



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

www.craigwhittakermp.co.uk

Access to Work Cap

Thank you for contacting me about the Access to Work cap.

Access to Work supports the disability-related needs of individuals in the workplace where they go beyond reasonable adjustments required under the Equality Act 2010 and supports over 35,000 people per year.

Funding for the scheme is being increased, to fund an additional 25,000 customers by the end of this Parliament.

I understand your frustrations about this cap, but the Government is in the difficult position of needing to strike a balance between accommodating the deeply felt needs of some individuals on the one hand and ensuring as many people as possible can benefit from the scheme on the other.

The annual cap on Access to Work grants was introduced for new customers in order to ensure the scheme can help as many people as possible in the future. The average Access to Work award is around £3,000 per annum, but approximately 1 per cent of people with very high level awards accounted for over 15 per cent of the entire budget. The Government decided to provide awards only up to a limit set at one and a half times the average annual salary. Half of 1 per cent of users previously exceeded this level of support. Capping individual awards has saved enough money to fund 1,000 additional average users.

Ministers have been clear they will monitor the application of the cap and consider whether any further flexibilities might be required in practice. Access to Work specialist teams also conduct annual reviews with customers and employers to establish the level of support required and determine whether there are any reasonable adjustments or other changes, such as greater use of technology, that could assist the customer overcome the barriers they face.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP