotland)

\*Those already participating in the Scottish Government's Fair Start Scotland will not be eligible.

## and

meet **one or more** of the following criteria:

- Disabled and/or deaf person (includes those experiencing mental health issues and those who have an impairment or long-term health condition)
  - Care experienced young people
  - Primary Carer
  - Person with a conviction (including Criminal Protective Orders)
  - No or limited work experience
  - Early leavers from the armed forces, veterans, and ex-forces personnel
- Long-term unemployed (6 months or over) who are not on Community Work Placements
  - Person who has failed their ESA Work Capability Assessment
- People from Ethnic Minority backgrounds and racial groups, with a targeted approach informed by local population data.
  - Gypsy/travelling community
  - Partner of current or ex-Armed Forces personnel
- Person requiring support with language, literacy, or numeracy, including those for whom English is an additional language
  - Lone parent
  - Low skilled (highest level of qualifications SCQF level 4 or below)
  - A young person who was receiving additional support for learning in school
  - Refugee or other granted leave to stay in the UK
  - Homeless person (including temporary or unstable accommodation)
  - Person affected by substance misuse.
  - Living in a household with children in poverty.
  - Person living in the 15% most employment deprived SIMD geographies (see ESF Scottish Local Authority Employment Deprived Area Postcodes list).
  - Person living in an area defined as “rural area” or “very remote rural”
  - Living in a jobless household.

*Specific priority will be given to those with multiple barriers to gaining sustainable employment.*

## What Funding Can Employers Access to Recruit under an ERI?

The ERI funding available is:

- **£2,000 (4 x £500)** \*- part-time job on minimum wage 16-25 contracted hours per week, paid at an hourly rate between National Minimum Wage and real Living Wage rates.
- **£4,000 (4 x £1,000)** - part-time job on real Living Wage - 16-25 hours at real Living Wage rates or above
- **£4,000 (4 x £1,000)\*** - full-time job on minimum wage - 25 hours or above between National Minimum Wage and real Living Wage rates
- **£6,000 (4 x £1,500)** - full-time job on real living wage - 25 hours or above at real Living Wage rates or above

**Please note a maximum of 50% actual salary costs will be paid in respect of the 52 week support period should actual costs be less than the ERI payment.**

\*A **£500** supplement will also be claimable if the person is paid the real Living Wage by the end of the 52 week ERI support period.

*The 4 payments will be made:*

- On completion of an Activity Plan (within the first 2 weeks of employment)
- Week 13 of employment
- Week 26 of employment
- Week 52 of employment

Claim forms will be issued by Argyll and Bute Council's Employability Team to employers in respect of all payments. These require to be returned accompanied by relevant payslips to evidence payment to the person.

Payment stages are set and cannot be apportioned should a person fall out of work.

## Employer Eligibility

- Employers from all sectors are eligible and there is no restriction on the size of employer, but an emphasis is given to private SMEs and third sector organisations (including social enterprises).
- Employers who employ individuals on precarious or flexible contracts inappropriately for example zero hour contracts are not eligible.
- The number of individuals an employer can recruit and appropriately support using an ERI will be determined on a case by case basis by Argyll and Bute Council.
  - All employers in receipt of an ERI should promote and embed fair work in line with the Fair Work First Guidance, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-support-implementation/>
  - The ERI is a beneficiary employment support measure and relates to the resident's postcode but the employer can be located throughout Scotland.
  - Employers can use ERI funding to fill vacancies and create new and additional jobs.
  - Employers cannot use ERI funding to duplicate, displace or substitute existing jobs such as to cover sickness absence, maternity leave or replace redundant posts.

## Employment Eligibility

- The employment contract should be a **permanent** contract or a fixed term contract for up to **18 months or more**.
- Prior to commencing employment participants must receive a written contract of employment which informs them of their employment rights and levels of pay (including National Minimum Wage/other negotiated industry rates).
- Participants must work a minimum of **16 hours** per week and a maximum of **40 hours** per week in line with working time regulations. (If the post is for an apprentice

then the hours per week must be sufficient to enable attainment of the qualification). Exceptions can be applied at local discretion, with the agreement of participants, where it is clear that: i) the participant feels this offers greater flexibility in recognition of their personal circumstances (e.g. due to the nature of the participant's health or disability, caring responsibilities, etc); and ii) participants understand the implications for their employment rights.

**All completed registration documentation including a copy of the person's contract must be received by Argyll and Bute Council Employability Team to allow eligibility to be checked and funding approved **prior** to the agreed employment start date.**

It is also expected employers will:

- Ensure the participant receives formal training as part of their job and as part of their investment in workforce development.
- Allow an Activity Plan to be created by an Employability Team Keyworker.
- Allow quarterly Activity Plan reviews to be undertaken by an Employability Team Keyworker to ensure a quality experience for both participant and employer.
- Be proactive in their collection and use of data to address specific equality issues. For example, public sector employers publish their ethnicity pay gap and produce an action plan to deliver identified outcomes.
- Take action to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Provide a commitment to consider payment of the real Living Wage during or at the end of the ERI (the salary must be greater than funding received).
- Ensure a safe and healthy working environment.
- Make a commitment to retain the participant beyond the period of the ERI support.

**If you are interested in accessing this funding to recruit an eligible parent please contact the Employability Team on:**

**[employability@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:employability@argyll-bute.gov.uk) or telephone 01586 555990**