

## **JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE:**

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is the main benefit for people without work. It can give you money when you are unemployed and looking for work. But you do have to look for work!

### **THERE ARE 2 KINDS OF JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE:**

- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance is a personal allowance that is based on the National Insurance contributions you have paid over 2 tax years. You can get this for up to 182 days. But, for people who have only recently arrived in the UK, it is not possible to claim this money. However, if you have paid contributions in another European country it may be that these contributions will allow you to claim Jobseeker's Allowance here.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance depends on your income and savings and the income and savings of members of your family. The benefit is designed to make sure that you (and your family) have at least the minimum level of income set by the Government. So, even if you only just arrived in the UK, it may be possible to get this help!

## CAN YOU CLAIM?

- Yes if you have a right to live in the UK (usually automatic if you have a EU passport)
- Yes if you are not working more than a few hours already (ask JobcentrePlus for details)
- Yes if you can work for 40 hours a week or more and you are looking for work (unless you are physically or mentally unwell or a carer)
- Yes if have already paid enough National Insurance contributions into the system OR if you have income and savings below a certain level
- Yes if you are 18 years old (usually, but there is some flexibility) but under the age when you would get a pension
- Yes if you have a 'Jobseeker's agreement' (a promise that you will look for work)
- Yes if you are not attending certain kinds of classes (some classes, like English lessons, probably will not stop you from getting money)
- Yes if you are not getting other money (other benefits) instead
- Yes if you would be in financial trouble without this help

## HOW THE JOBSEEKER'S AGREEMENT WORKS:

- You sign an agreement with your local Jobcentre Plus
- You meet regularly with a Jobcentre Plus personal adviser to confirm that you are still available for, and looking for, work.
- You must usually be available to start work immediately, but there are some cases when you can have more time.

## EXAMPLES OF WHEN YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO BE AVAILABLE TO START WORK IMMEDIATELY:

- If you have caring responsibilities (so you can start work within 48 hours)
- If you are providing a service (so you can start work within 24 hours)
- If you do voluntary work, for no wages (so you can start work within 1 week, but must go to an interview within 48 hours)

## COUPLES:

In general couples are given special treatment but are dealt with together (a joint claim and agreement). This is especially so:

- If you share responsibility for a child but you are only 16 or 17 years old
- If either of you were born after 28<sup>th</sup> October 1957

To find out if you are entitled to Jobseeker's Allowance, contact your local Jobcentre Plus office or visit our website at [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk). The contact details for your local Jobcentre Plus office in your local phone book and on the website.