



Down
Syndrome
Ireland



Employer Introductory Pack



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**Employment
Letter**

Dear Employer,

Through our Ability Programme at Down Syndrome Ireland we are working to break down barriers, and change low employment rates adults with Down syndrome experience. People with Down syndrome want to work and represent a substantial source of untapped commitment and talent. Through our partnership with employers we can offer help and support to ensure adults with Down syndrome successfully access meaningful employment opportunities.

Companies who employ people with Down syndrome report that those employees are committed and motivated, and often only need an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities. They take tremendous pride in their work and earning a wage, demonstrating unparalleled levels of loyalty to their Employer. Not only that, but in our experience, they unintentionally add a new and welcome dynamic to staff morale and customer engagement. Their presence in the workplace is reflected by higher levels of patience, tolerance and goodwill within the existing workforce, whilst also indirectly, further developing the People Management skills of Team Leaders and Supervisors, as a result. The positive impact on the person with Down syndrome is substantial too. Working helps improve confidence, increase social connectivity and helps integrate the individual into the local community.

If you are an employer, we ask you not to make assumptions about what a person with Down syndrome can do. We ask you instead to consider the skills, abilities and aspirations of each individual, as you would for any other potential employee.

We can provide support to you around looking at Job Roles and Work Tasks/Duties in your organisation, that would provide meaningful work for an adult with Down syndrome. In turn this could benefit your workplace by freeing up existing employees' time, so they can complete more highly skilled tasks. We can also provide support around Contracts and any Materials/Documentation required, along with Awareness Training for your team to ensure awareness around working with adults with Down syndrome.

If you are an employer who wishes to employ a person with Down syndrome, we are here to support you. Please don't hesitate to get in contact with us.

Yours Sincerely,

Aoife Gaffney
Head of Employment, Down Syndrome Ireland

Email: aoife@downsyndrome.ie

Phone: 089-7036209



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**Are you interested in
employing a person
with Down syndrome?**



Are you interested in employing a person with Down syndrome?

“ People with Down syndrome are one of the most under-represented groups in the labour market. They want to work and represent a substantial source of untapped commitment and talent. However, they often lack the opportunity to secure employment and participate fully in society. “It is the link between organisations in the not-for-profit sector and those in the business sector that holds the key to greatly increasing the range of opportunities for people with a disability to obtain a socially valued role in the workforce. ”

- Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability (2008)

1. What are our Aims at Down Syndrome Ireland?

- Promote inclusion in society and the workplace
- Enhance capacity in adults with Down Syndrome to participate fully in society as independent adults
- Develop beneficial relationships with Employers which will help promote inclusion in society
- Develop wider opportunities for meaningful employment for adults with Down syndrome

2. What are the benefits of employing an adult with Down Syndrome?

- People with Down syndrome have a lot to offer the workforce
- Companies who employ people with Down syndrome report that those employees are committed and motivated, and often only need an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities
- Working alongside a person with Down syndrome can enrich the wider workforce and benefit a company in diverse and unique ways
- Research shows that employers who employ people with Down syndrome report a high level of commitment and motivation from those employees, who often just need the chance to demonstrate their capabilities
- Loyalty and lower turnover when you employ a person with Down syndrome

3. What are the benefits to the person with Down Syndrome?

- Substantial impact on the person with DS
- It helps improve confidence, increase social connectivity and promotes integration into the local community
- It gives the person an opportunity and the ability to contribute to local community
- Becoming a valued member of society
- Securing a meaningful role in the workplace



4. What can Down Syndrome Ireland offer?

- Inclusive **workplace training** for your company
- **Education and awareness** of working with a person with Down syndrome
- **Awareness** of diversity within the workplace
- Specific **Personal Development** and **Pre-Employment Training** to adults with Down syndrome
- **Collaboration** with each individual to create a 'task list' of jobs and a role suitable within your company

5. What do Down Syndrome Ireland ask from employers?

1. **Training:** That is specific to the job for the adult with Down syndrome
2. **A Mentor:** Provide a link person within your organisation who will carry out this training and act as a point of contact for the adult with Down syndrome in case of any questions/help needed
3. **Paid work:** We kindly ask that all individuals hired to work in your organisation are paid the full minimum wage/salary*

*Please note there is a **wage subsidy scheme** available for an employer who employs a person with Down syndrome. For more information, visit:

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/employment_and_disability/grant_aid_scheme_for_employers_with_disabled_staff.html.

If you or somebody you know are an Employer & are interested in becoming a Partner with DS Ireland with a view to employing an adult with DS, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Email us at: aoife@downsyndrome.ie to find out more

Together with employers, we can give people with Down syndrome the opportunity to secure meaningful employment, by helping them learn the necessary skills to succeed. Business corporate partners play a central role in helping achieve these outcomes.



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**Would you like to include
a member of staff with
Down syndrome in the
work place?**

DUNNES STORES



Would you like to include a member of staff with Down syndrome in the workplace?

- This document outlines some **feedback** Down Syndrome Ireland has received from a company employing a person with Down syndrome in an office-based job.
- This document is **intended to give employers some ideas** in relation to job **roles**, what **supervision** may be needed within the workplace for the employee, what **support** may be needed for the employers.

1. What works:

- **Close management** on a daily basis
- List of **specific tasks** to do with a schedule to be followed
- **Breakdown** of tasks into individual steps
- **Explaining** every step, in detail
- Gradually giving more **independence** on the full task (in some cases, not all tasks)
- Providing **constant feedback** on work
- Being **observant** of special signs, if the person needs a break or just wants to share a personal story
- Giving time to **talk through questions** that may arise
- **Checking regularly** how the person is doing
- **Encouraging completion** of assigned tasks each day

2. Types of Work:

- **General office support:** Support of all departments in delivering post, stocking materials, shredding and other general tasks
- **Marketing:** Preparation of Promotional packs, support at events, stocking marketing material, preparing deliveries and internal reporting
- **Internal reporting or blogging:** Interviews staff and writes a blog together with the assistance of a staff member
- **Logistics department:** Moving goods and packing deliveries
- **Volunteer department:** Putting up and removing outdoor flags; stewarding/welcoming volunteers on open days
- **Media department:** Occasionally assists as reporter/interviewer

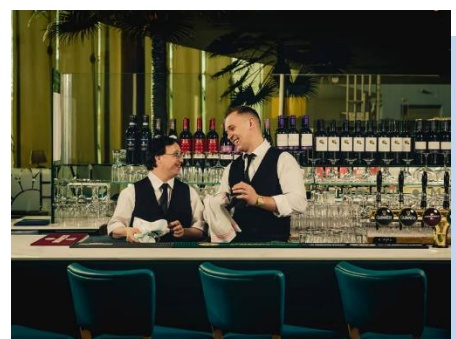


3. Facts to take into consideration:

- **Interdepartmental focus:** While being assigned to one department, there is work in every department that can be done by the person, matching the skills the person has, with the needs of the department
- **Difficulties** encountered during tasks might not always be communicated, which requires that staff are attentive to support needed
- **Office protocol** and line management are sometimes difficult to understand. Ideas need to be discussed first within each department and with the direct manager, as the company works more efficiently when the structures are respected
- The **highly structured way of working** can be beneficial for many tasks but can be challenging at times, when flexibility is required (prior discussion and explanation is essential)
- **Interaction** and **variety** are important to keep motivation levels and avoid boredom
- **Friendship** between colleagues are highly valued, as well as an openness to sharing personal/family life stories and achievements
- **Positive feedback**, feeling that the work done is important and that they are part of a team is key to work satisfaction and motivation

4. Conclusion and Recommendation:

- We would recommend that companies who wish to employ an adult with special needs e.g. Down syndrome, receive adequate training in advance of accepting him/her, to ensure the best positive experience and outcome for both parties
- Some thought should be given to the roles for the new member of the team. The work has to be real, the tasks taken on are tasks other would have to do if your new member of the office was not there
- Everyone has to feel the initial time given in training and support has a genuine return to the company, the staff and the intern
- While more time has to be given to support the new team member, the benefits can all be clearly seen





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ALFAPARF
MILANO

JOICO
the joy of healthy hair

General Employment Process





DSI General Employment Process

1. Initial meeting held between Down Syndrome Ireland and potential employer (preferably virtually)
2. Job role and suitable tasks, days, and times of work are agreed on for advertising of job role
3. Position advertised with Down Syndrome Ireland members through email and social media
4. Once CVs are received, DSI hold an Open Day @ National Office to meet all applicants and assess suitability for work
5. Through a selection process, a small number of interested participants are put forward for interview with the employer. DSI sit in on interview *or* DSI can job match an adult to the specific role if preferred
6. DSI carry out pre-interview and pre-employment training with the adult(s) with Down syndrome
7. DSI carry out Down syndrome awareness training with the staff team (it would also be important here to match a mentor to the role who can train the adult and supervise along the way)
8. Once the adult is placed in employment, we will provide support around contracts, task lists, and/or ongoing support in case issues arise

