



Helping your employees during the cost of living crisis

Introduction

The soaring prices for food, energy and other essential goods and services are affecting everyone and many employers are asking what they can do to support their employee's financial wellbeing. The following practical information may help.

Here are some suggestions, you can make a difference.

Talk to your staff openly:

- Start the conversation early regarding the cost of living. Assure staff of confidentiality and, if possible, ask if they foresee any issues for themselves (if appropriate).
- Ask staff if they can suggest any ways to save money for themselves or the team. Suggest a meeting to discuss as a group.
- Talking to each other will make people feel more comfortable if they understand this will affect many people within the organisation.



Optimise shift/working patterns and reduce staff travel costs where possible:

- Could consideration be given to minimise rostering staff on split shifts?
- Aim to have staff from the same area on the same shifts/working patterns so they can car-share.
- Investigate public transport options, such as could staff use school buses and do the work hours fit with their public transport options?
- Can you offer flexible working i.e. a shorter week where people do their hours over 4 days or hybrid working?



Offer the use of communal facilities:

- Make staff aware of the availability of work facilities.
- Have kitchen appliances available for staff to prepare hot meals and drinks at breaks.
- Consider if staff could have a shared fund for some foods and drinks which would be cheaper if bought in bulk.



Think about how you can lower your own costs within the workplace and how staff can help:

- Display and promote cost saving actions that can save money both in the workplace and in the home, such as:
 - only fill the kettle with as much water as you will need
 - switch computers and monitors off when not in the office
 - turn lights off when not in the room
 - use energy saving features on devices.
- Can you ensure pay & processes are fair i.e. offering real living wage?
- Be aware of any local initiatives and promote within the workplace.
- Can your organisation offer interest free loans for emergency purposes i.e. broken boiler, increased one off bills (vet, car etc.)?
- Do you offer any salary sacrifice schemes (i.e. cycle schemes) and if so can they be promoted more frequently?
- Lower your costs with energy saving LED light bulbs.
- Discuss further ideas with your team.



Training and awareness raising:

- Ensure managers have the knowledge and skills to provide cost of living support to employees with empathy.
- Offer training to staff on how to budget or keep costs down if the cost-of-living crisis is affecting their mental health and wellbeing. Ensure you know how to sign-post them to services which they can access for help.



Further Information

Support for you or your staff can be found in the accompanying title 'Useful Services', and both titles should be displayed in a public area together so all staff can access them.