



# Working for Carers

**Getting back into employment  
and your rights at work**

“ Since joining the programme my outlook to work has completely changed and I have more purpose in life. ”



689,000  
reasons to care



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## What is Working for Carers?

Working for Carers is a London-wide project that supports unpaid carers, aged 25 or over, to move closer to employment. The project is led by Carers Trust and is jointly funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund.

### Our aims are to:

- Support carers to pursue their employment goals through confidence building and skills development.
- Offer a flexible service that considers individual needs and ambitions.
- Provide a holistic package of support for individuals whose caring role or former caring role, restricts or has restricted their ability to work.
- Empower individuals through a variety of activities, support their personal development and strengthen employability skills.
- Engage with local businesses and organisations to support access to employment, training and volunteering opportunities for carers.
- Highlight the benefits of employing carers, adopting care-friendly policies and understanding the needs of carers in the workplace.

## Is Working for Carers for you?

### Who can join Working for Carers?

If you are a carer or former carer, aged 25 and over, not in paid work and living in London you can register with Working for Carers!



### About carers

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. There are around **seven million carers** in the UK – that is one in ten people.

### Why join Working for Carers?

Working for Carers is the only employment programme in London dedicated to carers and their individual needs.

Carers who register with Working for Carers can access free support, designed to meet their individual needs and delivered in their local area. This may include:

- An individual needs assessment and action plan.
- One-to-one support and advice with a dedicated Employment Personal Advisor.
- Group activities and training workshops.
- Support with writing CVs and interview techniques.
- Help with job searching.
- Access to employment, volunteering and training opportunities.
- Group workshops providing peer and specialist support.

“ I feel positive that a project like this exists. It is good for someone like me who has cared for many years and now wants to get back into work. It's not just about getting any job, they are supporting me to change career. ”



## Nadera's story

Nadera is 47 years old and has been caring for her husband, who has severe mental health problems, for the last seven years. Her Working for Carers Employment Personal Advisor helped her work out that her main barriers to employment were lack of confidence and knowledge of how to find a job.

After attending confidence-building and CV-writing workshops and meeting others in a similar position, she was keen to develop her interpersonal skills by volunteering at her local carers centre. Working for Carers also supported Nadera to apply for a job as a care assistant and she was delighted to be offered a position.

“ Since joining the programme my outlook to work has completely changed and I have more purpose in life. ”

## Suzanne's story

Suzanne had given up her job as a house manager of retirement properties to become a full-time carer for her mother. When Suzanne could no longer manage her mother's 24-hour needs, she arranged for her mother to move into a nursing home.

Suzanne then registered with the Working for Carers project. Her Employment Personal Advisor talked through her skills, employment needs and barriers to finding a job. After support with her CV she sent it to a local clothing retailer and was offered a job.

Working for Carers has given Suzanne a new routine, supportive colleagues and opportunities to learn new skills. And this has also helped her to cope when her mother sadly died.

“ Carers have so much to offer, we had to learn huge amounts of information about the ones we care for and learn diplomacy, listening skills, how to be compassionate, managing finances, keeping diaries, providing transportation. ”

## Flexible working: What are my rights?

This is the question we are most frequently asked about returning to work.

### Your right to request flexible working

- All employees with 26 weeks service can make a request.
- Informal requests can be made at any time. Formal requests can only be made once every 12 months.
- Responses should be confirmed within three months.
- A formal request can be refused on one of eight grounds listed on the next page.

### What kind of request can be made?

You can ask for a change in hours, times and place of work, for example you can ask for:

- Flexi-time.
- Home working.
- Job sharing.
- Part-time working.
- Term-time working.
- Shift swapping.
- Staggered hours.
- Compressed hours.
- Annualised hours.



### How to make a request

When making a request:

- Make it in writing and make sure it is dated.
- State that it is an application made under the statutory procedure.
- Specify the change that you are seeking and when you wish the change to take effect.
- Explain what effect, if any, you think the change would have on your employer and how any such effect could be dealt with. Go into detail and explore alternatives.
- State whether you have previously made an application to your employer and, if so, when.

## How should an employer deal with a request?

Your employer:

- Should deal with the request in a reasonable manner.
- Should notify you of their decision within three months (or longer period if agreed).
- May state that your request be subject to a trial period.

## Can your employer refuse your request?

Your employer can refuse your request on the grounds of:

- Additional costs to the employer.
- A negative effect on your employer's ability to meet customer demand.
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff.
- Inability to recruit additional staff.
- Negative impact on quality.
- Negative impact on performance.
- Planned structural changes.
- Not enough workload during the periods you propose to work.

## What happens next?

Your employer:

- If the request is granted, it is usually subject to a trial period.
- If successful you will have a permanent change to your terms and conditions.
- If unsuccessful your request is likely to be refused.
- You then have the right of appeal.



“If it wasn't for Working for Carers, I am not quite sure how I would manage. I like how Working for Carers actually represents carers and supports individuals into work.”

## Time off for dependants: What are my rights?

### What is time off for dependants?

- All employees have a statutory right to take a reasonable amount of time off work in order to deal with emergencies involving a dependant.
- This time off is usually unpaid.
- It applies to employees only.
- You can use one to two days of this allowance at any given time.
- A dependant is your spouse, civil partner, child or parent (not grandparent), or a person who lives in the same household (excluding tenants/lodgers).

### When can time off be taken?

You can take time off for dependants:

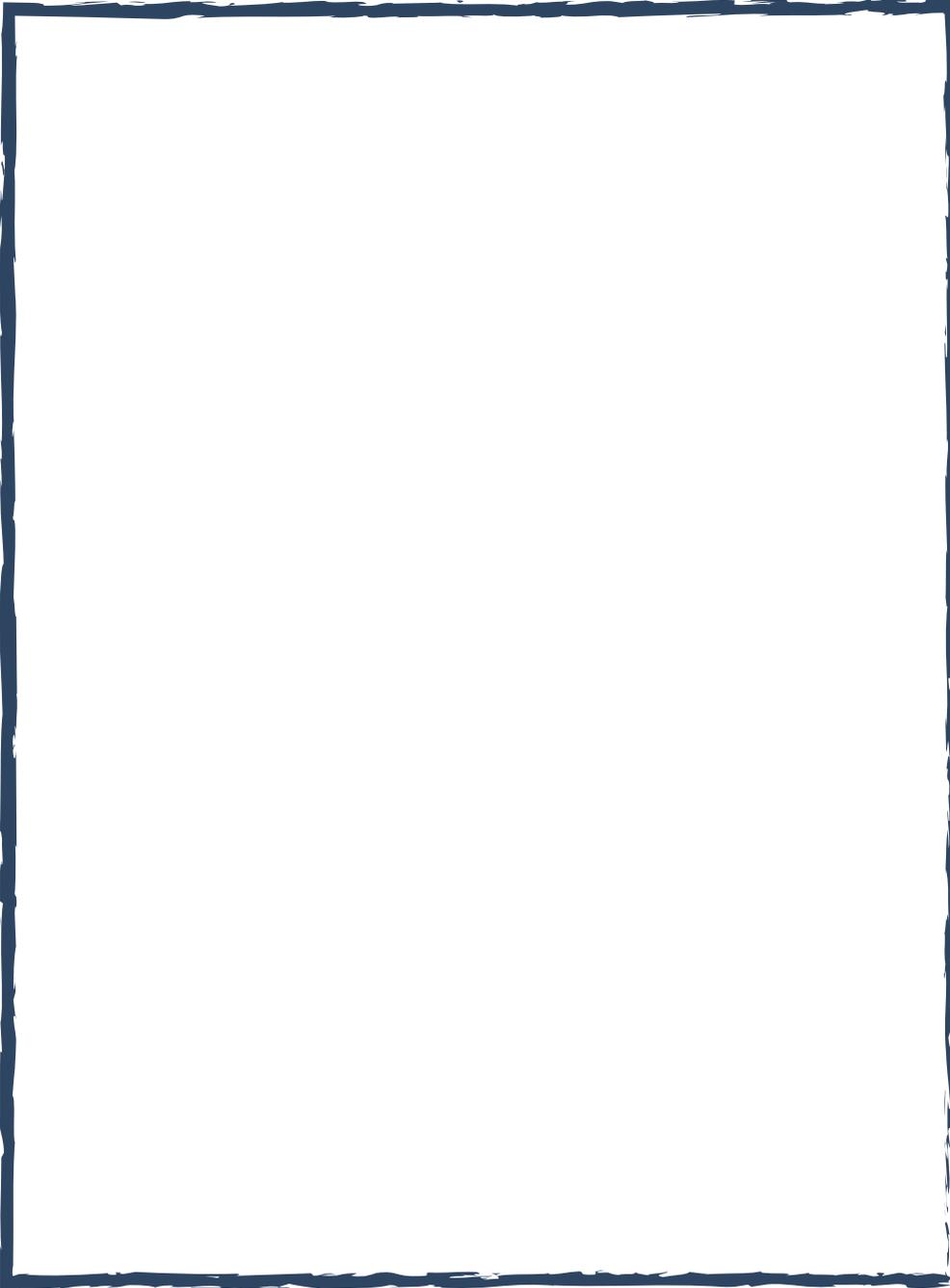
- To provide assistance if a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted.
- To make care arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- In consequence of the death of a dependant (this is not the same as compassionate leave).
- To deal with the unexpected disruption, termination or breakdown of arrangements for the care of a dependant.
- To deal with an unexpected incident which involves the employee's child during school hours. Time off for dependants does not apply:
  - To other events – for example a house fire.
  - To planned arrangements – it only applies to emergency/unforeseen events.



“Working for Carers has given me the tools and support to go back into employment. It has helped me get my confidence back!”



## What's happening in your area?



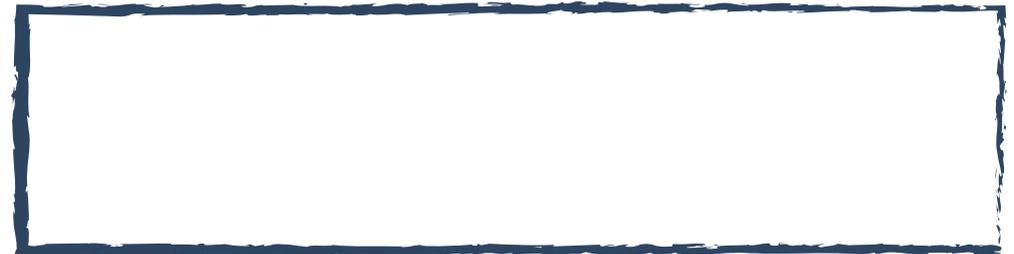
## Information if you are not eligible for Working for Carers

### Carers Trust

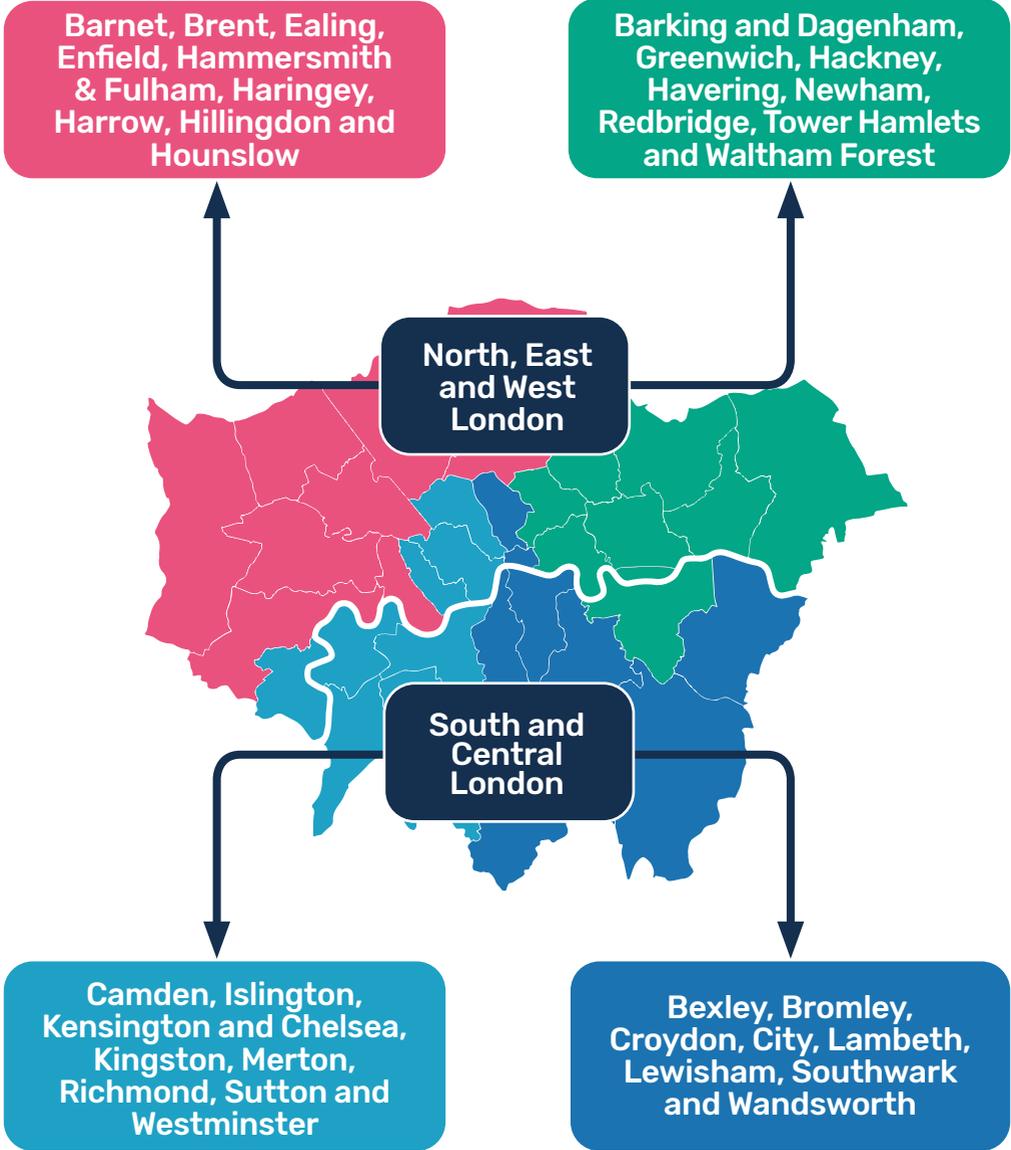
Carers Trust is a major charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

- ACAS advice – Workplace advice for employees and employers. [www.acas.org.uk/advice](http://www.acas.org.uk/advice)
- National Careers Service – Information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work. <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>
- Turn2us – Provides financial support to help people get back on track. [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)
- Entitled to – An online benefits calculator to help you check what you are entitled to. [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)
- Love London Working – A training and employment programme helping unemployed people over the age of 16 into work in London. [www.lovelondonworking.com](http://www.lovelondonworking.com)
- The Work and Health Programme – Employment support for people with health conditions or disabilities and those unemployed for more than two years. [www.shaw-trust.org.uk/en-GB/Services-\(2\)/Work-and-Health-Programme](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk/en-GB/Services-(2)/Work-and-Health-Programme)

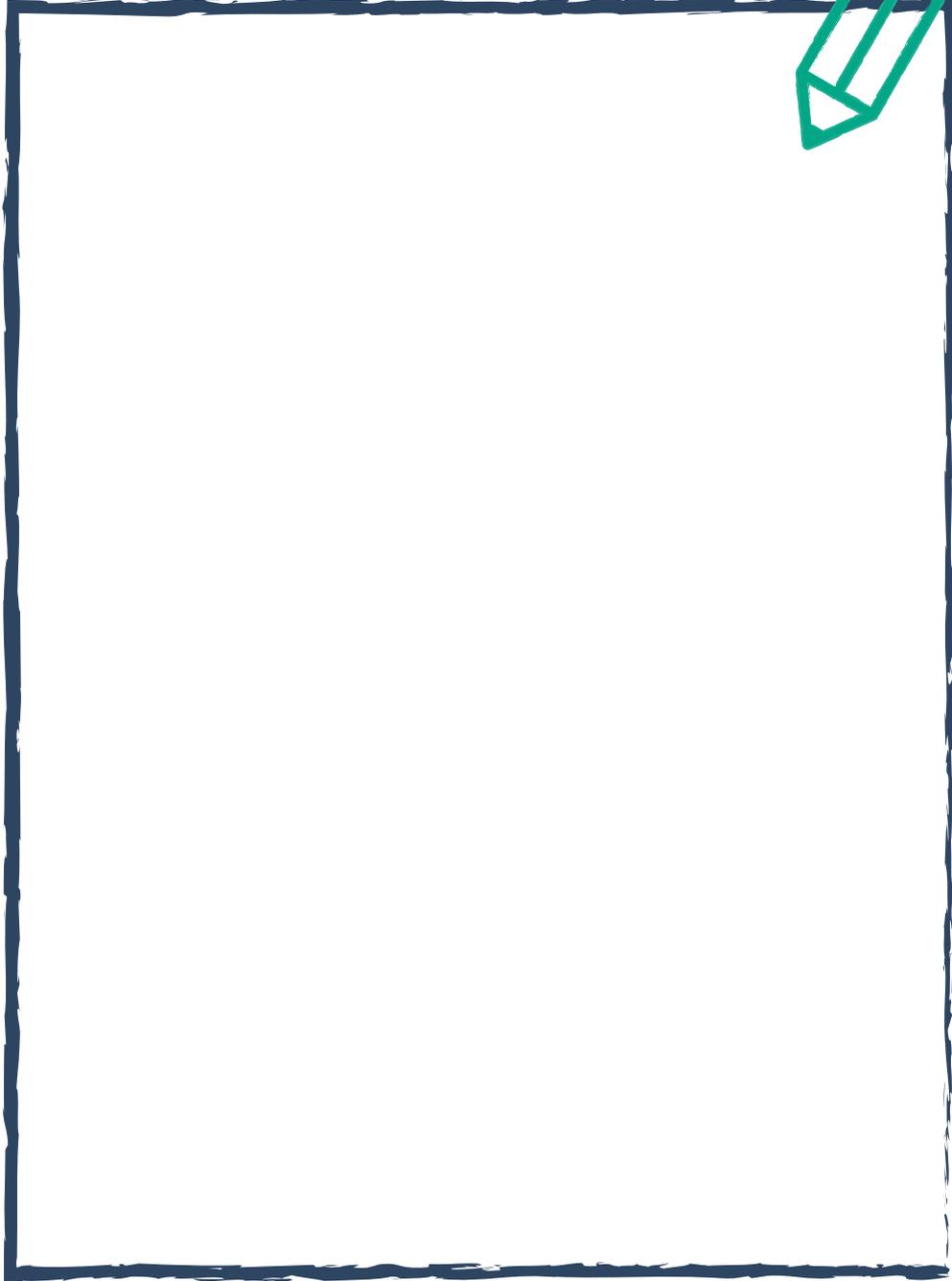
### Contact your local Working for Carers project



# Working for Carers across London



# Your notes



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