Inclusive Employment Australia

Finding careers for people with disability

Participant Information Pack

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The Participant Information Pack includes FAQs designed for people taking part in the Inclusive Employment Australia program.

In this pack, 'you' refers to the participant.

The purpose of the FAQs is to give you the information you need to make informed choices around your employment journey.

If you have any questions or need support, please contact the National Customer Service Line (NCSL) on 1800 805 260.

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What is Inclusive Employment Australia?

Inclusive Employment Australia

The Inclusive Employment Australia program supports people with disability, injury, or health condition to **find** and **keep** meaningful **employment**.

The program focuses on your goals, skills, and support needs. The program can help you get ready for work, find a job, and stay in your job. There are no time limits, so support can continue if you need it. You can choose who you work with and can change if you want something different.

The program also makes it easier for more people to join, even if they only want to work a small number of hours. Overall, it aims to help people feel confident, be independent, and find a job that is right for them.

If you are looking for work, you can choose a provider to support you.

Am I eligible?

You may be eligible if:

- you have a disability, injury, or a health condition that affects your ability to work
- you have had a Work Capacity Assessment
- your assessed capacity is less than 30 hours per week
- you do not work more hours than your assessed Capacity
- you are at least 14 years of age and under Age Pension age (67 years)
- you are an Australian citizen or hold an eligible:
    - permanent resident visa
    - Protected Special Category Visa (SCV)
    - Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) or
    - Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV)
- you are not studying full-time.

You do not need to receive Services Australia (Centrelink) payments to join.

In some special cases you may be eligible for the program without a Work Capacity Assessment:

- as an Eligible School Leaver or
- as a Special Class Client or
- as a person who already has a job and needs help to maintain it by receiving Ongoing Support.

How do I access the program?

You can access services in 2 ways:

Register directly with a provider

You can contact a provider directly to discuss joining the program. This is called Direct Registration.

You can find a provider by searching the JobAccess website. You do not need a Services Australia (Centrelink) referral. To help you join the program:

- the provider checks your eligibility
- you complete a registration form offline with the help of your provider
- you may need to have a Work Capacity Assessment.

Be referred by Services Australia (Centrelink)

If you have a disability, injury, or health condition and need extra support to find or keep a job, Services Australia may refer you to an Inclusive Employment Australia provider. The provider will work with you to help you achieve your employment goals.

You can contact Services Australia by:

- calling the Centrelink Employment Services line on 132 850 or

  by visiting a service centre.

Can I join as a volunteer participant?

Yes, you can join as a volunteer participant.

Volunteer participants:

- do not have Mutual Obligations
- can join or leave the program whenever they want to
- are not at risk of Payment Penalties if they stop.

As a volunteer participant, you can still access the same support and services as other participants, such as help getting ready for a job, finding work and staying employed.

Can I join as an Eligible School Leaver (ESL)?

You may be eligible if you:

- are under 22 years old
- are in your final year of secondary school and/or in a school-based apprenticeship
- need support to find a job
- are in or have recently finished a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) employment program
- are in a state-funded employment or work transition program.

You can only join Inclusive Employment Australia once as an Eligible School Leaver and will need proof, such as a letter from your school or NDIS provider. Learn more in the Eligible School Leaver factsheet.

Can I use both Inclusive Employment Australia and NDIS employment supports?

Yes, you can use both Inclusive Employment Australia and NDIS employment supports. Tell your Inclusive Employment Australia provider you are a NDIS participant.

Inclusive Employment Australia helps people find and keep a job, while NDIS supports can help build skills or provide extra support at work. The supports must not overlap, but they can work together. It is important that everyone involved understands their role.

What if I am already working?

If you're already working and need additional support to keep your job due to a disability, injury or health condition, you may be eligible for Ongoing Support.

Ongoing Support gives you extra help at work so you can keep your job, overcome challenges, and feel confident in your role.

To qualify, you must have been in your job for at least 12 Consecutive weeks or expect the job to last at least 12 weeks.

Visit JobAccess to learn how Ongoing Support can help and to find a provider.

What services are available for people from diverse backgrounds?

Inclusive Employment Australia is for all people with a disability, injury or health condition who need help to find and keep a job. This includes First Nations Australians and people from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

There are providers with experience supporting people from different backgrounds, including First Nations peoples, people from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and refugees.

Your provider is expected to:

- provide services that are tailored to your needs
- treat you fairly and with respect
- be sensitive to your individual needs and culturally appropriate
- provide information that's easy to understand
- have offices that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

You can learn more about the principles and standards that support the delivery of Inclusive Employment Australia in the Disability Services and Inclusion Code of Conduct.

Choosing a provider

Can I choose my provider?

Yes, you can choose a provider that is right for you. Inclusive Employment Australia puts **you first** by letting you decide who supports you, how you get help, and how long you stay in the program.

When choosing a provider, consider:

- their experience with your needs
- whether they offer specialised support
- how they deliver services, for example, whether they deliver Flexible Servicing Arrangements
    - Flexible Servicing Arrangements can include phone or online appointments if you are unable to attend provider appointments in person.

You can search for a provider using JobAccess or Workforce Australia.

You can also make changes along the way:

- if something isn't working, you can talk to your provider about adjusting your support
- if you need help making choices, you can ask a family member, friend, nominee, or advocate to support you.

Can I change my provider?

Yes, if you would like to change your provider for any reason, you can do so by calling the **National Customer Service Line (NCSL)** on **1800 805 260**.

You can also change your provider online.

1. Sign into your Workforce Australia account or app.
2. Go to **Your provider and support**.
3. Select **Find a new provider**.
4. Choose the provider you would like to change to.
5. Follow the instructions to submit your request.

If you are experiencing issues with the service from your provider, please refer to the Making a Complaint section.

What to expect from your provider

What your provider does

Your provider will work with you to help you **prepare** for and **find** a job and **maintain** meaningful employment. Your provider will meet with you regularly to make sure you get the support you need. They can:

- help you look for jobs and give advice
- help set up interviews and build your confidence
- help you learn new skills and get work experience
- support you to stay in your job.

They can also connect you with services like:

- counselling, physio, and mental health support
- help with childcare, housing, domestic and family services
- advice on how to manage your money.

With your consent, your provider can also contact employers on your behalf to:

- discuss job opportunities that match your skills and abilities
- deliver support to help you settle into your new role
- deliver Ongoing Support to help you keep your job

- deliver organisational training
- discuss Wage Subsidies
- discuss funding for work-related expenses and workplace modifications.

The Service Guarantee outlines the minimum level of service you can expect from your provider. For more information, go to the Inclusive Employment Australia Service Guarantee.

What happens when I start?

At your first meeting, your provider will:

- get to know you
- explain available supports
- work with you to set your employment goal
- create a Job Plan.

Your provider will give you information about the program, your rights and what you can expect. The documents providers must give you are:

- Privacy Notification and Consent Form
- Direct Registration Form
- Inclusive Employment Australia Service Guarantee
- Disability Services and Inclusion Code of Conduct
- Inclusive Employment Australia Participant Right and Responsibilities Statement
- One of:
    - Meaningful Engagement Fact Sheet – For participants (Mutual Obligation) and Disability Support Pension (DSP) recipients (Compulsory requirement) or
    - Meaningful Engagement Fact Sheet – For participants (voluntary).

During your first few weeks, your provider will help you:

- identify your strengths
- explore job options
- build skills
- create a resume.

Sharing your personal information

Why is sharing your personal information with your provider important?

Providers will use the personal information you share to **help you find** and **keep** the **right job for you**. This includes information you share about your:

- health
- work adjustment needs
- interests and goals
- education
- work history

Your Inclusive Employment Australia provider will usually be able to show you the information they hold about you. If you have concerns about how your personal information is being managed, please talk to your provider.

How is my information protected?

All information about you is kept in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

Providers must immediately notify the Department of Social Services (DSS) if they are aware of any breach or misuse of your information.

Where can I find more information?

For more about how we handle your information:

- refer to the privacy factsheet – Inclusive Employment Australia
- learn more about participant privacy and consent
- read our Privacy Policy.

Job Plans and Meaningful Engagement

Your Job Plan is an agreement between you and your provider about what you will do while getting help from Inclusive Employment Australia.

You must have a Job Plan in place to get support from your provider.

Your provider will help keep your Job Plan up to date. If something changes in your life, your goals, or the support you need, you can change your Job Plan with your provider.

Types of Job Plans

Meaningful Engagement Job Plan

This Job Plan is flexible and focuses on building a good relationship with your provider. It includes only one requirement - meaningful engagement. **This is a commitment to stay in contact with your provider and undertake tasks or activities that will help you achieve your employment goal.**

The requirement to meaningfully engage will be Compulsory if you have **mutual obligation requirements** or have Compulsory Participation Requirements to keep getting your Disability Support Pension (DSP).

If you do not **meaningfully engage**, you may be moved to a Detailed Job Plan with compulsory activities.

Not engaging meaningfully could include:

- not agreeing to a Job Plan
- missing provider appointments, activities or job interviews
- not meeting your job search requirements, or
- not completing Job Referral Tasks.

Learn more in the meaningful engagement requirements factsheet.

Detailed Job Plan

This Job Plan lists Compulsory requirements or tasks you must do to continue to receive certain Services Australia (Centrelink) payments. Compulsory requirements are called your **Mutual Obligation requirements**.

Your Detailed Job Plan could include tasks and activities such as:

- attending all appointments with your provider and Services Australia (Centrelink)
- actively looking for jobs to meet a minimum job search requirement
- attending job interviews with employers
- following up on job referrals from your provider
- studying approved vocational education and training courses
- keeping a job, including paid work with an employer or self-employment.

Your Job Plan may also include additional tasks and activities that will prepare you for employment and help to improve your job prospects. These will be listed as **voluntary** requirements.

Your Detailed Job Plan could include voluntary requirements such as:

- undertaking voluntary work or work experience placements
- taking part in training or courses to develop your skills
- connecting with other support services.

You can move from a Detailed Job Plan to a Meaningful Engagement Job Plan, if you consistently follow the requirements in your plan and stay engaged.

How will I know what I have agreed to do?

You can check and keep track of your Job Plan anytime through your Workforce Australia account. Your provider can help you access it.

Your Job Plan may list only one requirement for Meaningful Engagement. If so, your provider will work with you to develop a personalised approach on what Meaningful Engagement looks like for you based on your strengths, goals and aspirations.

They will talk to you about things like:

- what work you want to do
- your skills, education and training
- things that might make it hard for you to look for and keep a job
- services and supports that can help you.

Once you have agreed to your tasks and activities, your provider will give you a record of your plan for Meaningful Engagement. This will be separate to your Job Plan. Your provider must give you a copy in a format that works best for you.

Or you may have a Detailed Job Plan that lists the tasks and activities you need to do. You and your provider will work together to agree on what goes into your Job Plan.

When will my Job Plan be updated?

Your Job Plan will be updated when:

- you change providers
- you update or change your employment goal
- you start to receive services under a different phase, for example, when you start to receive Post Placement Support after starting in a job
- you start to receive a different level of service while preparing for or looking for a job (i.e. Intensive Service or Flexible Service)
- you have an exemption from your mutual obligation requirements but ask to continue to receive support from your provider during this period.

A Detailed Job Plan will also be updated if the tasks and activities you agree to have been completed or are changed to reflect your current needs and circumstances.

You can talk to your provider about changing the tasks and activities in your Detailed Job Plan at any time.

Your Job Plan should reflect your current goals and be tailored to your situation.

What support is available to help me prepare for or find a job?

Inclusive Employment Australia provides **two** levels of support services before you have found a job. These support types are tailored to your needs. These services are called **Intensive Service** and **Flexible Service**.

Intensive Service

Provides strong support for people who can take part in activities to help them get ready for work. It has two parts:

1. **Work Preparation:** Helps you get ready for work by addressing any problems that might make finding a job hard for you and improving your skills.
2. **Job Search:** Helps you to find a job.

The Intensive Service may include helping you complete a resume, preparing for job interviews, applying for jobs, connecting with employers, undertaking work experience, and completing work trials.

Flexible Service

Provides support if you do not need the Intensive Service because:

- you are partly meeting your Mutual Obligations through approved activities such as work, education, training, or volunteering
- you are doing other activities to help you get ready for work
- you are unable to join Intensive Services because of personal or family things happening in your life
- you are Temporarily Exempt from Mutual Obligation requirements but choose to stay involved with services.

You can move between the two service types based on your circumstances and what support suits you best.

Talk to your provider to find the best support for you.

What are my Mutual Obligation requirements?

Mutual Obligation requirements

If you receive Services Australia (Centrelink) payments, you may have Mutual Obligation requirements. These are tasks and activities you agree to do to help you find a job while receiving Services Australia (Centrelink) payments.

Some of your obligations may include:

- entering into a Job Plan and doing the things you've agreed to do in your Job Plan
- attending appointments with your provider and Services Australia (Centrelink)
- actively looking for work and accepting suitable work
- not voluntarily leaving suitable work.

If you do not meet these requirements, your payment may be put on hold.

If you are receiving the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and you are under 35, you might have to meet Compulsory Participation Requirements to keep getting your payment.

Fully meeting your Mutual Obligation requirements

If you're an Inclusive Employment Australia participant doing 30 hours or more of approved activities a fortnight, you're considered to be fully meeting your **mutual obligation requirements**.

These activities include:

- paid work
- study, education or training
- voluntary work.

The types of activities you can do may depend on your age.

While you are fully meeting your obligations, you may stay connected with your provider but won't need to do any other tasks or activities unless you want to.

Alternatively, you may be offered the choice to not stay connected with your provider. In this case, you'll need to enter into a Job Plan with Services Australia (Centrelink) and report to Services Australia (Centrelink) on the activities outlined in that plan.

What happens if I cannot meet my mutual obligation requirements?

Mutual obligation requirements and mutual obligation failures are explained in the Targeted Compliance Framework.

If you are unable to meet your mutual obligation requirements, you need to **let your provider know as soon as possible.** Let your provider know before the appointment or activity is due to happen if you can and let them know why you're unable to meet your requirements so they can help you.

You may be asked to attend another appointment or activity to make up for the one you missed.

You may need to provide a medical certificate or other documents to show you have a valid reason for not meeting your Mutual Obligations.

If you do not meet your requirements, you may get Demerit points, and your Services Australia (Centrelink) payment may be put on hold. It is important to stay in touch with your provider and meet your Mutual Obligations to avoid action being taken under the Targeted Compliance Framework.

Learn more about Demerits and payment suspensions for not meeting Mutual Obligations.

If your situation has changed, you can work with your provider to **update your Job Plan** so it better matches what you can do.

What happens if I get a job?

If you get a job, well done! You should let your provider know as soon as possible.

Inclusive Employment Australia provides **two** levels of support services for participants who have jobs. These services are tailored to your needs. The support types are called **Post Placement Support** and **Ongoing Support**.

Post Placement Support

When you get a job, your provider will continue to support you and help you settle into your new role. They can help with any challenges at work and help you build your confidence. You can receive Post Placement Support for up to one year.

Ongoing Support

If you need extra help to keep your job after one year, with your consent, your provider can keep supporting you for as long as you need to help you stay in your job.

This support is tailored to your needs and abilities.

Your provider can help you with things like:

- on-the-job training
- talking to the people you work with
- checking if your workplace is accessible
- funding workplace modifications or special equipment.

There is no time limit on receiving Ongoing Support while in employment.

You can keep getting support for as long as you need.

If you get Services Australia (Centrelink) payments, you must report your income to Services Australia (Centrelink) each fortnight. This is so they can pay you the right amount. This is different to staying in touch with your provider. It’s important that you do both.

What happens if my job is not right for me?

Your provider can work with you to understand what isn’t working and help you look for a more suitable job that matches your skills, interests, and needs. You can continue to receive support during this process to ensure you move into a role that is a better fit.

Service standards and Codes of Conduct

What are the service standards for Inclusive Employment Australia providers?

Providers who are funded by the Australian Government must meet the following when providing disability services:

- *Disability Services and Inclusion Act 2023* (Code of Conduct)
- National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS)

Services provided through the NDIS meet a different set of standards.

Service standards are rules that help make sure disability services are safe, respectful, and high quality. 'Service Standards' includes both the Code of Conduct and the National Standards for Disability Services.

What do I need to know about the Code of Conduct?

The Code of Conduct protects people with disability who receive disability services and supports by maintaining a quality standard of service.

The Code of Conduct states that when a person provides you with supports or services, they must:

- respect your rights and privacy
- support you in a safe manner
- act with integrity, honesty and transparency
- promptly raise issues that may affect the quality and safety of services you receive
- take steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

The full Code of Conduct can be found on the Federal Register of Legislation website.

What services does the Code of Conduct apply to?

Since January 2024, the Code of Conduct applies to providers who are funded by the Australian Government to deliver disability services and supports (except NDIS services).

The Code of Conduct applies to the Inclusive Employment Australia program, including its providers and their staff.

Refer to the Overview of the Disability Services and Inclusion Act 2023 for further information.

What are the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS)?

Providers of disability services, including Inclusive Employment Australia, are required to meet the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS). The NSDS helps to promote and drive a nationally consistent approach to improving the quality of services. They focus on rights and outcomes for people with disability.

There are 6 standards that apply to disability service providers:

1. **Rights:** The service promotes individual rights and prevents abuse, harm, neglect and violence.
2. **Participation:** The service works with individuals, families, friends and carers for active inclusion.

3. **Individual outcomes:** Services and supports are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed to enable individuals to reach goals.
4. **Feedback and complaints:** Regular feedback is sought and used to inform service reviews and improvement.
5. **Service access:** The service manages access, commencement, and leaving a service in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way.
6. **Service management:** The service has effective and accountable service management and leadership to maximise outcomes for individuals.

The NSDS is outlined in full on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website.

Your rights

You have the right to:

- choose your provider
- ask about conflicts of interest
- have a say in the services and supports you receive
- take time to decide
- request a review at any time
- choose how you attend appointments
- have support at your appointments
- schedule appointments that work for you
- decline any third-party appointments
- choose what personal information you want to share
- lodge a complaint.

Providers must follow service standards and Codes of Conduct.

For more information, please refer to the Inclusive Employment Australia Participant Rights and Responsibilities Statement.

Making a complaint

What if I'm not happy with the service I receive from my provider?

You can talk to your provider about the supports and services you feel would help you in your employment journey.

If you're not satisfied with the service you receive, you are encouraged to:

- raise your concerns directly with your provider
- try to work through any issues together.

Providers will explain their feedback process and give you a copy. All complaints must be investigated by a senior staff member.

What if I can't talk to or fix my concern with my provider?

If you are not satisfied with your provider's response, or feel uncomfortable discussing your concerns directly, there are options available to you.

National Customer Service Line (NCSL)

The NCSL can help you:

- understand decisions made by your provider
- lodge a complaint

- review decisions related to:
    - your level of engagement
    - your Job Plan

You can contact the NCSL by:

- phone: **1800 805 260**
- email: nationalcustomerserviceline@dewr.gov.au

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 7pm AEDT (excluding national public holidays).

What will the NCSL do?

The NCSL can:

- help you transfer to a new provider
- assist with complaints
- explain available supports under Inclusive Employment Australia.

Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS)

You can make a complaint about the services you are receiving by:

- phone: **1800 880 052**
- email: crrs@glresolution.au

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 7pm AEDT (excluding national public holidays).

What will the CRRS do?

The CRRS will support you by:

- listening and recording your complaint
- investigating and trying to resolve your complaint
- seeking your permission before contacting your provider or others
- remaining neutral. This means not taking sides.

All complaints are Confidential, and you can remain anonymous. However, providing consent (permission) helps them resolve your issue more effectively.

Using the CRRS will **not affect your services**, and you will not be disadvantaged for making a complaint.

For more information visit the JobAccess Complaints Resolution and Referral Service.

Other ways to make a complaint

If your issue is not resolved through your provider, CRRS, or NCSL, you can contact DSS by:

- **phone: 1800 634 035**
- **email:** enquiries@dss.gov.au or complaints@dss.gov.au
- **online:** Enquiries and feedback form
- **mail:**
  DSS Feedback
  GPO Box 9820
  Canberra ACT 2601

DSS welcomes feedback and aims to improve services for the Australian community.

What can I do if I need support to make a complaint?

Additional services are available to assist you to make a complaint, enquiry or provide feedback.

Hearing and/or speech impairments: If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can use the National Relay Service (NRS) to contact any of DSS's listed phone numbers.

For more information, go to About the National Relay Service (NRS) | Access Hub or call **1800 555 677.**

Languages other than English: If you need an interpreter, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450**.

TIS National will put you through to any of DSS's listed phone numbers.

Speak and listen: Speak and Listen users should phone **1300 555 727** then ask for **1300 362 072**.

The following page outlines the glossary - a collection of definitions referred to throughout this pack.

Glossary

Assessment (Work Capacity Assessment) – A check to understand how many hours you can work and what support you need.

Capacity – Capacity means what a person is able to do or handle.

Compulsory – Something you **must do** — it is required, not optional.

Compulsory Participation Requirements - Compulsory Participation Requirements are the tasks you have to do to stay in the program and keep your payments.

Confidential – Confidential means keep it private and don't share it.

Consecutive – Consecutive means in a row, one after the other.

Consent – Giving clear and voluntary permission for something to happen. It should be given freely, without pressure, and with a full understanding of what you are agreeing to. A person can change their mind at any time, and consent must be respected at every stage.

Demerits – Warning points you may receive if you do not meet your requirements.

Exemption – Exemption means you don't have to do something because you have an approved reason.

Flexible Service – Support for participants who do not need intensive help or are doing other activities.

Inclusive – Including everyone and treating people fairly.

Intensive Service – A higher level of support to help you prepare for and find a job.

Payment Penalties – Payment is reduced or stopped because you didn't do something you were required to do.

Service Guarantee – Minimum service standards that outline how you can expect to be supported and treated.

Temporarily Exempt – You do not have to meet requirements for a short period of time.

Wage Subsidies – Wage subsidies are payments that help employers pay your wages when they give you a job.

Work Capacity Assessment (Assessment) – An assessment that looks at how much work you are able to do and what support you may need.