

# THRIVING COMMUNITIES EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE

Thriving Communities are investing in local businesses, helping unemployed people of all ages secure permanent employment.



Local businesses who offer a permanent contract of employment to someone unemployed and living in South Ayrshire, may be eligible to receive funding through our Employer Recruitment Incentive.

To be eligible for the incentive, employers must pay the Real Living Wage (RLW), and the position must be a newly created role or current vacancy.

For more information please call:  
01292 612301  
or email:

[ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)



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## Introduction

South Ayrshire's Employer Recruitment Incentive (ERI) supports people of all ages, some with the greatest barriers to employment, to progress to meaningful, sustainable employment.

ERIs are administered by South Ayrshire Council, in line with the Scottish Government's [No One Left Behind](#) priorities.

SME employers and third sector organisations can apply for an ERI to help with the costs of recruiting and employing someone who fits the eligibility criteria for an ERI.

Employers can receive up to £5,000 for **newly created** roles or **current vacancies**.

The total amount paid will be determined by the number of hours and rate of pay per week. ERIs are paid to the employer at set intervals throughout the duration of the funding.

## **1 EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE**

### **1.1 ERIs**

- South Ayrshire's ERIs are available from 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025, subject to funding available. Employees must commence employment during this period
- Applications will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis
- Payment will be made to the employer in three instalments over a 26-week period
- Individuals should not commence employment until funding has been approved
- To ensure the terms and conditions of the funding are being met, a representative from Thriving Communities will maintain regular contact throughout the duration of the ERI

### **1.2 Employer criteria**

- It must be a newly created role, or a current vacancy within the organisation
- Employer must offer a permanent contract of employment or a contract of employment for the duration of Apprenticeship (minimum 12 months) with hours and rate of pay noted
- Employer must offer a minimum of 12 hours employment per week
- Employer must pay the Real Living Wage or above
- Employer must pay a salary greater than ERI being received
- Employer must ensure the employee receives role specific training, demonstrating your investment in workforce development
- Employer and employee must agree to regular reviews from Thriving Communities to ensure a quality experience for both
- Employer will ensure a safe and healthy working environment, where staff wellbeing is actively supported by promoting good work/life balance
- Employer must apply the principles of Fair Work First ([Fair Work First: guidance - March 2023](#))
- Small to Medium Enterprises or 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations (fewer than 250 employees)
- Employer will ensure all supporting evidence requested by Thriving Communities will be provided in full, without delay
- Employer understands that failure to supply supporting evidence could result in a delay to payment or ERI being withdrawn
- Employer will repay any money where South Ayrshire Council deem that the conditions under which the ERI was offered have not been fulfilled

### **1.3 Meeting the Real Living Wage rates**

Employers must pay the employee the Real Living Wage or above to be eligible for the ERI.

The Real Living Wage is a rate of pay, which is based on the cost of living. It applies to all workers aged 18 and over. The current RLW rate is £12.60 per hour.

The Apprentice Rate (£7.55) can only be paid where the employee is registered as an apprentice and undertaking the relevant vocational qualification. See **1.9** for further information.

### 1.3 ERI Eligibility

Employees must meet all of the undernoted criteria:

- is unemployed
- is aged 16 or over
- resides in South Ayrshire
- has the right to live and work in the UK and can provide the required documentation
- has a disability\* or is in receipt of reserved benefits\*, *at risk of long-term unemployment and where the support being received is for at least one year*

\*For further information please refer to [Scotland Act 2016](#)

### 1.4 ERI Ineligibility

A person who is:

- of compulsory school age
- currently employed
- currently attending school or college full time as a learner or student
- in full time higher education
- in custody or remanded in custody

Employment that is:

- unpaid voluntary work
- a zero hours contract
- a position to cover sickness or maternity leave
- a replacement of redundant post
- registered with a recruitment agency or other third-party employment
- currently receiving other government funding

### 1.5 Modern Apprenticeship

To be eligible for an ERI at the Apprentice rate, Thriving Communities will require evidence of the qualification(s) that will be achieved by the employee. No ERI claim for an Apprentice will be paid without this information. Qualification evidence must include:

- Employee Name
- Training Provider
- Qualification Title(s)
- Qualification Start Date(s)

### 1.6 SALUS (Working for a Healthy Economy Service)

Funded through the Ayrshire Growth Deal, the Working for a Healthy Economy Service supports employed individuals across Ayrshire who are experiencing difficulties in returning to/sustaining work due to any type of health difficulty. Delivered by a team of NHS Health Practitioners, support is fast and confidential with no cost to individuals or businesses. All referrals can be completed by visiting <https://ayrshire.salus.co.uk/>. For general enquiries or to arrange a presentation for your business please call 0808 196 3919.

## **2 APPLICATION TERMS**

### **2.1 Application Guidelines**

- You can request an application by emailing [ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)
- Employees who are already in post are not eligible for an ERI. Posts must be a newly created position or current vacancy
- The individual must not be in employment at time of applying for an ERI
- The preferred candidate cannot commence employment until the ERI has been approved
- If you do not have an employee in mind and would like support to fill your vacancy, please either call us on 01292 612301 or email [ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk) requesting support and someone from our team will be in touch
- Your application will be assessed to ensure all eligibility criteria is met. We will aim to notify you of the decision within 10 working days for receipt of your application. Please note, ERIs are not guaranteed. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis
- If your application is approved, we will contact you to advise a start date can be offered to your preferred candidate, please then notify us as soon as possible of confirmed start date

### **2.2 Approved ERI**

We will confirm approval of the ERI in writing, including details of your payment schedule and evidence required.

In order for Thriving Communities to make payment to you, you must be added to South Ayrshire Council's (SAC) payment system.

If you are not already listed as a supplier, Thriving Communities will get in touch with SAC's Procurement Team ([procurement@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)), who will email you a link to register. Upon receipt, please complete the relevant information required.

Failure to complete this process will result in no payments being made to your organisation and funding being withdrawn.

### **2.3 Termination of Application**

An ERI can be terminated at any time for the following reasons:

The Employer:

- Does not adhere to all points stated
- Pays the employee less than the Real Living Wage rate
- Does not submit supporting evidence within timescales stated
- The employee leaves employment, for any reason, during the 26 week ERI period

### 3 ERI PAYMENT DETAILS

#### 3.1 ERI Payments

ERI	Amount
Contracted <b>12-15 hours per week</b> <i>8Wk - £250 / 16Wk - £250 / 26Wk - £1000</i>	£1,500
Contracted <b>16-24 hours per week</b> <i>8Wk - £500 / 16Wk - £500 / 26Wk - £1000</i>	£2,000
Contracted <b>25+ hours per week</b> <i>8Wk - £500 / 16Wk - £1000 / 26Wk - £1500</i>	£3,000
<b>Modern Apprentice amount will be calculated based on contracted hours and rate of pay</b>	

ERI - Parents	Amount
Contracted <b>12-15 hours per week</b> <i>Split £500 / £1000 / £1500</i>	£3,000
Contracted <b>16-24 hours per week</b> <i>Split £500 / £1000 / £2000</i>	£3,500
Contracted up to and including <b>25 hours per week</b> <i>Split £500 / £1000 / £2500</i>	£4,000
Contracted <b>26-40 hours per week</b> <i>Split £1000 / £1500 / £2500</i>	£5,000
<b>Modern Apprentice amount will be calculated based on contracted hours and rate of pay</b>	

#### 3.2 Evidence Requirements

You will receive an email, at each submission date, from [ThrivingcommunititesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingcommunititesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk) informing you of what evidence you are required to provide.

<u>Payment</u>	<u>Evidence Required</u>
<p><b>8 weeks in employment</b></p> <p>NOTE: if employee leaves employment, for any reason, during the first 8 weeks, no payment will be made to employer</p>	<p>Copy of Employee's Contract of Employment</p> <p>Payslips covering the full claim period</p> <p>Progress review completed and signed by employee, employer &amp; Thriving Communities Officer</p> <p>Invoice</p>
<p><b>16 weeks in employment</b></p> <p>NOTE: if employee leaves employment, for any reason, during weeks 9-16, no payment will be made to employer</p>	<p>Payslips covering the full claim period</p> <p>Invoice</p>

<p><b>26 weeks in employment</b></p> <p>NOTE: if employee leaves employment, for any reason, during weeks 17-26, no payment will be made to employer</p>	<p>Payslips covering the full claim period</p> <p>Exit (final) review completed and signed by employee, employer &amp; Thriving Communities Officer</p> <p>Invoice</p>
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Thriving Communities will arrange a meeting with you and the employee, to complete a progress and exit review, as noted above.

Payslips must detail: Gross salary, rate of pay, hours worked and Net pay.

Invoices must be addressed to South Ayrshire Council and state a Purchase Order number. The Purchase Order number will be provided within the email request for evidence.

All ERI evidence should be emailed to [ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

### 3.3 Receiving ERI Payments

On receipt of evidence (as noted within **3.2**) Thriving Communities will carry out eligibility checks, following this your invoice will be processed for payment. We aim to have our compliance checks completed within 48 hours. If any delay is foreseen, we will get in touch with you to advise.

Evidence must be submitted in line with the payment schedule. If your pay run periods fall out with the schedule, please let us know and we can adjust accordingly.

Payment will be made by BACS and South Ayrshire Council's payment terms are strictly 30 days from the date of invoice.

### 3.4 Changes to Contract of Employment

In the unlikely event that you or your employee are unable to meet the current contract of employment, please let us know either by calling us on 01292 61230 or via email [ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

We will then be able to advise what the next steps are for your ERI.

## 4 CONTACT INFORMATION

**Susan Kerr**  
Programme Officer  
Telephone: 01292 612301  
Email: [ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ThrivingCommunitiesERI@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

[Thriving Communities Service Privacy Notice](#)