

# ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS AND THEIR WORKFORCE DURING THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

## Access to support services

### Job Centre Plus (JCP)

Providing support with your individual staffing issues and access to a Rapid Response service for businesses making redundancies.

Help can be accessed depending on where your business is based:

**Marches District (Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire):** 01432 363672 or 01562 623661

**Birmingham and Solihull:** 0121 255 8351

**Black Country (Sandwell, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall):** 01902 435163

**Coventry and Warwickshire:** 02476 232598

**Staffordshire:** 01782 382164

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

### Business Link West Midlands (BLWM)

Providing general business advice and assistance with training needs.

**Train to Gain:** 08000 754557

**General Business Advice:** 0845 113 1234

**Credit Crunch Hotline:** 0845 002 0900

[www.businesslinkwm.co.uk](http://www.businesslinkwm.co.uk)

[www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

### Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

Providing advice and guidance on all legal issues connected to business restructuring, alternatives to redundancy or the legislation regarding making redundancies ensuring the principles of good practice are applied to the way all staff are treated.

**General helpline:** 08457 474747

**Howard Paskin:** will provide a point of contact for West Midlands businesses: 0121 345 1410

### Careers Advice and Guidance - contact details for employers to circulate amongst their employees.

Providing one-to-one advice and careers guidance for all adults over 19 years of age.

**Help over the phone:** 08000 924 429 - lines open seven days a week 8am-10pm

**To book face to face help, in your local area contact:** 0800 217 244

[www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice](http://www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice)

[www.nextstepsmidlands.org.uk](http://www.nextstepsmidlands.org.uk)

A large print version of this document is available at [www.lsc.gov.uk/wmpublications](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/wmpublications)



It is recognised that the current economic downturn makes it a tough time for businesses both large and small. In supporting employers through these difficult times The Regional Minister has set up the West Midlands Taskforce to ensure public sector agencies and business organisations are working together to address the impact of the economic downturn, providing a wide range of assistance for business, individuals and communities.

Support is there to help employers and their workforce face a variety of challenges, giving advice and practical assistance every step of the way. This support has a two-fold approach. Wherever possible, we will look to help employers retain their workforce and continue trading. Where this is not possible and redundancies and job losses are unavoidable, there is help and assistance in both identification and delivery of appropriate activities that will prepare people for work with other employers.

Business Link, Jobcentre Plus, Learning and Skills Council and ACAS are working together to provide businesses with flexible and responsive support. The support available is summarised in the following boxes:



DO YOU NEED GENERAL BUSINESS ADVICE/SUPPORT RETRAINING YOUR WORKFORCE TO AVOID REDUNDANCIES?		DO YOU NEED SUPPORT CONSIDERING OR ACTUALLY MAKING REDUNDANCIES?	
	ORGANISATION		ORGANISATION
<p><b>Support can be gained to advise on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing new marketing strategies - widening the customer base, to increase profitability.</li> <li>how lean manufacturing can contribute to business success by minimising costs.</li> <li>increasing productivity delivering a boost to your bottom line.</li> </ul>	BLWM	<p><b>Support can be gained to advise on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support in restructuring an existing organisation.</li> <li>how individuals can be assisted with new business start ups.</li> <li>up-to-date business information relevant to your business and the changing economic climate from our advisors through our <b>Credit Crunch Hotline</b>.</li> </ul>	BLWM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>helping business find the right staff for their needs - filling vacancies and reducing recruitment costs.</li> <li>in depth recruitment support through Local Employment Partnerships that can provide access to a range of measures including: pre-employment training programmes - bespoke to your needs and access to Work Trials - to assess an individuals suitability for a particular role.</li> </ul>	JCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>information about alternative jobs for your employees if you need to make redundancies.</li> <li>matching individuals to known vacancies within the labour market.</li> <li>helping employees update their CVs and improve their job search skills.</li> <li>general information to individuals about a range of benefits and financial support.</li> </ul>	JCP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how redundancies can be avoided by exploring options such as - short time working, temporary wage reductions and changes to working arrangements.</li> <li>how you can draw on the knowledge and expertise of your employees to improve the efficiency of your organisation.</li> </ul>	ACAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>helping you to understand the legal obligations placed upon your organisation in respect of lay offs, contractual changes and redundancy dismissals, to reduce the risk of claims being made to the employment tribunal.</li> <li>helping you to understand the legal obligations to consult with employees, to reduce the risk of claims being made to the employment tribunal.</li> </ul>	ACAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how the skills of employees can be developed through funded training, accessed through Train to Gain including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>short accredited courses in vocational skills areas such as health and safety and customer care.</li> <li>help with basic skills needs.</li> <li>training for higher level managers.</li> <li>skills development in productivity and manufacturing techniques.</li> <li>how business can ensure staff they have the right skills to respond to new market opportunities or diversification.</li> <li>bespoke training to meet your business needs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	BLWM	<p><b>If you are making people redundant there is a Rapid Response service that may be able to help. It is available to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a skills analysis for your workforce, helping to identify transferable skills and training needs relevant to the local labour market.</li> <li>give job-focused training to help individuals develop new skills relevant to current job vacancies.</li> <li>give access to a fund of money to overcome individual short-term barriers to taking up a specific job offer, e.g. travel to work expenses.</li> </ul>	JCP

