Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Pathways to Employment:

Your guide to a career in substance use services

Contents

Welcome to 'Pathways to Employment: Your Guide to a Career in Substance Use Services'

This toolkit is for people with lived, or living, experience of substance use who might be considering working to help others with similar issues. Your experiences can bring immense value, and this toolkit will show you how you can prepare to start working in this rewarding area.

Starting work can be exciting but you might be unsure whether it is right for you. This toolkit will help you understand your options, the skills you might need and help you find the support you might need to succeed. Whether you are just starting to think about a job or already looking for work, this toolkit can support you throughout your journey.

Your experience is valuable. It helps you connect with others and provide them with hope. By sharing your story and helping others, you can bring compassion and understanding to this important work and support Scotland's National Mission to reduce deaths and harms associated with drug and alcohol use and improve lives.

For clarity, and for the purposes of this document, when we hereafter refer to "people with lived experience" we mean anyone with either lived, or living, experience of substance use.

Using your lived experience of substance use to help others

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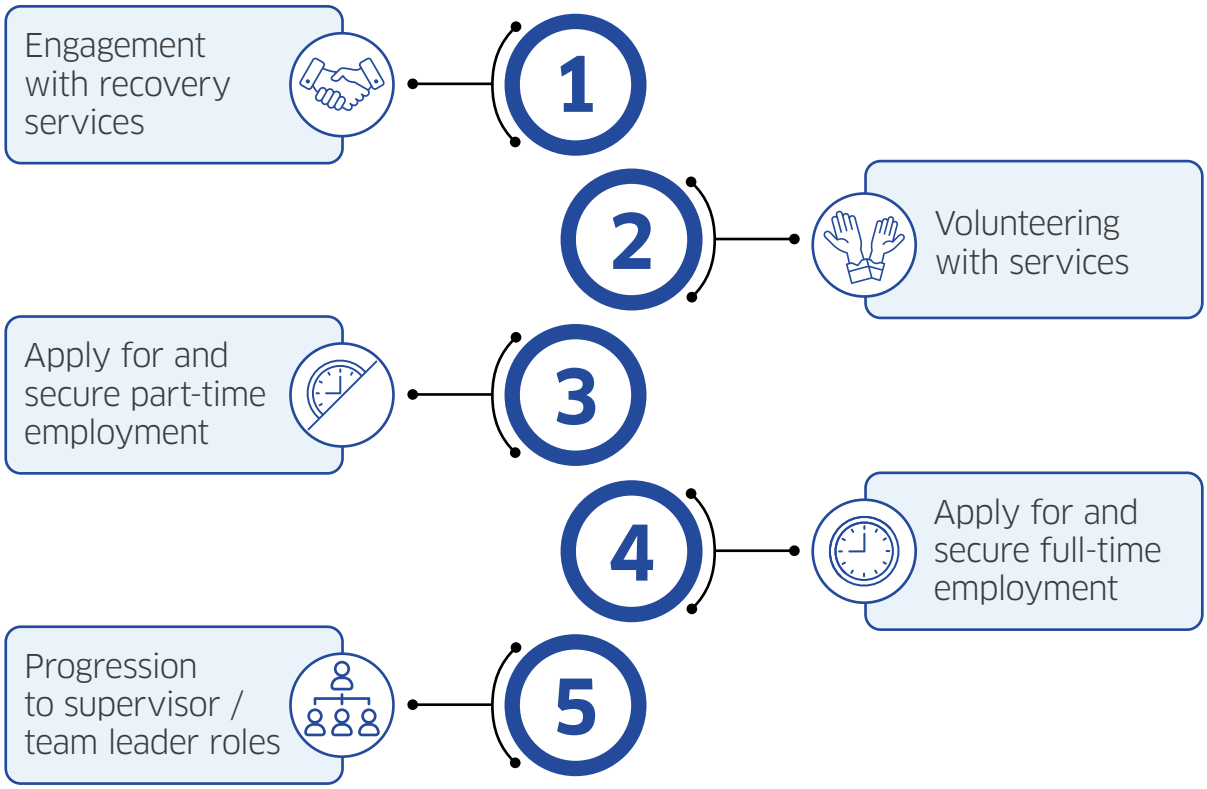
Substance use services across Scotland need people with lived experience to help support others. Working in this field can be rewarding and by helping others, you can also strengthen your own recovery.

Your personal experiences can bring incredible value, but please know that you are not required to share your lived experience if you do not want to. Only in specific roles, might sharing your experience be expected.

The diagram below shows one potential pathway to employment, but there are many different routes you can take to begin working in substance use services. This toolkit will help you understand which one is right for you.



Recovery communities and lived experience recovery organisations (LEROs)

Recovery communities and lived experience recovery organisations (LEROs)

Your local recovery community or LERO can offer many benefits before you begin your journey towards employment. These organisations can help you build relationships, share your experiences, and develop the skills and confidence necessary to enter work.

How can recovery communities and LEROs support my recovery and employability?

Recovery communities and LEROs can support your recovery and your path to employment by acting as a bridge between fellowship or treatment services, and the workplace. By offering structured pathways, they can often provide support and guidance that will help you transition to employment.

These organisations can offer a support system that may help you develop:

- **Coping Strategies** – helping you build the tools needed to manage challenges.
- **Emotional Stability** – providing a foundation for handling the stresses of work life.
- **Skill Development** – offering training, education and volunteer opportunities to develop job-related skills.
- **Practical Support** – offering practical support as you navigate systems such as disclosure and benefits.

What kind of opportunities do these communities provide?

Recovery communities and LEROs can prepare you for employment by providing you with an opportunity to engage in:

- **Recovery Events/Meetings** - where you can share your experience, engage with other people in recovery and build your confidence.
- **Volunteering** – where you can gain experience and readiness for work, whilst being supported with your own needs.

How can I benefit from their employability pathways?

You can benefit from the unique employability pathways provided by recovery communities and LEROs through:

- **Tailored Support** - addressing both personal and professional development.
- **Personal Health and Wellbeing** - equipping you with the training, knowledge and practical support to manage your mental health and wellbeing.
- **Skill Building Workshops** - helping you gain the skills needed for your desired job.
- **Networking Opportunities** - connecting you with potential employers and peers.

What key areas should I focus on to prepare for employment?

To prepare for employment, focus on developing:

- **Resilience** - building the strength to overcome obstacles.
- **Readiness** - ensuring you are emotionally and mentally prepared for work.
- **Ongoing Support** - maintaining connections with support networks to sustain employment.

Recovery communities and LEROs can provide you with the support needed to develop these key areas, helping ensure you are not only ready to enter the workforce but also capable of sustaining your employment and personal recovery.

The Scottish Drugs Services Directory or Scottish Recovery Consortium may be able to help you identify recovery communities and LEROs in your local area.

Planning for employment

Planning for employment

What do I need to know before I start?

It is important to remember that every person is different, and no two stories are the same.

If you are returning, or even entering employment for the first time, then it is not unusual to feel apprehensive. Often people worry that they are not ready to work. Past experiences can often rob us of self-belief, but it is important to recognise that your skills and experiences can help.

Should I consider volunteering?

Volunteering is a great way to start a career in substance use services. It helps build confidence, develop new skills, and allows you to understand if this type of work is right for you.

If you attend fellowship meetings, you may have the opportunity to take on extra responsibilities like volunteering for service roles or helping set up. SMART recovery meetings also offer opportunities to become a trained facilitator, which can lead to paid work.

Recovery communities can offer structured work to help you gain experience. The **Scottish Recovery Consortium** can help you to find services nearby.

Volunteering helps build a record of achievements, which is useful for future job opportunities. Many successful careers have started with volunteering. Organisations that may offer volunteer opportunities to people with your lived experience include:

- **Change Grow Live**
- **CREW**
- **Scottish Drugs Forum**
- **Scottish Families Affected by Drugs & Alcohol**
- **Scottish Recovery Consortium**
- **With You**

Local volunteer opportunities can be found by asking within the services you use, the **Volunteer Scotland** website also lists opportunities. Additionally, there may be other options outside the substance use sector that can prove useful in building your confidence.

Organisations such as **Scottish Recovery Consortium** also offer peer support training and a safe space to help build confidence, skills, and knowledge.

Case Study: Harbour (Ayrshire), Transforming Lives Through Support and Employability

Harbour runs 13 volunteer-led peer support groups across Ayrshire, including three for families, fostering community and mutual support. They offer those affected by substance use a chance to focus on personal growth and employability.

Harbour's work is trauma-informed and person-centred, helping individuals overcome barriers and transition into the workforce. After 30 days of engagement, people may become Harbour Helpers, which includes professional development opportunities. These roles include assisting volunteers, learning mental health first aid, confidence-building or working with the Community Support Vehicle to help those fleeing violence or facing homelessness.

This work is part of the five-stage 'Bridge to Shore' pathway, guiding individuals from recovery to employment. Harbour builds strong links with local employers, helping people with little or no work experience find meaningful jobs. Employers work closely with Harbour to match candidates for smooth workplace transitions.

Inspired by the University of Birmingham's **Better Than Well programme**, Harbour provides a supportive environment for handling setbacks. Qualified counsellors and trainees address issues like unresolved trauma, ensuring people get the help they need during recovery.

Harbour's trauma-informed approach includes therapeutic services, staff training in trauma care and peer networks, creating a safe and empathetic space for everyone. They connect people to external services for housing, mental health and work with partners like Women's Aid, and local authorities to support broader needs for employment success.

Harbour's efforts boost employability, confidence, and help people move into the workforce, especially in substance use fields. By supporting both individuals and staff, Harbour makes a lasting impact on lives and communities.

Success Story: One success story to highlight is Neil. Neil's story highlights Harbour's impact. Starting with little work experience, he followed the Bridge to Shore pathway, becoming a group facilitator and helpline supporter. Today, Neil is a full-time manager who continues to volunteer, giving back to the community.

Skills and qualifications

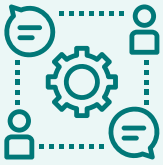
Skills and qualifications

What skills would I need to work in substance use services?

Below are some skills that employers might look for. It can be useful to think about examples where you have used these, be able to explain the situation and understand those skills you might still need to improve.

Active listening skills and a non-judgemental approach

Example: A time when you have listened to someone speak about their experience and how you have been able to make them feel comfortable by not placing judgement on them.



Communication skills

Example: A time when you have had to communicate information to another person in a clear way.

Patience

Example: A time when you might have felt frustrated, but you have been able to handle the situation well.

Problem solving and using your initiative

Example: A time when you have had to think of a solution to a problem and how you have put that idea into practice.

Sensitivity and understanding of situations relating to recovery

Example: A time when you have supported someone during a sensitive situation using your experiences and understanding of substance use.

Team-working skills

Example: A time when you have had to work with others in a group setting and how you did this successfully.

Time management

Example: A time when you have shown that you have been able to manage your time well to get multiple things done on time.

Literacy and Numeracy skills

It is common for people to need help with their reading and writing skills. Support is available through Skills Development Scotland's '**The Big Plus**'. You can access 'The Big Plus' by calling their free phone help line, **0800 917 8000**. Advisers can offer advice and put you in touch with tutors in your local area.

You could also visit the **Workers Educational Association** website to identify any local or online learning that could support you.

Digital skills

If you are worried about your digital skills, then support is available from a range of sources:

- **Access to Industry** can support you with online access to enable you to develop your digital skills.
- **Citizen Literacy** have also created an adult literacy development program and **tutor training resources** supported by a web app that also improves digital literacy skills. As well as the app, they can also support you with training and printed learning resources.
- **The Marie Trust** support those in the homeless population to use digital devices.

Within your area, there may also be local groups or services available, speak to your **local library**, **local Jobcentre** or **Citizens Advice Bureau** if you would like to find out more.

Do I need any qualifications?

Formal qualifications will not necessarily be needed to begin working. The personal experience you have of substance use often offers as much value as a formal qualification.

However, the **Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Level 2 in Social Services and Healthcare** qualification is widely recognised across the entire social care field. Achievement of this SVQ can open up a range of employment opportunities. Many employers may be able to support you to achieve this once in post and when you are ready.

What careers support is available to me?

Access to impartial, person-centred, and confidential careers, learning and employability support is available to support your route into work.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) provide a service that is available to all and can help you make your own learning and career decisions.

A meeting with a qualified SDS career adviser can help you understand what you have to offer and identify your options.

Exploring careers in substance use services

Exploring careers in substance use services

Working in substance use services can allow you to use your lived experience to help improve the lives of others.

Often people with lived experience might worry about working with or supporting people they know personally. However, everyone has a past and you should be able to move on from it this and use it to make a positive difference.

What roles are available in substance use services?

There are various roles available across the NHS, local health and social care, and third-sector services, such as charities and voluntary groups. These roles can be rewarding, and your own strengths and experiences can help you succeed.

Though the job names may vary depending on the organisation, two of the most common roles include:

1. **Peer Support roles -** these roles can be paid or voluntary. In these roles you would share your experiences to help others. These roles focus on building relationships and supporting others based on your own lived experience.
2. **Support Practitioner roles -** in these roles you would provide individual support to people affected by substance use, helping them stay engaged with treatment and encouraging their personal growth and independence.

Note: Many of these roles will have more specific information on individual organisations' websites.

There may also be opportunities in mental health, homelessness, and advocacy services.

What are the first steps I can take?

1. The journey begins with a single step

Looking at this toolkit is a good first step.

2. Build up your confidence and skills

Think about opportunities to increase your self-belief and strengthen your own recovery. You might consider engaging with your local recovery community as one possible way to do this.

3. Identify the types of jobs you might be interested in

Use online job boards like **myjobscotland**, **NHS Scotland jobs** and **Goodmoves**. Searching key words such as "peer support," "recovery worker," or "lived experience" can help identify potential opportunities.

4. Set achievable goals

For example, look for volunteering opportunities.

5. Track your progress

Keep track of your actions to stay focused and see your progress.

6. Celebrate small successes

Recognise your achievements, like identifying a job of interest or applying.

7. Set an end goal

Aim for a goal, such as finding a volunteering opportunity or peer support role.

These steps will help you stay focused and patient, just like your recovery journey. Setbacks can happen, but you can get back on track and reach your goal.

Case Study: EACH Recovery Matters, East Ayrshire

EACH Recovery Matters offers strong employability support through gradual progression pathways, educational opportunities, ongoing support, and digital assistance. This helps individuals transition from early recovery into employment. EACH encourage service users to consider employment early in their recovery journey.

EACH provide practical and emotional support, connection and activities to give people purpose and ease them into volunteering and employment. Starting with simple volunteering tasks like making teas and coffees, EACH help people build confidence. As people progress, they get the opportunity to take on more formal roles, providing direct support to others at their Recovery Hub. When ready, EACH assist in supporting individuals into employment, either within their service or through other external opportunities.

EACH staff closely monitor each person's readiness to ensure that any step forward does not compromise their own personal recovery. They also fund college courses and SVQ qualifications, helping individuals develop crucial skills for employment. Support through the disclosure process is also provided, with guidance and advice available throughout.

Through Digital Lifelines Scotland funding, EACH provides mobile devices and sim cards, helping individuals improve digital skills and access employment opportunities by removing digital barriers.

What other opportunities are available?

Scottish Drugs Forum's National Traineeship

This program helps people with lived experience of substance use to work mainly in the substance use and wider social care field. It offers formal learning and work placements over 39 weeks. Visit the **National Traineeship webpage** for more information.

Elevate Glasgow

Elevate Employability offers support for moving towards education, training, volunteering, or employment. The service tailors support to your individual needs and provides ongoing help to maintain progress. The team combines recovery and employment expertise for a person-centred approach.

Navigating the job application process

Navigating the job application process

Applying for a job can feel overwhelming, especially if it has been a while. However, there are so many benefits to being in work and support is available from recovery communities and organisations such as **Skills Development Scotland**. You can get help throughout your employment journey at **My World of Work**.

Where can I find job vacancies?

To boost your chances of finding work, use a variety of job websites such as **Find A Job**, **Indeed**, **Totaljobs**, **myjobscotland**, **NHS Scotland jobs** and **Goodmoves**. If you do not have internet access then check your **local library** where this is often provided for free.

Don't forget traditional methods like networking - tell people you are looking to work and ask about the availability of any opportunities.

How do I apply for jobs?

My World of Work offers tips and resources on completing job applications. A CV may be required and you can **find examples** and a **CV builder tool** on there.

They provide background information on what an application form is and tips for filling out forms and other helpful information.

How do I prepare for an interview?

Identify your strengths

Start to consider your personal skills and strengths. Think of examples from your past and highlight these on your CV (if you have one), job application, and during the interview. Use the **Skills Discovery** tool to find your transferable skills. **My Strengths** is also a short questionnaire which will give you a personalised report about your strengths.

Ask questions before the application/interview process

If you have any questions about a job, there will usually be a point of contact provided. Contact this person to understand if the role is right for you. This can also show your interest in working for them.

How do I prepare for an interview?

Prior to interview:

- Find out about the organisation, check their website or speak to someone who already works there.
- Practise answering the questions they are likely to ask with a trusted friend or a careers adviser. Think about what you might ask the interviewer as well, this can show you are interested.
- Get to know the interview location and how to get there beforehand.

Lots of people feel nervous about interviews so check out the stress busters on pages 86-88 of the **Positive Steps to your Future handbook**. Lots more information and tips about every stage of the interview process can be found **here**.

What do I wear to an interview?

Dress smartly, although employers care more about what you say, looking professional can create a good first impression.

Can I get help with travel or clothing costs for an interview?

If you have a work coach, you may be eligible for the Flexible Support Fund, which covers:

- Travel to interviews and work.
- Clothing for work.

Contact your work coach or visit the **Turn2us website** for more information.

Can I get help with travel costs?

If you have a **Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card**, you may get:

- Two free tickets a month for travel to interviews.
- A free Monthly Season Ticket once you secure a job.

You can **find out how to access this support on the Scotrail website**.

Where can I find other support?

- **Skills Development Scotland (SDS)** offers a helpline **(0800 917 8000)**, for career advice and services. SDS support is available to everyone, you can access their range of services no matter what stage of your career or where you live.
- For in-person advice you can find the contact details of your **local career centre** to access career advice, information and guidance and you can find careers information at **My World of Work**.
- Chapters 4-6 of the **Positive Steps to your Future handbook** is a useful guide to help you in your career journey.
- **Connecting Scotland** have a helpful page which provides links to resources for finding jobs, interview skills, building a CV, developing digital skills and building confidence.

- **Scotland Smart Works** helps unemployed women with clothing and coaching to secure employment. They have two centres which are based in Edinburgh and Glasgow.
- **Elevate Employability** supports people in recovery with job placement assistance.

How do I provide identification to employers?

To start work, you will need proof of your right to work in the UK. Find more information on the **UK Government** and **Citizens Advice** websites.

Financial support

Financial support

Employment can provide independence, achievement, regular pay, as well as a sense of purpose which can help your own personal recovery journey.

Will starting work affect any financial benefits I receive?

If you are in receipt of any benefits, then it is important you understand if employment could affect your finances.

Where can I find support?

- There is guidance from the **Department for Work and Pensions** on claiming benefits whilst volunteering.
- **Social Security Scotland** helps people by providing social security payments. If you are in receipt of additional financial support, you may be directed to information allowing you to understand the implications of taking on a new role or increasing hours.
- You can call **Social Security Scotland** for free on **0800 182 2222** or they can also be reached through post and webchat.
- **Citizens Advice** also have a range of support available on their website or you can search for your **local Citizens Advice Bureau**. You can also call their **helpline** on **0800 028 1456**.

Will my Universal Credit be affected when I start work?

Universal Credit can be made available to you even after you begin working and aims to ensure that you are financially better off in employment. You may be able to receive top up payments to your wages every month.

How much Universal Credit will I get?

If you or your partner are working, how much Universal Credit you receive will depend on any earnings. There is no limit to how many hours you can work and still get Universal Credit.

What if my wages increase or I stop working?

If your wages increase, your Universal Credit payment will reduce. If you stop working or your wages decrease, your payment will increase. For every £1 you earn from working, your Universal Credit payment goes down by 55p. Your total income will be your wages plus your new Universal Credit payment.

- Further guidance on **Universal Credit information for claimants** is available.
- There is also helpful guidance on how earnings affects your **Universal Credit depending on your circumstances**.
- There is also a **benefits calculator** to help you understand how your Universal Credit may change if your pay increases.

Please continue to check this information as this will be subject to change. This can also vary depending on your own personal circumstances so it is important to be aware of that and ensure you seek support where required.

How can I look after my mental wellbeing?

Your mental wellbeing is important. This is just as important to look after along with your physical health. If you need to access support, then some of the organisations here can help:

- **Breathing Space**
- **Mental Health Foundation**
- **Mental health - Citizens Advice**
- **Mental health services at NHS 24**
- **Scottish Action for Mental Health**

You can also find advice on building your self-confidence available from the NHS Inform **self-esteem self-help guide**.

Disclosure process

Disclosure process

Most employers in the substance use sector understand that people will often have previous convictions or even outstanding charges. They also recognise that these can often be for matters other than drug offences. Employers are responsible for having a fair recruitment process, and many interviewers or colleagues may have convictions themselves.

Disclosure Scotland, a Scottish Government agency, helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and supports people into work. They encourage employers not to automatically reject candidates based on previous convictions.

From 01 April 2025, there are four types of disclosures, including the **Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme** which could be required for working in the substance use sector. These are detailed below, and further information is available on the **Disclosure Scotland website**.

Type	Description
Level 1	These will show **unspent** convictions and any notification requirements.
Level 2	These will show information on unspent and certain **spent** convictions and other relevant information held by the police.
Level 2 (with barred list check)	Some roles will require additional checks to show if you are barred from working with children or protected adults. For most of these roles you will need PVG scheme membership. But for certain activities, such as adopting a child, you will need a Level 2 with barred list check instead. This will replace most enhanced disclosures.
PVG scheme	The PVG scheme will be a mandatory for people in a regulated role with children or protecting adults.

The details of the previous disclosure levels up until 31 March 2025 can be found on the **Scottish Government website**.

PVG Scheme

1. What is the PVG scheme?

The PVG scheme is a criminal record check for jobs in sectors such as substance use services. Disclosure Scotland performs these checks, and the results help employers decide if you are suitable for a role. Again, most employers understand that people will often have previous convictions, or even outstanding charges. This is the highest level of disclosure for regulated work in Scotland. Regulated work is classed as working with children or protected adults.

2. Why is the PVG scheme necessary?

Most roles in health and social care involve working with children or vulnerable adults, which may require PVG membership. Some jobs may not need any disclosure or require a lower level.

Consideration of suitability to work

3. What information does a Disclosure Scotland certificate include?

The certificate lists relevant conviction history based on the type of disclosure applied for, helping employers assess suitability for work.

4. Who decides if someone is suitable for employment?

There is no "pass" or "fail" when it comes to disclosure. Employers decide suitability based on the information provided by Disclosure Scotland, except when individuals are barred from specific roles.

There are certain jobs you will not be able to do if you are listed as barred. This could be working with certain groups such as children or protected adults. If you are not in that category, after a disclosure certificate is returned then it is the decision of the organisation whether to offer you a role.

Convictions

5. Do I need to disclose all my convictions?

No, you do not have to disclose all your previous convictions. Whether you need to disclose a conviction depends on how long it has been since the conviction occurred. Information below explains the different classes of convictions in relation to disclosure.

There are three main types of convictions that are important to understand: spent, unspent and protected.

6. What is a spent conviction?

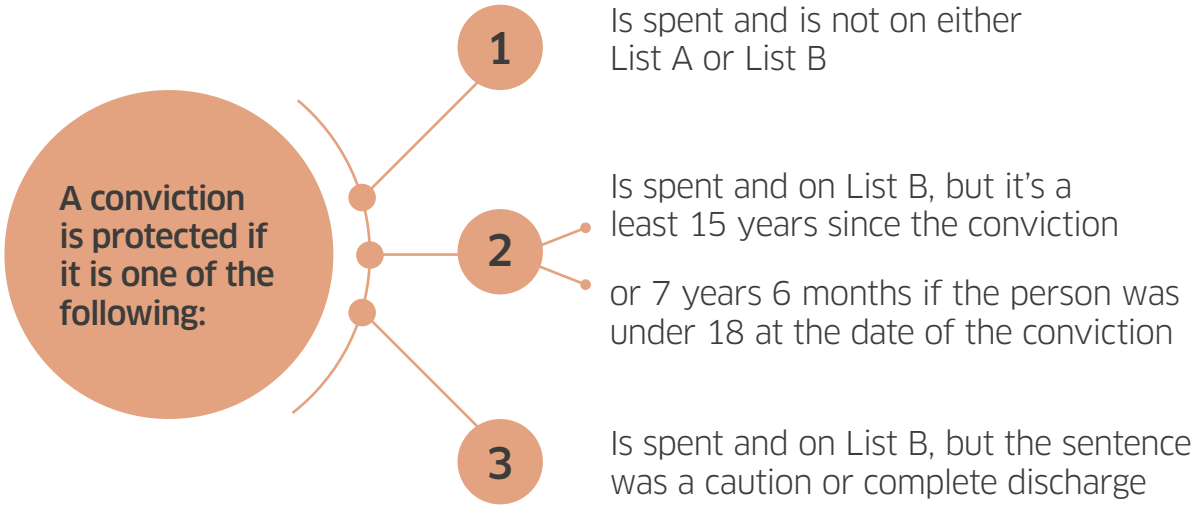
Once the disclosure period for a conviction has passed and it becomes "spent", it will not be shown. This is a conviction that no longer needs to be disclosed.

7. What is an unspent conviction?

An "unspent" conviction is still within its disclosure period and would need to be disclosed. You will need to tell an employer about these if they ask about convictions. They will show on a lower level of disclosure. Don't worry, this does not mean you will not be able to take up a new role.

8. What is a protected conviction?

A protected conviction is a spent conviction. It does not need to be disclosed to an employer, even for a job which requires you to disclose spent convictions.



The links to both lists are here where you can check if that would apply to you – **List A offences; List B offences**.

9. What can employers ask about my convictions?

An employer can ask about convictions that you have, but this will depend on the type of work that you would be carrying out and the type of disclosure that is required.

10. How do I tell an organisation about any convictions I may have?

Most organisations who support people with convictions recommend using a "letter of disclosure". Disclosing relevant information about convictions to employers is not a bad thing and it should be an open and honest conversation. Details of what could be included in this letter is set out below.

In this letter you can explain:

- Why you want to disclose your convictions.
- The nature of your convictions and the sentences received.
- The circumstances that led to your convictions.
- Changes you have made in your life since your conviction, like education.
- Why they should consider you for the position.

Page 40 of the **Scotland Works for You** guidance shows **examples of disclosure letters**.

You can disclose convictions through a letter, CV, application form, interview, or after receiving a job offer. A 'letter of disclosure' can explain:

- The conviction details and circumstances.
- Changes made since the conviction.
- Why you are suitable for the role.

If an organisation asks about your convictions when you apply for a job or volunteer role, you can send a letter of disclosure with your application form or CV. If they do not ask you about your convictions until after an interview, you could provide the letter then.

Consideration for listing

11. What does it mean for me if I am "considered for listing"?

This assessment determines if you should be barred from regulated work. Disclosure Scotland evaluates convictions and other relevant information.

This process can take some time to complete but Disclosure Scotland take a fair and considered approach. You should not be unnecessarily worried; this **does not** automatically mean that you will not be able to get on to the PVG scheme.

12. What do Disclosure Scotland consider when someone is "considered for listing"?

Disclosure Scotland will let you know that you are under "consideration for listing". They will assess the information they have about you. This could be a conviction or other relevant information from the police, a conviction from the Scottish Court Service or a referral from a past employer.

You can submit additional evidence within 28 days to support your case. They will then also give you 28 days to send any extra information you think is useful to explain the circumstances. The information you provide may include testimonies or references that will inform Disclosure Scotland's decision, this is known as a "representation".

13. What if I am listed as "barred"?

You cannot work in the specific roles for which you are barred, such as the vulnerable groups covered by that list. However, you may pursue other types of employment.

14. Can I appeal against a listing decision?

Yes, you can appeal within three months. You will remain barred until the appeal is resolved. Further information can be found on the **appeal against a listing decision page**.

Further support and advice

15. What advice is available to help me understand the disclosure process?

Disclosure Scotland have also **produced a document** that gives advice to both employers and individuals on how to approach conviction information that may have been disclosed.

16. Are there any organisations that can support me?

Organisations who may be able to offer practical support are detailed in the useful resources section on the final page of the **Scotland Works for You** guide. You can also email Disclosure Scotland for advice and signposting at **scotlandworksforyou@gov.scot**.

How do I adjust to starting a job?

How do I adjust to starting a job?

Once you have secured a job, you should have support to settle in. Working in a professional role may feel different, but you will be in a great position to help others in their recovery journey.

The Scottish Government has created '**Guiding Principles**' to help employers support and recognise the potential of employees with lived experience. This document will let you know how your employer should support you. Wellbeing support will also be available to you once in employment.

- The **National Wellbeing Hub** and helpline (**0800 111 4191**) is available to everyone working in health, social care and social work in Scotland.
- The **Workforce Specialist Service**, (**0300 0303 300**) offers a confidential mental health service. This is available to all regulated professionals working in health, social care and social work in Scotland who, due to confidentiality reasons, cannot access care or treatment through their own GP or other local services.

Setting boundaries at work

Starting a professional role involves a transition that might take some adjustment. Setting clear boundaries is important in this type of work, as you balance your professional responsibilities with your personal recovery. Mistakes might happen, but what matters most is being honest and open if they do.

Here are tips to help maintain a healthy separation between your job and your personal recovery:

- Be mindful about what you share in recovery meetings where clients from your service are present.
- Some people prefer attending meetings where clients from their service are not present.
- Don't talk about clients or work-related matters outside of work settings.
- If you attend a recovery meeting in a professional role, let the group know you are there as a professional.

Further learning whilst in work

The Scottish Government has created the **Drug and Alcohol Workforce Learning Directory** which can support you in your career to access learning opportunities whilst working with people affected by substance use.

This Learning Directory is aligned with the **Drugs and Alcohol Workforce Knowledge and Skills Framework**. The "Informed" level sets out the knowledge and skills that you will be expected to develop when you begin working to support people who use substances.

Alternative career support

Alternative career support

What if I don't want to work in substance use services?

Not everyone will want to work in substance use services. It is important that career advice and support is available to everyone.

What do I need to consider if I want a different career?

Below are alternative options that you could consider as a next step if you want to explore another career:

1. Look for other volunteering opportunities in different sectors.
2. Identify if there are there any other jobs that you could try to gain experience in.
3. Have conversations with peers or people in the services that you have engaged with before.
4. Search for jobs online, have a conversation with a trained careers adviser at **Skills Development Scotland (SDS)** or other relevant support organisations.
5. Consider if there are any qualifications that you want to work towards or might need for a specific job.
6. Understand if there are any college and or university courses available that might help.
7. Look at any modern apprenticeships that you might want to consider.

Below are some links to other potential routes for either learning or employment that can support you.

Apprenticeships

- SDS have information that they provide about **apprenticeship opportunities**.
- **Apprenticeships in Scotland** allows you to search and look to see what apprenticeships are on offer across the country.

Education

- You can find out about the different types of **college and university courses** on offer.
- **The Scottish Wider Access Programme** supports access to higher education for adult learners.
- You can find a list of **Scotland's colleges.**
- You can find a list of **Scotland's universities.**

Employment and Training

- **Myjobscotland** is the website for the public and third sector where many job opportunities will be advertised.
- **My World of Work** is a good guide to training and studying.
- **Mygov.scot** can help support you in finding employment and a career.
- **Goodmoves** for searching for jobs in the voluntary sector and some volunteering opportunities.

What is No One Left Behind?

No One Left Behind is the shared approach between Scottish and Local Government to delivering an all-age, place-based, person-centred model of employability support in Scotland. It promotes a strengthened partnership approach where Scottish & Local Government work together with public, private, and third sector organisations to design and deliver services.

Through the No One Left Behind approach, services are flexible, person-centred, integrated and aligned with other key services including health, justice and advice services. Support is offered to individuals regardless of age or background and are completely voluntary.

What support should you expect?

- To be supported into the destination which is right for you.
- An Employability Key Worker to work on an individual plan to help you to reach your goals and accounts for your personal circumstances.
- Support to be tailored to assist your needs, when you need it.
- Preparing for employment can include access to training, education and/or volunteering.
- Throughout your journey, you'll be treated with dignity and respect, following **Employability Service Standards**.
- Your Employability key Worker will work with employers giving you the best chance of sustaining employment.
- Ongoing support once in work.

You can find out how to get in touch with your local service here on the **Employability In Scotland website**.

Believe in Yourself and Make a Difference

Your lived experience has the power to change lives. Substance use services across Scotland are looking for people like you, your skills, your experiences, and your passion to make a real impact.

Everyone's journey to employment is unique. This toolkit can guide you through the key steps and help you understand what is possible.

No matter where you are in life, you can achieve your goals. There is a network of people, organisations and resources to support you every step of the way.

Take the first step today - your story can provide hope and create positive change.

If you have any questions or comments relating to the content of this toolkit, these can be directed to **drugsandalcoholworkforce@gov.scot**.

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

This publication is available at **www.gov.scot**

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St Andrew's House
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EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-83691-282-8 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, June 2025

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1540454 (06/25)

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