

Carers Personal Budgets can be used to improve your own work opportunities. Southend Carers can offer more information and there are fact sheets on the Southend Borough Council website.

The statutory employment rights that are particularly relevant to carers to help you stay in work while caring are;

- the right to request flexible working
- the right to time off in emergencies
- the right to parental leave if you have a child
- the right not to be discriminated against or harassed under the Equality Act.

Flexible working

Staggered hours Part time
Job sharing hours
Working from home Compressed hours
Term time working Shift work Flexitime
Career break Mobile working
Annualised hours

If you are self-employed, on a short-term contract or employed through an agency you may not be covered by these rights. If this applies to you it is important to seek advice.

All employees with 26 weeks of service have a statutory right to request flexible working. Your employer must consider your request reasonably and have sound business reasons for turning down your request. If you tell your employer why you would like to work flexibly you are more likely to identify a working arrangement that works for both you and your employer.

Part-time working, job sharing and flexi-time are well known examples of flexible working but other solutions such as homeworking, shift swapping, annualised hours or compressed hours with employees working their hours over fewer working days could be a solution to a problem in covering care responsibilities. It is always worth discussing possible options.

Make your request in writing include an outline of the working pattern that you would like to

State how the proposed change will help the business as well as you, or how any possible negative impact can

State the date on which you would like the proposed change to start

State that it is a statutory request for flexible working and the dates, if any of any previous requests

How do employees make a request for flexible working?

In addition to your statutory rights your employer may offer more support. For example you may be able to use leave arrangements, paid or unpaid to cover intensive periods of care. If you are thinking of giving up work some employers offer paid and/or unpaid career breaks, often after a specified period of service with them. If this is possible it allows you to keep your options open, ensuring you can go back, and keeping you in touch with the workplace.

Help to Start Work or Re-train

Jobcentre Plus offer **Work Focussed Support For Carers** to carers who are aged 18 or over, work less than 16 hours a week and cannot get help from any other Jobcentre Plus employment support programme. It is a voluntary service which you can choose to take part in at any time. A Jobcentre Plus personal adviser can give help and support including;

- Help preparing for work
- Help to find suitable training
- Support in looking for and applying for a job
- Funding for replacement care

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Our mission is to make life easier and fairer to Carers in Southend and our expert information and advice is always tailored to the Carers individual and personal caring circum-



Carers and Your Employment Rights

In the future most people's lives will include at least one episode of unpaid caring. Many do not see themselves as carers as they are still at work and maybe sharing care with other family members and /or friends. When someone close to you is ill, you just get on with it and don't stop to think how the change in responsibilities is affecting you. However if you are juggling caring for someone with work and family, it is essential you consider your own health and wellbeing. Awareness of this has even been written into the Care Act 2014. Register with Southend Carers Forum and let us provide you with information, advice and support so you can look after yourself as well as provide the care you want for your loved one.

Continuing to work whilst caring can help maintain an income and pension rights, and provide you with an interest and social interaction outside of your caring role. But you might be finding it difficult to juggle two jobs; your paid employment and your unpaid caring responsibilities, staying in work or returning to work might feel like a daunting prospect. If you are looking to combine caring and work you may get some help by having a Carers Assessment, or getting a review of an existing Carers Assessment.