



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

Corporate Plan 2024–25

Covering reporting period Financial
Years 2024–25 to 2027–28



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Social Services acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, water, culture and community. We pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

Artwork: Reconciliation Journeys.

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Part one: Introduction



Secretary's foreword

I am very pleased to present the 2024–25 Corporate Plan (the plan) for the Department of Social Services (the department), covering the reporting years from 2024–25 until 2027–28, as outlined under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The plan is the department's primary planning document, detailing our purpose, capabilities and key activities over the next four years. The plan also details how success will be measured for these activities, ensuring accountability to our purpose of improving the economic and social wellbeing of individuals, families and vulnerable members of Australian communities.

The department's purpose is delivered under four key outcome areas — Social Security, Families and Communities, Disability and Carers, and Housing. Additionally, our portfolio agencies are essential partners in meeting our policy, program, and service delivery responsibilities. We are committed to fostering productive relationships and consulting with state and territory governments, Australian Government agencies, third parties and key peak bodies in the development and delivery of policy solutions. We recognise that data and evidence is critical to the quality of our advice with a significant focus on developing our data and evaluation capability and implementing strategies to achieve more with data.

We also recognise that our people are critical in delivering the key priorities of the department. We have a significant focus on developing our workforce capability and implementing strategies to support a diverse and inclusive workforce with a strong pro-integrity culture.

During 2024–25, the department will remain focused on supporting the government in addressing contemporary social policy issues and supporting the government's efforts in ensuring that we improve and deliver meaningful change to the lives of Australians. Particularly those who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including people with disability, our First Nations peoples and women and children leaving family, domestic and sexual violence.

Our Priorities for 2024–25

- ▶ ensuring the social security payment system provides support to people when they need it most, including through implementation of 2024–25 Budget measures to provide more support through increasing the maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance, improving support for JobSeeker Payment recipients with a Partial Capacity to Work of less than 15 hours and improving flexibility for Carer Payment recipients to take up employment.

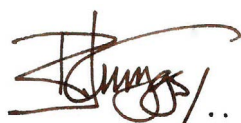
- ▶ delivering the expansion of the Paid Parental Leave Scheme which will increase to 26 weeks by 1 July 2026 and implementing the 2024–25 Budget Measure to add superannuation to government-funded Paid Parental Leave for births and adoptions from 1 July 2025.
- ▶ provide stewardship for the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032 (National Plan), working with key stakeholders to drive the work needed to meet the objectives of the National Plan.
- ▶ permanently establishing the Leaving Violence Program so those escaping violence can receive financial support, safety assessments and referrals to support pathways.
- ▶ delivering the *Early Years Strategy 2024–2034*, including the first action plan and developing an outcomes framework.
- ▶ development of Australia’s first standalone National Plan for First Nation’s family safety, under the National Plan to end Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032.
- ▶ establishing a National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People under existing legislative mechanisms, as an interim step before implementing a fully legislated, independent and empowered National Commissioner.
- ▶ delivering the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse ensuring applicants are provided with timely and trauma informed support.
- ▶ continuing to embed the Priority Reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap in the work we do and deliver on our part of 3 of the Closing the Gap targets (targets 9 (a) - housing, 12 - out-of-home care, and 13 - family violence) and the cross-cutting outcome of disability to transform the way we work and partner with First Nations people, communities and organisations.
- ▶ working across government to support the government response to the recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*.
- ▶ developing the National Autism Strategy to improve life outcomes for Autistic people in Australia.
- ▶ developing a National Carer Strategy to deliver a national agenda to support Australia’s carers.
- ▶ working with states and territories to develop a joint government response to the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- ▶ implementing reforms in response to the findings of the independent review of the NDIS.
- ▶ developing new NDIS Rules around access, a new budget-setting framework and needs assessment.
- ▶ working with states and territories and the disability community on design and implementation of additional Foundational Supports.
- ▶ working with the states and territories to progress the government’s housing agenda through the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council, leading the development of the National Housing and Homelessness Plan and implementing the new National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness.
- ▶ working collaboratively with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association through the Housing Policy Partnership, to improve housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- ▶ continuing to engage and work with communities and their leaders to shape the future of support services with the Income Management Reform including implementation of the *Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Income Management Reform) Act 2023*.
- ▶ continuing to work with Services Australia to implement the government's response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, particularly on payment assurance and debt reforms.
- ▶ helping Australians build financial resilience and capability and leading ongoing work across government to reduce harm from online wagering.
- ▶ leading implementation of Action Plans under *Safe & Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–31*.
- ▶ tackling entrenched disadvantage through community partnerships and social impact investment.
- ▶ providing Emergency Relief/Food Relief to Australian individuals and families.
- ▶ leading the Commonwealth's implementation of Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS) 2021-2031, including the first planned review of the ADS, development of new Targeted Action Plans and other initiatives that drive change over the next three years, improving availability, consistency and reporting under the ADS Outcomes Framework and the delivery and ongoing development of the National Disability Data Asset.
- ▶ implementing the new specialist disability employment program for commencement on 1 July 2025 to support better quality outcomes for people with disability and employers.
- ▶ implementing the Disability Employment Centre of Excellence to commence in March 2025 and deliver a best-practice hub of resources, tools and training to improve disability employment outcomes.
- ▶ ensuring disability employment programs continue to deliver quality services and outcomes to participants and employers as the sector transitions.
- ▶ continuing to support the government implement the Data and Digital Government Strategy and APS Reforms.
- ▶ continue to develop and implement strategies to build capacity of volunteering involving organisations to create a thriving volunteering culture and increase volunteering in Australia.

I look forward to working with our Portfolio Ministers, Assistant Ministers and their staff, portfolio agencies, external partners, and stakeholders to deliver the outcomes set out in this plan.

Statement of preparation

As the accountable authority of the Department of Social Services, I present the 2024–25 Department of Social Services Corporate Plan, covering the financial years 2024–25 to 2027–28, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.



Ray Griggs AO CSC
Secretary

Our purpose

To improve the economic and social wellbeing of individuals, families and vulnerable members of Australian communities.

How we deliver on our purpose

We work in partnership with government and non-government organisations and communities to ensure the effective development, management and delivery of payments, evidence-based policies, programs and services to support individuals and families.

Our outcomes



Social Security – A sustainable social security system that incentivises self-reliance and supports people who cannot fully support themselves by providing targeted payments and assistance.



Families and Communities – Contribute to stronger and more resilient individuals, children, families, and communities by providing targeted support.



Disability and Carers – Supporting the independence of and economic participation by, people with disability and carers by providing targeted supports.



Housing – Supporting access to safe and secure housing for individuals, including social housing, and providing targeted supports for preventing and addressing homelessness.

Our programs



Social Security

- 1.1 Support for Families
- 1.2 Paid Parental Leave
- 1.3 Support for Seniors
- 1.4 Financial Support for People with Disability
- 1.5 Financial Support for Carers
- 1.6 Working Age Payments
- 1.7 Student Payments



Families and Communities

- 2.1 Families and Communities



Disability and Carers

- 3.1 Disability and Carers
- 3.2 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)



Housing

- 4.1 Housing and Homelessness
- 4.2 Affordable Housing

Our key activities

The department undertakes key activities that contribute to the achievement of our purpose. The key activities are a function of our funded programs that are outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements and are listed under each program in Part 3: Our performance section of this document.

Our policies and programs are the foundations through which we achieve our purpose. The performance measures in Part 3 demonstrate the value and impact of our initiatives to improve the economic and social wellbeing of individuals, families and vulnerable members in Australian communities.

Our planning and reporting framework

The department's planning and reporting framework supports the delivery of our obligations under the PGPA Act and ensures the business planning, performance measurement and budget processes are aligned.

The Corporate Plan is our primary planning document. It integrates our outcomes, performance, priorities, and workplace values. The detailed group business plans and individual performance plans cascade down from the Corporate Plan, which allows the department to have a clear line of sight between our purpose and performance. We measure and assess performance in contributing to government policy objectives.



Part two: Our operating context

Our environment

The department operates in a complex, interconnected and evolving environment that presents both opportunities and challenges. Our success is contingent on our ability to anticipate, adapt and respond to the changing environment. Our focus is on supporting individuals, families and vulnerable members of Australian communities using person-centred approaches. We use our networks, partnerships and expertise to inform mainstream policy and programs, legislative and structural reform and funding of priority programs.

Cost of living

A range of factors have contributed to increased pressures on the cost of living. While inflation is expected to ease over the next year, the Consumer Price Index remains higher than the Reserve Bank's target range of 2 to 3%. Indexation continues to play a crucial role in ensuring social security payments keep up with increases in living costs.

Access to safe and affordable housing remains a crucial issue. Addressing housing supply, specifically social housing, affordability and homelessness will require concerted, cooperative and substantive efforts from all levels of government. Private industry, the finance sector and the community and not-for-profit sectors all have roles to play and are vital in delivering better housing and homelessness outcomes.

We work with the Treasury and state and territory governments, to improve housing outcomes across Australia, including through the new National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness, Commonwealth Rent Assistance, and initiatives emerging from National Cabinet. The development of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan will set out the key short, medium and longer term reforms needed to address housing challenges.

Natural disasters

The frequency and intensity of natural disasters has been challenging for the Australian people. These events have impacted our most vulnerable disproportionately. We continue to collaborate with Australian Government agencies such as the National Emergency Management Agency to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. Our portfolio agency, Services Australia, helps people directly affected by natural disaster events with targeted support such as Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance.

Longer life expectancy

As people are living longer we must remain responsive to how these changes affect the outcome areas of the department, the relative demand for services and the sustainability of the social security system. While the proportion of older Australians is increasing, longer working lives and the maturation of the superannuation system will result in gradual reduction in the proportion of senior Australians receiving the full rate of Age Pension. The Age Pension will remain an important safety net for seniors who have not been able to accumulate sufficient retirement savings and for those whose savings are depleted over their retirement.

Reconciliation

The department is committed to partnering authentically with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We take a leadership role in reconciliation processes based on relationships, respect and opportunity. As at the end of June 2024 the department has completed its

Reconciliation Action Plan 2021–2024. This includes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific action plan in partnership with community leaders through Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children (2021–2031), a framework that embeds the 4 Priority Reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children (2022–2032). Implementation of the Closing the Gap Disability and Housing Sector Strengthening Plans puts into practice the Priority Reforms of working in partnership with First Nations people and building the First Nations community-controlled sector. The department is also working to deliver a range of additional measures aimed at further enhancing its commitment to reconciliation.

Our procurement practices also demonstrate active investment into sustainable economic empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Inclusion and Accessibility

The department is committed to partnering with people with disability and acknowledges its role in providing leadership towards greater inclusion of people with disability across all areas of our work.

The department is committed to driving inclusion and accessibility in our workplace and will actively contribute by:

- ▶ increasing employment of people with disability, including in leadership roles
- ▶ enabling information and communication systems to be accessible, reliable and responsive
- ▶ ensuring policies, processes and programs provide better responses to people with disability.

Workforce

The unemployment rate remains low by historical standards, with labour markets competitive across all sectors, presenting challenges for employers to attract and retain diverse talent. Through our workforce and business planning processes, the department is looking for ways to address those challenges, with a particular focus on skills shortages within Data and Digital capabilities.

Our use of flexible work arrangements and leveraging our geographic dispersion has yielded significant benefits, broadening talent pools, and building capability. Leaders and managers have focused on maintaining and strengthening team communication and cohesion, ensuring data security and capability building within a virtual environment.

The APS reform agenda is transforming the way the APS workforce operates. The reform initiatives present new and innovative opportunities as we look to the future. The department must ensure we have the resources and capability for the enduring changes which lie ahead.

Our cross government priorities

Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031

Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (ADS) provides the national policy framework agreed by all levels of government, to create an inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal members of their communities.

The department has a leadership and central coordination role in supporting implementation of ADS, including working across all governments and Australian Government agencies, and with people with disability.

ADS recognises the diversity of people with disability and the intersectional impacts affecting different groups of people with disability. ADS complements the commitment and endorsement by all levels of government on Closing the Gap, providing an opportunity to drive national action and improve outcomes with and for First Nations peoples with disability, specifically under the Disability Sector Strengthening Plan.

In 2024–25, the department will continue work internally and with other departments and agencies to embed ADS' shared leadership approach across government.

We will use the guiding principles when developing and evaluating policies, programs, services and systems to uphold the rights of people with disability and improve the way the department conducts consultations to be more inclusive and accessible to people with disability.

The department will work across its programs to progress agreed deliverables in ADS over 2024–25, and to progress the deliverables under ADS.

Reform of the NDIS

On 6 December 2023, the National Cabinet acknowledged the need for reforms to secure the future of the NDIS, ensuring it can continue to provide life-changing support to future generations of Australians with disability.

As an initial response to the NDIS Review, National Cabinet agreed to work together to:

- ▶ Implement legislative and other changes to the NDIS to improve the experience of participants and restore the original intent of the Scheme to support people with permanent and significant disability, within a broader ecosystem of supports.
- ▶ Adjust state and territory NDIS contribution escalation rates, increasing from 4% to be in line with actual Scheme growth, capped at 8%, with the Commonwealth paying the remainder of Scheme costs growth, commencing from 1 July 2028.

The National Cabinet also agreed to jointly design additional Foundational Supports to be funded by the Commonwealth and the states, with the work oversighted by the First Secretaries Group.

Cross-government work is progressing on this joint design, including investment of \$11.6 million over 2 years by the Commonwealth to support development and implementation of a Foundational Supports Strategy and to support engagement with the disability community on the approach to Foundational Supports.

An initial tranche of legislation was introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament on 27 March 2024, with new rules to be developed.

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) seeks to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and empower them to ensure their voices are embedded in the department's policies, programs and services.

The department has a strong focus on embedding the Priority Reforms. The department continues to raise awareness and action in support of the National Agreement across the agency, is exploring new opportunities to better engage with First Nations communities and has a commitment to measuring the impact of the department's work. The department is also working across the Social Services portfolio to develop a transformation strategy for Priority Reform 3, transforming government institutions.

The department leads the Commonwealth response to target 9a (increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized housing), target 12 (reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care), and target 13 (reducing the rate of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children). It is also responsible for the cross-cutting disability outcome and contributes to target 4 (children thrive in their early years). Key priorities are captured in the Commonwealth's 2024 Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

The department co-chairs the Housing Policy Partnership (HPP) with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association (NATSIHA). The HPP will deliver recommendations to the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. An implementation strategy for the Housing Sector Strengthening plan will be developed in partnership with NATSIHA and the National Housing and Homelessness Plan will be finalised.

The department will continue to implement the Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023–2026 to protect Australia's children. The Safe and Supported Partnership Agreement has been agreed, and the forward agenda now includes developing a national child and family investment strategy, assessing legal support needs, and establishing a National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People.

The implementation of the Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023–25, including through new grant opportunities, will address the unacceptable rates of violence against First Nations women and children. The target 13 forward agenda also includes the development of a First Nations National Plan, establishing a First Nations national family, domestic and sexual violence peak body, and a culturally appropriate data collection on family and domestic violence.

Early Years Strategy 2024–2034

The *Early Years Strategy 2024–2034* (Strategy) sets out the government's vision to best support Australia's children and their families. Recognising how critical the early years are for children's development and continued success over their lifetime, the Strategy articulates how the Australian Government will prioritise and support child-centred policy development, and target investment in early years supports and services over the next 10 years.

The Strategy outlines a vision, 8 outcomes, principles to guide how the Australian Government will work to support children and families in the early years, and 4 Priority Focus Areas, which are:

1. Value the early years
2. Empower parents, caregivers and families
3. Support and work with communities
4. Strengthen accountability and coordination.

The Strategy will be delivered through 3 action plans and measured against an outcomes framework. The first action plan will start in 2024.

Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031

Safe & Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031 (Safe and Supported) sets out how all governments will work in partnership with First Nations representatives, and in close collaboration with the non-government sector to help children, young people and families in need of support, particularly those who are experiencing disadvantage or are vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

Safe and Supported was developed in partnership with state and territory governments, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group, and SNAICC – National Voice for our Children.

Shared-decision making is embedded in the implementation of Safe and Supported with a formal Partnership Agreement which commits to the right of First Nations people to determine the design and delivery of services that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Decisions are made through a Shared Decision-Making Committee and supporting groups, with an emphasis on membership parity between all governments and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group.

Safe and Supported has 4 focus areas to achieve outcomes:

1. a national approach to early intervention and targeted support for children and families experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage
2. addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems
3. improving information sharing, data development and analysis
4. strengthening the child and family sector and workforce capability.

Safe and Supported embeds the Priority Reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, to transform how governments work to support improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families. It is a key mechanism in responding to the Closing the Gap Target 12 to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% over 10 years.

Safe and Supported is being delivered through 2 Action Plans: *Safe & Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023–2026*, and *Safe & Supported: First Action Plan 2023–2026*.

The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032

The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032 (National Plan) is the cornerstone of the government's strategy to address family, domestic and sexual violence. It sets the national policy agenda guiding the work of Commonwealth, state and territory governments, family safety experts and front-line services, and importantly commits to ongoing engagement with victim-survivors in the development of policies and solutions. The National Plan addresses violence across the continuum from prevention, early intervention and response, through to recovery and healing.

The 10-year National Plan is underpinned by 2, 5-year action plans, as well as a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan. The Action Plans detail the priority focus areas for implementation and investment across all governments. The National Plan is also supported by an Outcomes Framework that increases our ability to track, monitor and report change over the life of the National Plan.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan, jointly developed with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence, both addresses current family safety needs and provides a foundation for the standalone First Nations National Plan for family safety.

Disability Employment Services Reforms

Disability Employment Services (DES) is the main employment service for people with disability, injury and/or health condition. The current DES program will run until 30 June 2025 when a new

specialist disability employment program (the new program) will commence. The new program will be informed by, and contribute to, the implementation of the Australian Government's strategies that support people with disability to thrive in diverse and inclusive communities.

In 2024–25, a number of measures will aim to improve employment and career outcomes of people with disability, injury and/or health condition. The new program will deliver on the government's vision for a stronger and more inclusive Australia for people with disability, focusing on assisting people with disability to find and maintain sustainable employment. It will improve the quality of service for participants by ensuring the support provided is tailored to their circumstances. There will be a greater focus on quality providers, with staff and leadership that reflects the diversity of the communities they are working with. Providers will place clients and employers at the centre of their service design and build meaningful relationships with both clients and employers.

From 1 July 2025, in line with the new program, the National Panel of Assessors program will continue to deliver assessment services, and a Disability Employment Centre of Excellence will be established to develop best practice, evidence-based information to help providers deliver high-quality effective employment services and supports to improve disability employment outcomes.

In July 2023, the Australian Government commenced the reforms to disability employment services by announcing a new DES Quality Framework. The Framework is designed to ensure the delivery of high quality, tailored services for people with disability. It will ensure providers are listening and responding to the needs of individuals and employers to drive meaningful and sustained quality improvement.

The department will continue to consult with the sector and gather feedback on a new Performance Framework which will take a holistic view of provider performance. The Performance Framework will build on the DES Quality Framework to drive continuous improvement in the quality of disability employment services under the new program.

Build Financial Resilience and Capability

In order to tackle disadvantage and improve the lives of Australians, the department is helping Australians build financial resilience and capability by:

- ▶ investing in the Financial Wellbeing and Capability Activity
- ▶ expanding the Saver Plus program to enable participants to build financial skills, capabilities and resilience
- ▶ supporting the No Interest Loan Scheme for Vehicles to support vulnerable people needing to purchase a vehicle for essential use
- ▶ enabling better accessibility to financial counselling services through the National Debt Helpline, including an appointment system and live webchat function to support individuals with personal financial difficulty.

The investment in Financial Wellbeing and Capability, and the expansion and support of the financial well-being activities above will set out how the department will work in close collaboration across government and non-government sectors to help families in need of support, particularly those who are experiencing disadvantage or are vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

The support through the initiatives listed will enable the department to support government in implementing improved outcomes for families. It will be a key mechanism in responding to families in financial hardship.

Our cooperation and collaboration

Collaboration

Strong cooperation and collaboration across government, including with our portfolio agencies, the states and territories and the community sector is essential in delivering our policy program and service delivery responsibilities. We will continue to cultivate open and respectful relationships with our partners and the community to deliver meaningful change to the lives of individuals and families in Australian communities.

Our portfolio agencies

Under the PGPA Act, the portfolio comprises of 5 non-corporate Commonwealth entities (one Department of State and 4 listed entities) and 2 corporate Commonwealth entities. Each agency publishes their own Corporate Plan detailing their purpose and performance measures.

Non-corporate Commonwealth Entities

- ▶ Australian Institute of Family Studies
- ▶ Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission
- ▶ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- ▶ Services Australia.

Corporate Commonwealth Entities

- ▶ Hearing Australia
- ▶ National Disability Insurance Agency.

Our integrity

Our integrity is reinforced through a focus on pro-integrity culture and commitment to our purpose to improve the economic and social wellbeing of individuals, families and vulnerable members of Australian communities. To drive our culture of integrity the department has:

- ▶ established a set of expected behaviours (the 4Cs) which build upon the APS Values and enable an adaptive workplace culture. The 4Cs are demonstrated by:
 - being **curious**
 - **contesting** ideas respectfully
 - working **collaboratively**, both internally and with our stakeholders and partners
 - having the **courage** to call out what needs to be called out, including poor behaviour.
- ▶ established a dedicated Integrity Unit to provide education, advice and support for the National Anti-Corruption Commission.
- ▶ developed an integrity strategy and framework for 2024–26.

Throughout 2024–25, we will continue to support pro-integrity culture for the department and the broader APS through implementation of the APS Reform Agenda, APS Integrity Taskforce recommendations, and participation in the Secretaries Board, as well as supporting the ongoing work of the National Anti-Corruption Commission.

Our capability

Our workforce

In recent years, rapid change has affected our workforce, increasing the risks we manage, changing our operating environment, and impacting our ability to attract and retain critical capabilities. Over this time, the Australian Public Service landscape has also evolved. Shifts in public sentiment and social issues continue to influence expectations, specifically where and how we need to deliver our work.

There are approximately 3,400 people working in the department in various locations around Australia. We undertake critical roles across multiple job families, including policy, project and program management, data, research and analysis and service delivery.

In 2024–25, we will implement our Workforce Strategy 2024–27 (Workforce Strategy). The proposed Strategy intends to outline how we will navigate changes in our environment and attract, retain, engage, and develop a highly capable workforce. Annual implementation plans under the draft Workforce Strategy, will prioritise the actions we will take to understand, grow, support, and mobilise the capability we need for a high-performing, diverse, and agile workforce.

Our workforce reflects the diversity of the community we serve. Our success is contingent on high level workforce priorities to transform, optimise and grow the workforce. Our strength and impact is underpinned by how we value every employee's unique and diverse perspective and skills. A place where our people collaborate to bring their diverse perspectives, life experience, cultural capability and expertise to balance our social policy focus with good governance and clear purpose. The cultural mindset outlined in our 4Cs of being courageous, collaborative, curious and contestable in action, strives to have the department working together as one team.

Our diversity

We value the range of views and approaches diversity brings to our workplace. We are committed to being inclusive, culturally aware and responsive to the needs of individuals in our policies and practices. We actively pursue initiatives to broaden diversity and inclusion in our workplace, supporting a wide range of diversity dimensions including gender, age, disability, LGBTQIA+, First Nations peoples and cultural diversity.

We acknowledge that to deliver high-quality and culturally appropriate services, policies and programs, we must demonstrate our understanding and respect of First Nations peoples, cultures and histories. We will continue to build the department's cultural competence, supporting our staff to form genuine, respectful and collaborative partnerships with each other and First Nations peoples, stakeholders and community groups.

The different perspectives we bring, experiences we can draw on and expertise we can apply, enhance our ability to understand and solve even the most challenging situations we face every day.

Our health, safety and wellbeing

The ongoing safety and wellbeing of staff remains crucial. We continually build our strong safety culture. We use a risk-based approach that is based on evidence as we build the overall safety and wellbeing of our people.

We fulfil our due diligence obligations through effective communication and consultation with our people. Our people engage in decisions so that their expertise and experiences are valued and incorporated into our safety initiatives. Together, we create a safety culture that promotes staff wellbeing and meets our safety goals.

In the coming year we will strengthen our approach to assessing psychosocial hazards, with a continued focus on prevention and early intervention. We understand a strong safety culture promotes a positive work environment, improving the wellbeing and overall job satisfaction of our people.

Our focus on prevention and early intervention ensures our people are at the centre of what we do, and lessen the impact of injuries, illness or critical incidents.

Our learning and development

Our learning is central to achieving our vision and delivering our objectives. To meet workforce challenges we face now and in the future and to effectively manage risks, we focus on retaining, developing and investing in the areas that are critical to our business success.

Understanding and continually assessing our roles, skills, knowledge and attributes, ensures we can meet our future workforce goals. Strengthening and diversifying our talent pipelines will create a stable and ongoing workforce. We are reviewing our entry level pathways programs, developing a centralised capability framework and adjusting our learning and development offerings and approach to mobility to support these capabilities. Our Employee Value Proposition will assist in attracting and retaining people with the right skills now and for the future.

We offer contemporary learning and development opportunities to our staff, with multiple ways to learn in the workplace. We are embracing and leveraging enhanced IT capability to provide platforms to learn online and in hybrid formats. We are applying a continuous learning approach with learning solutions available, from bite-sized learning through to intensive programs. We are providing tools and resources to build the capability of our staff wherever they are in their career, and preparing them for their career ahead.

We are committed to growing and developing the capability of the department, including a focus on advancing the capability of the department in line with the APS Reform agenda.

Our ways of working

We recognise our people need a modern workplace and flexibility with the ability to choose how they work - whether that is remotely or in the office, together or independently. Our flexible approach supports productivity and business continuity, enabling us to operate safely and seamlessly from any location.

We are transforming our workplace by delivering better designed policies that will enable more inclusive workspaces and improved technology. We will invest in manager development giving them the tools to deliver on our purpose. The way in which we work is underpinned by a strong focus on enabling our people to be leaders at all levels to drive change and innovation with respect and integrity in all that we do.

Over the next 12 months, we will focus on a culture that is underpinned by the 4Cs and fosters organisational agility, resilience, and adaptability needed to thrive in a modern workplace.

The department is committed to reducing reliance on the external workforce and prioritise APS employment and capability. In 2024–25, the department has set a target to ensure our workforce remains at least 90% comprised of APS employees (ongoing and non-ongoing) and 10% or fewer contracted workforce. External workforce arrangements are regularly reviewed to ensure they are appropriate for the work that needs to be delivered. The reductions are mainly from the following job families, Accounting and Finance, Administration, Communications and Marketing, Data and Research, ICT and Digital Solutions, Legal Parliamentary, Policy and Portfolio, Program and Project Management.

While the 90% target is focused on developing APS capability, cost savings are also anticipated. Total savings applied to the department in 2024–25 from the external labour savings measure was \$0.815 million.

The department will continue to carefully manage outsourcing to meet this target over the coming year.

Our grants capability

Since its establishment in 2016, the Community Grants Hub has continued to provide best practice grant administration services to government departments. In 2023–24, the Hub managed 43,893 grants for the department and client agencies totalling \$11.5 billion in value for the financial year. These figures include fee-for-service arrangements and reimbursement payments. Through shared services arrangements and partnerships with government departments and funded organisations, the Community Grants Hub strives to deliver grants that are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the individuals and communities that access services.

The Community Grants Hub has robust assurance mechanisms designed to ensure deliverables are of high quality and effective grants administration services and maintain compliance with the Australian Government grants policy framework including the PGPA Act and the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017.

The Community Grants Hub facilitates strategic engagement between the department and the social, disability, health and aged care services sectors, leveraging opportunities, evidence and engagement to target programs more effectively and maximise outcomes. Through the department's geographically dispersed network of staff, including Funding Arrangement Managers, based in all states and territories, our aim is to better understand our operating environment to support the ongoing development and improvement of the policies, programs and grant activity delivered by the department and client agencies.

Our sustainability

The department is committed to environmentally sustainable operation, including meeting the Commonwealth Climate Disclosure requirements set out by the Department of Finance and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. The Commonwealth Climate Disclosure requirements will focus on the 4 key aspects of climate related reporting:

- ▶ **Governance:** This includes governance processes, controls and procedures in place to support climate risk management within entities.
- ▶ **Strategy:** This includes strategic approaches an entity uses to manage climate-related risks and opportunities and reduce its emissions over time.
- ▶ **Risk Management:** This includes the methods used to assess an entity's overall risk profile and embed climate risk management practices across its organisation.
- ▶ **Metrics and Targets:** This includes processes and methodologies an entity uses to track its performance and meet its targets.

The Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy further describes the approach for implementing the Australian Government's commitment to achieve net zero government operations by 2030.

The department is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2030. The goal of the department's Emissions Reduction Plan is to provide a pathway for the department to meet Net Zero emission targets through reduction activities.

These actions include:

- ▶ Procuring renewable electricity
- ▶ Improving building standards
- ▶ Transitioning the fleet vehicles to low emission vehicles
- ▶ Sustainable procurement
- ▶ Encouraging low-emission sources of travel
- ▶ People, culture and capability uplift
- ▶ Reporting departmental emissions in our Annual Report.

Our data

The department's data and evaluation capability supports our performance monitoring and reporting. The department draws on extensive data from our policies, programs and services, and applies various analytical techniques, to examine appropriateness, efficiency, and effectiveness of programs and policies.

The DSS Data Strategy 2022–24 (Data Strategy) sets the strategic direction for the department's data agenda to deliver the vision of empowering every person in the department to achieve more with data. The Data Strategy outlines the goals to improve and reinforce the department's data foundations across 5 themes: capability; governance; culture; data access and sharing; and technology.

In early 2025, the department will release a new *Data and Analytics Strategy 2025–27*. The Data Strategy will continue to:

- ▶ ensure our data governance reflects best-practice and enables the use of data in a safe and ethical way
- ▶ ensure our technology and systems support all aspects of the data lifecycle
- ▶ share and leverage data and enable data access, internally and externally
- ▶ increase staff capability and confidence in using data to drive policy development and improve program outcomes
- ▶ explore and participate in initiatives related to data, analytics, capability development and evaluation across the Australian Public Service
- ▶ create a culture of data-driven curiosity and enquiry where data is embedded into all aspects of our business.

The department is actively engaging in the DATA Scheme established under the *Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022* (Cth) (DAT Act) for safe, secure, legal and ethical data sharing arrangements. As a data custodian under the DATA Scheme and one of its early adopters, the department signed one of the first DAT Act Data Sharing Agreements in 2023–24 for sharing Data Over Multiple Occurrences (DOMINO) data into the National Disability Data Asset (NDDA). The NDDA is the first national data asset to be co-governed by all Australian governments and the disability community. The first release of the NDDA is expected in the second half of 2024, and will enable Australian governments and university researchers to deliver deeper, data driven insights about the needs and outcomes of people with disability.

In 2024–25, the department will:

- ▶ move from interim to final accreditation status as an Accredited Data Service Provider and Accredited User under the Scheme

- ▶ support DATA Scheme data sharing requests. In 2023–24, the department received the first ever DATA Scheme data sharing request
- ▶ continue to update the Australian Government Data Catalogue
- ▶ contribute to the statutory review of the DAT Act.

Our financial capability

Our Finance Group leads the department’s finance capability and ensures compliance with legislative and policy requirements. The Group facilitates coordination of external and internal budget processes, reports on financial performance and produces the financial statements. The group is a key enabler in the financial stewardship of the department, providing advice to the:

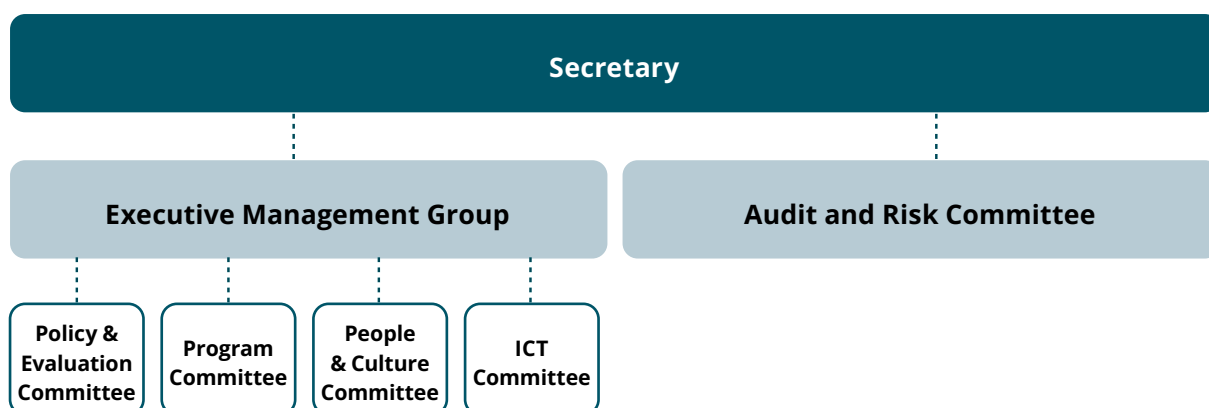
- ▶ Executive Management Group in a timely and accurate manner about financial performance, forecast, pressures and risks
- ▶ departmental managers, in relation to:
 1. the development of robust and easy to use financial management policies, systems and processes
 2. assisting in the development of new policy proposals and coordinating the Budget process
 3. the provision of timely and accurate financial information, analysis and advice
 4. anticipating financial issues and working collaboratively in developing solutions
 5. financial literacy training and support to enhance financial knowledge
 6. procurement advice, use of credit cards, travel and fleet management.

Our governance

Our strong and supportive governance arrangements underpin our decision making by ensuring transparency, accountability and integrity are applied to all our activities.

Our governance structure includes the Executive Management Group and its sub-committees, which consider overarching policy and evaluation, people and culture, information and communication technologies (ICT) and program performance matters.

Our governance structure informs the strategic prioritisation of resources as part of policy setting, program and workforce planning, risk management and audit and compliance activities.



Our risk management

The department operates in an ever-changing environment of strategic, operational, shared and emerging risks in order to deliver on our purpose.

Our Risk Management Framework (the framework) assists staff at all levels across the department to effectively identify and manage risk. The framework includes a risk management policy, along with a risk and issues management procedures, and a legal risk reporting framework. It also provides clear responsibilities for all our staff to consistently escalate and report on risk and issues. Identification, reporting and management of legal and other specialist risks is iterative and needs to be incorporated in all activities and operations of the department.

Our processes align with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and section 16 of the PGPA Act.

Our risk governance

Our Executive Management Group oversees the approach and effectiveness of the Risk Management Framework and makes decisions about strategic risks. The strategic risks are continuously monitored and reviewed.

The Chief Risk Officer provides oversight of risk management culture and capabilities across the department and is supported by 6 risk stewards who each champion a strategic risk.

Significant risks, including emerging risks are escalated to the Secretary or relevant Deputy Secretary, through Group and Branch Managers. Issues are reported to the relevant senior executive and as appropriate to the Secretary.

The Audit and Risk Committee provides independent assurance and advice to the Secretary, on the design and operation of our department's risk, control and compliance framework, including its external accountabilities.

Our strategic risks

The department's 6 strategic risks, identified by the Executive Management Group have the potential to impact our purpose. These risks are interdependent and cut across organisational boundaries. Our strategic risks and associated risk treatments are detailed below:

Strategic risk	Description	Risk mitigations
Government Priorities	There is a risk the department will not provide timely, quality policy advice addressing government priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Deliver against our 4 outcomes by continuing to implement government priorities in line with relevant legislation, frameworks and guidance.▶ Continue to work collaboratively with our key partners and stakeholders to ensure all views are considered and policy advice is timely, influential, and has a strong evidence base.

Strategic risk	Description	Risk mitigations
Integrity	There is a risk to the department that not upholding a culture of integrity and professionalism will reduce the effectiveness of the delivery of outcomes for Australian communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue working to build a pro-integrity culture by developing and implementing an Action Plan that meet the requirements of the National Anti-Corruption Commission including an Integrity Strategy and Framework for the department. ▶ Continue educating staff on their responsibilities for maintaining integrity through the delivery of training on Integrity in the APS as well as an introduction to the National Anti-Corruption Commission. Additionally, deliver mandatory training on APS values, code of conduct, fraud awareness, employment principles and expectations.
Our People	There is a risk to the department having the workforce capability needed, including managing the safety, wellbeing and development of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Implement and monitor the department's Workforce Strategy that sets direction and priorities to support and develop our people. ▶ Through Work Health and Safety Management Arrangements, continue demonstrating the department's commitment to managing health and wellbeing in the workplace. Mature diversity and inclusion efforts in the department through continued implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.
An Integrated Policy Cycle	There is a risk the delivery and implementation of the department's policy and program solutions is not effective and suitably citizen-centric.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and promote guidance tools to improve citizen-centric policy design and program management, including the Getting Better Outcomes approach and the Program Logic Model. ▶ Promote the Secretary's 4Cs in embedding a more robust scrutiny of current and future policies and how these drive better outcomes for the Australian community. ▶ Develop a centralised program management reporting mechanism with an escalation process to consistently track and report on progress of programs.

Strategic risk	Description	Risk mitigations
Partnerships with other Agencies and Organisations	There is a risk to ensuring the department's partnerships with other agencies and organisations maximises the outcomes for the Australian community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Implement best-practice principles identified through the Australian Public Service Commission's Charter of Partnerships and Engagement and good practice guidance, which supports leveraging partnerships to develop community/person-centred policies and services. ▶ Continue to consult with key stakeholders on policy and program solutions to ensure that outcomes are maximised. ▶ Contractual Agreements with our key stakeholders are in place and regularly monitored to meet our policy, program and service delivery responsibilities.
Systems and Data Integrity	There is a risk to maintaining and protecting data held by the department and using data and information effectively to support our outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Implement strategies within our 2022-24 Data Strategy and continue to ensure strong governance processes are in place in relation to the quality, use, and sharing of our data. ▶ Continue to ensure that Service Level Agreements are in place with our key stakeholders in relation to our IT systems and support for our data. We will also continue to review these on a regular basis.

Fraud and Corruption

Fraud and corruption poses a serious risk to the department's programs, schemes and corporate functions. To meet its expanded obligations under the PGPA Act and new Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework, the department has developed a new Fraud and Corruption Control Plan 2024-26, Fraud and Corruption Policy, and updated Secretary's Instruction 1.3 Fraud and Corruption Control. These documents outline the governance, roles and responsibilities of officers, and expanded fraud and corruption risk assessment activities the department is progressing to meet its requirements under the new Framework.

The department maintains systems of fraud and corruption risk management and oversight, ensuring all reasonable measures are in place to prevent, detect, deter, disrupt and respond to fraud and corruption.

Part three: Our performance

The department’s key activities are delivered in partnership with a range of third parties including portfolio agencies, for-profit and not-for-profit organisations. The majority of the data used to report our performance is sourced from our third-party delivery partners. The department aims for better practice approaches to ensure third-party data is reliable, verifiable, and supported by proportionate assurance processes. However, in practice some third-party data may have limitations. In the interest of transparency, we disclose any limitations associated with the data and methodology used to assess our performance.

Within our operating context, there are external factors beyond the department’s control that can impact our performance. Performance measures that may be impacted by external factors are identified in this chapter using the diamond symbol (◊).

The assessment of performance measures outlined in this Corporate Plan will be published in the 2024–25 Annual Report.

Categorising Data Sources

The PGPA Rule requires that performance measures should use sources of information and methodologies that are reliable and verifiable. This includes appropriate assurances and controls of data. Reliable and verifiable data is key to supporting advice to better inform government decisions which the department is working towards. Performance statements will include categorisations of data that underpin the department’s performance measures. Three data categorisations are identified as follows:

Data Source	Definition
Primary source	Generated from within the department.
Secondary source	Data sourced from another Commonwealth or state and territory entity.
Tertiary source	Contracted business or service provider.

Assurance	Definition
Tier 1	The department has assurances over this data.
Tier 2	The data is sourced from a third party. The department has some controls in place which assure this data, for example an agreement with the data provider outlining data quality expectations or data is supported by a quality statement.
Tier 3	Data is sourced from a third party, such as a contracted business or service provider. The department has minimal mechanisms by which to assure the data reported by the third party.

Outcome 1: Social Security

Programs and activities

Outcome 1 comprises of 7 programs and a number of activities, all of which contribute to achieving the social security outcome.

An in-depth description of each of the activities, performance measures, targets, rationale, methodology and outputs are in the Performance Tables Section on the pages that follow.



PROGRAM 1.1 SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Assist eligible families with the cost of raising children while ensuring that parents remain primarily responsible for supporting their children.

Key Activity — 1.1.1 Family Tax Benefit

The Family Tax Benefit is a key activity of the Support for Families Program. The Family Tax Benefit activity makes payments to eligible low and medium income families to help with the direct and indirect cost of raising dependent children. It comprises two parts:

- ▶ Family Tax Benefit Part A – this is paid per child and the amount paid is based on the family's circumstances.
- ▶ Family Tax Benefit Part B – this is paid per family and gives extra help to single parents and some couple families with one main income.

Family Tax Benefit can be paid fortnightly or as a lump sum at the end of the financial year. Families who are eligible for Family Tax Benefit may also be eligible for other payments and supplements, such as Newborn Supplement, Newborn Upfront Payment, and Rent Assistance. Family Tax Benefit Part A recipients must also meet immunisation and health check requirements (where applicable).

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the key activity. This includes providing advice to government on policy and legislation, program implementation and management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting key performance indicators, and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering the Family Tax Benefit on the department's behalf, including receiving, processing, and managing payment applications and making payments.

Performance Measure

1.1.1-1 Extent to which families with lower incomes are supported with the costs of raising children through Family Tax Benefit.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.1.1-1A Payment targeted to low income families (67% of support received by families under the FTB lower income free area).	≥ 67%	≥ 67%	≥ 67%	≥ 67%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which families with lower incomes are supported with the costs of raising children through the Family Tax Benefit aims to demonstrate how the payment is targeted towards these families. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the Family Tax Benefit in achieving the objective of the key activity, which is to ensure eligible families are helped with the cost of raising children.

The target demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the department's role in delivering the key activity by showing the extent to which families with lower incomes are supported in comparison to the support provided to medium income families. The intent of the policy is for low-income families to receive the majority of assistance provided by the government under this program.

Methodology

The number of families with lower incomes supported through the Family Tax Benefit is calculated using the total number of Family Tax Benefit recipients. The Family Tax Benefit recipients are filtered by annual family adjusted taxable income:

- ▶ equal to, or less than, the lower income free area (low-income families)
- ▶ greater than the lower income free area.

This is used to evaluate the per cent of support, measured in entitlement amounts, that is received by those families with income under the Family Tax Benefit lower income free area.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Secondary source Tier 1	Services Australia administrative data.

Note: Family Tax Benefit data is not considered mature until 2 years (8 quarters) after the end of the entitlement year.

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Payment accuracy
- ▶ Number of recipients – Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B
- ▶ Number of children – Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B

PROGRAM 1.1 SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Assist eligible families with the cost of raising children while ensuring that parents remain primarily responsible for supporting their children.

Key Activity — 1.1.2 Child Support Scheme

The Child Support Scheme (CSS, the Scheme) is a key activity of the Support for Families Program. The Scheme ensures children receive an appropriate level of support from their parents following separation.

Child support payments are calculated according to an administrative formula that uses an income shares approach and is based on research into the cost of raising children in Australia. Child support payments can be transferred privately, or Services Australia can collect and transfer the payments on parents' behalf.

Child support payments and Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A are closely linked. To receive more than the base rate of FTB Part A for a child from a previous relationship, an individual must take reasonable action to apply for a child support assessment. This is known as the Maintenance Action Test (MAT). The requirement to meet the MAT applies, regardless of if the parent is or would be assessed to receive or pay child support.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the CSS, including child support policy and legislation. The department is also responsible for designing and implementing FTB Part A policy, including the administration of the policy and legislation.

Services Australia delivers the Scheme on the department's behalf and provides services to parents and carers. Services Australia assists parents to apply for a child support assessment, determines the amount payable and, where applicable, facilitates the collection and transfer of child support payments. Where payments are not made voluntarily, Services Australia has a range of powers to enforce the collection of child support. The Child Support Registrar in Services Australia has decision making powers under child support legislation.

Performance Measure

1.1.2.1 Extent to which separated parents in the child support system are supporting their children.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.1.2.1A At least 85% of Family Tax Benefit Part A children of separated parents meet the maintenance action test requirements.	≥85%	≥85%	≥85%	≥85%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which separated parents who receive FTB Part A apply for child support for their children (or an exemption from the MAT) demonstrates how the FTB Part A MAT requirement can influence parents to engage with the Scheme to maximise the economic resources available to raise their children.

The target demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing:

- ▶ The proportion of children of separated parents in the FTB system whose parent has taken action to receive child support or an exemption from the MAT to receive an above base rate of FTB Part A
- ▶ A significant percentage of these children continue to receive financial support from their parents following separation.

Methodology

The number of FTB Part A children of separated parents that meet the MAT requirements is based on the number of children subject to the MAT that:

- ▶ are exempt from the MAT requirement; and
- ▶ pass the MAT requirement.

The percentage is based on the number of children that are exempt from the MAT, plus the number of children that satisfy the MAT, as a proportion of all children subjected to the MAT.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Secondary source Tier 1	Services Australia FTB administrative data

PROGRAM 1.2 PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Assist parents to take time out of the workforce to bond with their children following birth or adoption and encourage continued participation in the workforce.

Key Activity — 1.2.1 Parental Leave Pay

Parental Leave Pay is a key activity of the Paid Parental Leave Program. Parental Leave Pay provides financial support to help eligible parents to take time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child, to encourage women's workforce participation, to enhance the health and development of mothers and their children and promote equality between men and women, and the balance between work and family life. It also aims to increase the time that fathers and partners take off work around the time of birth or adoption to provide further opportunities for fathers and partners to take a greater share of caring responsibilities.

For children born or adopted from 1 July 2024, Parental Leave Pay provides eligible families with up to 22 weeks of pay based on the national minimum wage. To support a more balanced approach to paid and unpaid work within families, 2 weeks are reserved on a dedicated 'use it or lose it' basis for each parent. Single parents are able to access the full 22 weeks. To be eligible for Parental Leave Pay, a claimant must meet the scheme's work test, income test, and residency test. Parental Leave Pay will be expanded by an additional 2 weeks each year, reaching a total of 26 weeks from July 2026, which includes an increase in the reserved period to 4 weeks.

For children born or adopted before 1 July 2024, Parental Leave Pay is available to eligible families for up to 20 weeks.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the key activity, including providing advice to government on policy and legislation, program implementation and management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting guidelines, and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering Parental Leave Pay on the department's behalf, including receiving, processing, and managing payment applications and delivering Parental Leave Pay payments.

Employers are responsible for providing the government payment to employees in their usual pay cycle.

Performance Measure

1.2.1-1 Extent to which eligible families use their unreserved entitlement to Parental Leave Pay.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.2.1-1A At least 95% of eligible Parental Leave Pay families receive payment.	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which families use their unreserved entitlement to Parental Leave Pay aims to demonstrate that parents are financially assisted to take time off work following the birth or adoption of a child.

This performance measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of Parental Leave Pay in achieving the objectives of encouraging women’s workforce participation and enhancing the health and development of mothers and children and promoting equality between men and women and balance between work and family life.

Targeting at least 95% of eligible Parental Leave Pay families that receive the payment demonstrates the effectiveness of the key activity by showing the proportion of eligible families that are assisted by the payment to take time off work following the birth or adoption of a child.

Methodology

Eligibility is defined as Parental Leave Pay families that receive Parental Leave Pay. Receive payment is defined as the receipt of the payment for the entire 18 week entitlement period for children born or adopted prior to 1 July 2023 and at least the entire unreserved period for children born or adopted on or after 1 July 2023.

The percentage is based on the number of Parental Leave Pay children whose parents or combination of carers took at least 18 weeks or the full number of unreserved weeks of Parental Leave Pay as a proportion of the total number of Parental Leave Pay children whose entitlement was completed or whose two-year claim period finished during the financial year.

As the scheme expands the number of unreserved weeks will increase. For children born or adopted:

- ▶ between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, there are 20 weeks of unreserved Parental Leave Pay;
- ▶ between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, there are 21 weeks of unreserved Parental Leave Pay; and
- ▶ from 1 July 2026, there are 22 weeks of unreserved Parental Leave Pay.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #004a60; color: white; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Secondary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #004a60; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	Services Australia administrative data

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Number of recipients

PROGRAM 1.3 SUPPORT FOR SENIORS

Assist eligible senior Australians financially and to encourage them to use their financial resources to support their retirement income.

Key Activity — 1.3.1 Age Pension

The Age Pension is a key activity of the Support for Seniors Program. The key activity provides income support to senior Australians who need it, while encouraging pensioners to maximise their overall incomes. The Age Pension is paid to people who meet age and residency requirements, subject to a means test. Pension rates are indexed to ensure they keep pace with Australian price and wage increases.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the Age Pension, including providing advice to government on policy and legislation, program implementation and management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting guidelines and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering the Age Pension, including receiving, processing and managing applications and delivering payments.

Performance Measure

1.3.1-1 Extent to which people over the Age Pension qualification age are supported in their retirement through the Age Pension or other income support.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.3.1-1A 75% or below of people of Age Pension age are supported by the Age Pension or other income support.	≤ 75%	≤ 75%	≤ 75%	≤ 75%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which people over the Age Pension qualification age are supported in their retirement through the Age Pension, or other income support, aims to demonstrate that senior Australians with low to moderate means are assisted financially. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the Age Pension in achieving the objective of the key activity: senior Australians are assisted financially in a manner that encourages them to productively manage resources and life transitions.

The target demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing:

- ▶ funding is targeted to senior Australians with low to moderate means to maintain their financial wellbeing, in a manner that encourages self-reliance during retirement
- ▶ the remaining proportion of senior Australians not receiving a payment can fully support themselves due to the level of their income and assets, consistent with the objective of self-reliance.

Methodology

The number of people supported by the Age Pension or other income support (the numerator for the calculation of the measure) is calculated using the sum of:

- ▶ Age Pension recipients
- ▶ DVA Service Pension and Income Support Supplement recipients over pension age
- ▶ other income support recipients over pension age.

The number of people over pension age is based on Australian Bureau of Statistics population projections, which draws on the base population data set released on 23 November 2023.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Secondary source Tier 1	Services Australia administrative data
Secondary source Tier 1	Department of Veterans Affairs administrative data
Secondary source Tier 1	Australian Bureau of Statistics - Population Projections, Australia 2017–2066

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Payment accuracy
- ▶ Number of recipients

PROGRAM 1.4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

To financially assist eligible people with disability.

Key Activity — 1.4.1 Disability Support Pension

The Disability Support Pension key activity aims to make payments to eligible people with disability who cannot fully support themselves.

The Disability Support Pension is an income support payment paid fortnightly, for people who have a physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment which is expected to persist, in light of available evidence, for at least 2 years, and attracts at least 20 points under the tables for the assessment of work-related impairment for Disability Support Pension (the Impairment Tables). People who are eligible to claim Disability Support Pension includes people who are unable to work for at least 15 hours per week at or above the relevant minimum wage. The person must be aged 16 years or over and under Age Pension age at the time of claim. Disability Support Pension recipients are automatically issued with a Pensioner Concession Card. Disability Support Pension is income and assets tested.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the key activity, including providing advice to government on policy and legislation, program implementation and management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting guidelines and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering the Disability Support Pension on the department's behalf, including managing applications and making payments.

Performance Measure

1.4.1-1 Extent to which people of working age with a profound or severe disability are paid Disability Support Pension.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.4.1-1A At least 90% of people with a profound or severe disability of working age are supported by the Disability Support Pension.	≥90%	≥90%	≥90%	≥90%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which people of working age with a profound or severe disability are paid Disability Support Pension demonstrates that eligible people with disability who cannot fully support themselves are being financially assisted. This measure demonstrates the effectiveness of the Disability Support Pension in achieving the objective of the key activity: to make payments to eligible people with disability who cannot fully support themselves.

Targeting 90% of people with a profound or severe disability of working age are supported by the Disability Support Pension demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing:

- ▶ a significant per cent of the eligible people with a severe disability who are unable to support themselves are in receipt of financial support
- ▶ funding is targeted to financially assist people with disability who are unable to support themselves to achieve financial independence.

Methodology

The number of people receiving Disability Support Pension is based on the number of people receiving Disability Support Pension aged 16–64 inclusive who are severely or profoundly disabled.

The number of people with a profound or severe disability of working age is based on the number of Australians who are severely or profoundly disabled between the age of 15–64.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source		Data source
Primary source	Tier 1	Services Australia administrative data
Secondary source	Tier 1	Australian Bureau of Statistics - Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Payment accuracy
- ▶ Payment recipients

PROGRAM 1.5 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CARERS

To financially assist eligible carers of people with disability or a severe medical condition.

Key Activity — 1.5.1 Carer Payment and Carer Allowance

The Carer Payment and Carer Allowance are key activities of the Financial Support for Carers Program and provide financial assistance to eligible carers of people with disability or a severe medical condition.

Carer Payment is for eligible carers of people with disability or a severe medical condition. Carer Payment may be paid where the constant care a carer provides to a child (under 16 years) and/or adult (16 years and over) with disability or medical condition prevents the carer from supporting themselves through paid employment. Carer Payment recipients automatically qualify for a Pensioner Concession Card and short term or episodic carers qualify for a Health Care Card. Carer Payment is income and assets tested and paid at the same rate as other social security pensions. Carer Payment recipients may also qualify for Carer Allowance.

Carer Allowance is an income supplement to people who provide daily care and attention in a private home to a person with disability or a severe medical condition. Carer Allowance is a fortnightly payment for carers who provide daily care and attention to a child (under 16 years) or an adult (over 16 years).

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the key activity. This includes providing advice to government on policy and legislation, program implementation and management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting guidelines and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering the Carer Payment and Carer Allowance on the department's behalf including managing applications and making payments.

Performance Measure

1.5.1-1 Extent to which payments are made to, or with respect to, carers unable to fully support themselves.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.5.1-1A At least 70% of primary carers in Australia are supported by Carer Payment and/or Carer Allowance.	≥70%	≥70%	≥70%	≥70%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which payments are made to, or with respect to, carers unable to fully support themselves aims to demonstrate that carers of people with disability or a severe medical condition are financially assisted. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the Carer Payment and Carer Allowance in achieving the objectives of the department's policy and legislative oversight in assisting eligible carers of people with disability or a severe medical condition.

Targeting 70% of primary carers in Australia to be supported by Carer Payment and/or Carer Allowance demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing a significant percentage of eligible carers who are unable to fully support themselves are in receipt of financial support.

Methodology

The number of primary carers in Australia that are supported is calculated using the number of payment recipients of Carer Payment, Carer Allowance (Adult) and Carer Allowance (Child).

The number of primary carers in Australia is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics - Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source		Data source
Secondary source	Tier 1	Services Australia administrative data
Secondary source	Tier 1	Australian Bureau of Statistics - Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Payment accuracy
- ▶ Number of recipients

PROGRAM 1.6 WORKING AGE PAYMENTS

To provide financial assistance to people while they are unable to fully support themselves through work.

Key Activity — 1.6.1 Jobseeker Payment, Youth Allowance (other) and Parenting Payment

Jobseeker Payment, Youth Allowance (other) and Parenting Payment are key activities of the Working Age Payments program.

Working Age Payments assist people who are temporarily unable to support themselves through work or who have a limited capacity to work due to injury or illness or parenting responsibilities. Eligibility for payments is targeted with means testing and supplementary payments are available where people have additional costs, ensuring that assistance is directed to those with the greatest need. Recipients who have the capacity to work are required to actively seek work and may be required to attend training or work experience to improve their job prospects.

Jobseeker Payment is the main income support payment for eligible people aged between 22 years to Age Pension qualification age who are looking for work, who temporarily cannot work or study because of an injury or illness, or bereaved partners in the period immediately following the death of their partners.

Youth Allowance (other) is the income support payment for eligible young people aged 16–21 years who are looking for full time work or undertaking approved activities to improve their job prospects.

Parenting Payment is the income support payment for single parents, partnered parents, or guardians who have principal care for a young child; it provides them with incentives to increase workforce participation.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing these payments, including providing advice to Government on policy and legislation, program management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting guidelines and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering the key activities on the department's behalf including receiving, processing and managing claims for payment, ensuring recipients' continued eligibility for payment and delivering the JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance (other) and Parenting Payment.

Performance Measure

1.6.1-1 Extent to which payments are made to, or with respect to, people unable to fully support themselves.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.6.1-1A Recipient numbers reflect the number of people who are unable to fully support themselves through work.	Recipient numbers align with changes in the unemployment rate	Recipient numbers align with changes in the unemployment rate	Recipient numbers align with changes in the unemployment rate	Recipient numbers align with changes in the unemployment rate

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which payments are made to, or with respect to, people unable to fully support themselves demonstrates that people who are temporarily unable to support themselves through work or who have a limited capacity and availability to work due injury or illness or parenting responsibilities are assisted financially. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of JobSeeker Payment, Parenting Payment & Youth Allowance (other) in achieving the objectives of the key activities: to financially assist people who are temporarily unable to support themselves through work or have a limited capacity to work.

The extent to which changes in recipient numbers align with the unemployment rate demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activities, by showing how closely the system responds to need in the community as they change (measured in terms of movement in the unemployment rate). It also demonstrates the **effectiveness** of payment policy in providing the right incentives for income support recipients to take up available and suitable work to fully support themselves.

Over the past year, the unemployment rate and the number of people supported by working age payments have been broadly aligned, with levels for both measures steadily increasing.

Methodology

The number of people supported by Working Age Payments is calculated using the number of recipients of:

- ▶ JobSeeker Payment
- ▶ Parenting Payment (Partnered + Single)
- ▶ Youth Allowance (other).

The unemployment rate uses the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey - Seasonally adjusted unemployment rate.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Secondary source Tier 1	Services Australia administrative data
Secondary source Tier 1	Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey - Seasonally adjusted unemployment rate

It is important to note there are significant differences between the population measured by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to calculate the unemployment rate, and Working Age Payment population recipients. There is also a lag between changes in labour market conditions (as reflected in the change in unemployment rate) and people moving on to or off income support payments.

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Payment accuracy
- ▶ Payment recipients

PROGRAM 1.7 STUDENT PAYMENTS

To support eligible students whilst they undertake education and training, so that they can gain employment. To increase access and participation by Indigenous students in secondary and tertiary education and accelerate their educational outcomes.

Key Activity — 1.7.1 Youth Allowance (Student), Austudy, ABSTUDY

Youth Allowance, Austudy and ABSTUDY are key activities of the Student Payments program.

- ▶ **Youth Allowance** is a payment to eligible students or apprentices aged 16-24 years who are in need of financial assistance to undertake education or training.
- ▶ **Austudy** is a payment to eligible students or apprentices aged 25 years and over who are in need of financial assistance to undertake education or training.
- ▶ **ABSTUDY** includes a number of payments to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or apprentices to address the particular educational disadvantages faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the key activity, including providing advice to government on policy and legislation, program implementation and management, program performance, monitoring and meeting all relevant deliverables, setting guidelines and providing guidance and advice to Services Australia on the administration of the program.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering the key activities on the department's behalf including receiving, processing and managing payment applications and delivering student payments.

Performance Measure

1.7.1-1 Extent to which payment recipients have improved financial self-reliance.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 1.7.1-1A The proportion of Austudy, Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY recipients who are not receiving income support 12 months after exiting student payments reflect the number of people who are unable to fully support themselves through work.	Changes in exit rates align with changes in unemployment rate.	Changes in exit rates align with changes in unemployment rate.	Changes in exit rates align with changes in unemployment rate.	Changes in exit rates align with changes in unemployment rate.

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which payment recipients have improved financial self-reliance demonstrates that students receiving income support and other financial assistance achieve growth in skills and qualifications, to support their participation in the workforce. This measure

demonstrates the **effectiveness** of ABSTUDY, Austudy and Youth Allowance (Student) in achieving the objectives of the key activity: recipients have improved financial self-reliance.

Targeting the proportion of recipients who are not receiving income support 12 months after exiting student payments aligns with movements in the unemployment rate and demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing that those leaving the temporary payments are able to support themselves through employment.

Methodology

The number of recipients who exit student payments and have improved financial self-reliance (for example, by remaining in employment) is calculated by comparing the:

- ▶ percentage of people who are not receiving income support 12 months after exiting student payments; and
- ▶ the unemployment rate as measured by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Student payment recipients include recipients of Austudy, Youth Allowance (Student) and ABSTUDY over a 12-month calendar year, where the recipient has been on a student payment for more than 3 months.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source		Data source
Secondary source	Tier 1	Services Australia administrative data
Secondary source	Tier 1	Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Accounts – Labour Force Australia

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Payment accuracy
- ▶ Payment recipients

CROSS PROGRAM – RENT ASSISTANCE

To make payments to income support or family payment recipients to assist with the costs of renting private and community housing.

Key Activity — Rent Assistance

Cross-Program Rent Assistance is a supplementary payment to assist eligible Australians receiving income support or family assistance payments with the cost of private rental or community housing. Individuals receiving the following payments may be eligible for Rent Assistance:

- ▶ Age Pension, Carer Payment or Disability Support Pension
- ▶ ABSTUDY Living Allowance, Austudy or Youth Allowance
- ▶ Special Benefit
- ▶ Family Tax Benefit (FTB) – Part A, at more than the base rate
- ▶ Parenting Payment, partnered and single
- ▶ JobSeeker Payment or Farm Household Allowance
- ▶ Service Pension, Income Support Supplement, Veteran Payment, or Department of Veterans' Affairs Education Schemes.

In the 2024–25 Budget, the government announced it would increase maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) by a further 10% to help relieve rental cost pressures for recipient households. This represents an investment of \$1.9 billion over five years from 2023–24.

The 10% increase will be implemented on 20 September 2024, with regular indexation to occur on top of this on the same day.

In 2024–25, the government expects to spend around \$6.2 billion on CRA to assist households receiving income support or family tax benefits with the costs of private rental or community housing.

The department is responsible for Rent Assistance policy and program management.

Services Australia is the primary portfolio agency responsible for administering Rent Assistance, including assessments, compliance and payments.

Performance Measure

Australians receiving income support or family assistance payments are assisted with the cost of private rental or community housing.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) reduces the proportion of recipient households in "rental stress" by at least 25 percentage points ¹ .	CRA reduces the proportion of recipient households in "rental stress" by at least 25 percentage points.	CRA reduces the proportion of recipient households in "rental stress" by at least 25 percentage points.	CRA reduces the proportion of recipient households in "rental stress" by at least 25 percentage points.	CRA reduces the proportion of recipient households in "rental stress" by at least 25 percentage points.

Rationale

This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of CRA in achieving the objective of Outcome 1 in delivering: a sustainable social security system that incentivises self-reliance and supports people who cannot fully support themselves by providing targeted payments and assistance.

Reducing the proportion of recipient households in "rental stress" by at least 25 percentage points measures the **effectiveness** of CRA for recipient households.

Methodology

Rental stress is defined as a rent assistance recipient household paying more than 30% of their income on rent. The proportion of individuals and families experiencing rental stress after receipt of CRA is calculated using:

- ▶ Percentage of CRA recipients paying more than 30% of their income in rent prior to receiving CRA.
- ▶ Percentage of CRA recipients paying more than 30% of their income in rent including after receiving CRA.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; background-color: #004a60; color: white; border-radius: 5px;">Secondary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; background-color: #004a60; color: white; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	Services Australia administrative data - Social Services Housing Data Set

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays

1. A recipient household or 'income unit' comprises a single person (with or without dependent children) or a couple (with or without dependent children) receiving a social security or family assistance payment and expected to share financial resources. Single social security recipients living together in the same dwelling are regarded as separate recipient households.

Outcome 2: Families and Communities

Programs and activities

Outcome 2 comprises one program underpinned by a number of activities that seek to contribute to stronger and more resilient individuals, children, families and communities. The table below depicts how this purpose is translated into measurable activities.

An in-depth description of each of the activities, performance measures, targets, rationale, methodology and outputs are in the Performance Tables Section on the pages that follow.

OUTCOME 2 – FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Contribute to stronger and more resilient individuals, children, families, and communities by providing targeted supports.

PROGRAM 2.1

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Key activities*

- 2.1.1 – Families and Children
- 2.1.2 – Family Safety
- 2.1.5 – Financial Wellbeing and Capability
- 2.1.7 – National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

*The key activity numbering in Outcome 2 is not consecutive as it reflects the 2024-25 Portfolio Budget Statement appropriation numbering.

PROGRAM 2.1 FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

To strengthen relationships, support families, improve wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, and strengthen family and community functioning.

Key Activity — 2.1.1 Families and Children

Families and Children is a key activity of the Families and Communities Program. The Families and Children key activity provides services and initiatives to support families, strengthen relationships, improve the wellbeing of children and young people, enhance family and community functioning, and build capacity within the families and communities sector.

Families and children service providers deliver early intervention and prevention activities to improve the wellbeing of families and children (including after separation), including parenting programs, relationship counselling, playgroups and other supports.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing the Families and Children key activity, including:

- ▶ designing policy and legislation, and
- ▶ designing and managing grants to service providers.

Performance Measure

2.1.1-1 Extent to which individuals have improved individual and family functioning.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 2.1.1-1A - At least 75% of clients in reporting services have improved family functioning.	≥75%	≥75%	≥75%	≥75%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which individuals have improved individual and family functioning demonstrates that Families and Children Service Providers have strengthened family functioning. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of Families and Children in achieving the objective of the key activity: to provide services and initiatives to support families, strengthen relationships, improve the wellbeing of children and young people, enhance family and community functioning, and build capacity within the families and communities sector.

The target of 'at least 75% of clients in reporting services have improved family functioning' demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing that a significant majority of clients that received services from Families and Children Service Providers have improved individual and family functioning.

Methodology

Funded service providers conduct a survey with a sample of clients to whom they provide a service. Client Circumstances data is based on a self-assessment of functioning, pre-service to establish a baseline and post-service to record the self-assessed outcome.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source

Data source

Tertiary source

Tier 3

Department of Social Services Data Exchange - Family Functioning SCORE data

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays

PROGRAM 2.1 FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

To strengthen relationships, support families, improve wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, and strengthen family and community functioning.

Key Activity — 2.1.2 Family Safety

All governments have committed to the aim of ending gender-based violence in one generation. The main vehicle to achieve this goal is through the implementation of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* (the National Plan). The National Plan utilises a public health approach, with clear objectives spanning 4 domains: prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing. All Australian governments have committed to the National Plan with clear actions for implementation as outlined in the *First Action Plan 2023–2027* and dedicated *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023–2025*. The department contributes to the aim of ending gender-based violence through policy stewardship of the National Plan and implementing a range of actions and activities in the Action Plans.

The First Action Plan details 10 cross-cutting actions with Commonwealth, state and territory activities/initiatives aligned to ensure the outcomes and objectives of the National Plan are met. The First Action Plan's Activities Addendum details the activities that will be implemented by all governments over the 5-year period. As part of the Commonwealth initiatives, the department has a number of national programs that it delivers. There are 8 key national initiatives for which the department is responsible, these are listed below and mapped to corresponding Actions within the First Action Plan.

Initiatives	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Our Watch▶ Stop it at the Start Campaign	Action 1: Advance gender equality and address the drivers of all forms of gender-based violence, including through initiatives aimed to improve community attitudes and norms toward family, domestic, and sexual violence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety	Action 2: Improve the national evidence base by working towards consistent terminology and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and by strengthening collection and sharing of data and evidence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ DV-alert	Action 3: Increase and strengthen the capability of mainstream and specialist workforces to deliver quality services, activities and programs across the 4 domains, including those that are tailored to respond to the unique experiences of all victim-survivors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1800RESPECT▶ Escaping Violence Payment trial	Action 4: Build the capacity of services and systems that support victim-survivors to provide trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses that support long-term recovery, health and wellbeing.

Initiatives	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Safe Places Emergency Accommodation program² ▶ Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program 	Action 10: Improve access to short-term, medium and long-term housing for women and children experiencing violence, including those living in institutional settings, and support women to stay in their own homes when they choose to do so.

Performance Measure

2.1.2-1 Successful delivery of DSS-led national initiatives under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*

Target	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
◆ 2.1.2-1A - Demonstrated achievement of continued successful delivery of initiatives under the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032</i> .	The department will report outputs for 8 significant initiatives	TBD	TBD	TBD

Rationale

This measure primarily demonstrates the achievement of outputs from the national programs administered by the department which directly support implementation of the National Plan.

Reporting outputs for significant initiatives the department administers will demonstrate achievement under this key activity during the initial years of implementing the National Plan.

Methodology

The target will be considered met if 75% or more (6 or more out of 8) of the department’s national programs meet their intended output target, based on tailored criteria developed for assessment across the programs. The target will be considered partially met if 50–74% (4 to 5 out of 8) of the national programs successfully achieve their target, and not met if less than 50% (3 or below out of 8) successfully achieve their target.

2. Note Safe Places Emergency Accommodation is funded under Outcome 4 – Housing

1800RESPECT Performance Measure

The number of calls to the service answered within 20 seconds is calculated as a percentage of the total number of calls answered and number of calls abandoned (minus the number of calls abandoned within 5 seconds).

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The success criterion is met if the percentage is greater than or equal to 80%.	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%

Our Watch Performance Measure

The total number of participants engaged by Our Watch through prevention activities that facilitate opportunities for knowledge sharing, capacity building, collaboration and training across multiple sectors, settings and communities that demonstrate positive change in understanding, confidence, attitudes and behaviours to support the prevention of family, domestic, and sexual violence, and sexual harassment, across Australia.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The success criterion is met if the result is greater than or equal to 25% (p/year) on the 2022-2023 financial year baseline of people engaged. This escalated approach will result in a 100% increase in engagement over the life of the grant.	≥ 25%	≥ 25%	≥ 25%	≥ 25%

DV-alert Performance Measure

The total number of workshops delivered equals the target number of workshops listed for each financial year (e.g. n=693).

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The success criterion is met if the target number of workshops is delivered each year.	≥ 400 workshops	≥ 400 workshops	≥ 400 workshops	≥ 400 workshops

ANROWS Performance Measure

The total number of research and/or technical reports provided to the department by ANROWS in the financial year.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Greater than or equal to the annual target.	3	TBD	TBD	TBD

Stop it at the Start campaign Performance Measure

Evidence supporting delivery of phase 5 of the Stop it at the Start campaign.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The success criterion is met if there is evidence supporting delivery of phase 5 from July 2024 to May 2025 as planned in the approved media strategy and plan.	Advertising for the campaign occurred as planned.	TBD	TBD	TBD

Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Performance Measure

Confirmation a funded Safe Places project(s) activity details have been completed (i.e. capital works/building phase completed) and is tenanted.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The success criterion is met if the total number of safe places delivered is greater than or equal to the prior year’s target.	≥ 665 = 44% of program target	≥ 1005 = 67% of program target	≥ 1125 = 75% of program target.	Nil - Program Ends 30 June 2027

Keeping Women Safe In Their Homes Performance Measure

The extent to which victim-survivors of family and domestic violence are supported to safely remain in their homes or a home of their choosing.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The total number of KWSITH clients assisted nationally is maintained at a minimum of 80% compared to the same period last financial year.	(n = TBD) At least 80% of 2023-24 client numbers.	(n = TBD) At least 80% of 2024-25 client numbers.	(n = TBD) At least 80% of 2025-26 client numbers.	(n = TBD) At least 80% of 2026-27 client numbers.

Escaping Violence Payment trial Performance Measure

The number of financial assistance packages delivered (defined as provided the initial payment) nationally by the funded provider for the trial between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
The success criterion is met if the number of EVP client packages delivered nationally meets or exceeds the target amount of 19,999 for the financial year 2024-25.	≥ 19,999	Terminating measure. Trial will cease 30 June 2025	N/A	N/A

Data Categorisation

Initiative	Data categorisation		Data source
1800RESPECT	Tertiary source	Tier 2	Telstra Health Contact Management System (GENESYS)
Our Watch	Tertiary source	Tier 2	Our Watch Performance Evaluation Framework progress report
	Secondary source	Tier 2	Our Watch Activity Workplan progress report
DV-alert	Secondary source	Tier 3	Department of Social Services Data Exchange (DEX)
Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)	Tertiary source	Tier 1	ANROWS research/technical reports
The Stop it at the Start campaign	Tertiary source	Tier 1	11x Monthly media buy expenditure report from Universal McCann
	Tertiary source	Tier 1	1 x Final media performance report, from Universal McCann, delivered in June 2025 which reports on performance across whole campaign
	Tertiary source	Tier 1	1 x Approved Media Strategy and Media Plan
Safe Places Emergency Accommodation	Primary source	Tier 1	Department of Social Services project management spreadsheet containing Safe Places Application and milestone evidence from Grantees
Keeping Women Safe in their Homes (KWSITH)	Tertiary source	Tier 3	Department of Social Services Data Exchange (DEX)
Escaping Violence Payment trial	Tertiary source	Tier 3	Monthly Service Provider data

PROGRAM 2.1 FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

To strengthen relationships, support families, improve wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, and strengthen family and community functioning.

Key Activity — 2.1.5 Financial Wellbeing and Capability

Financial Wellbeing and Capability (FWC) is a key activity of the Families and Communities Program. It aims to provide services and initiatives to support vulnerable individuals and families to navigate financial crises, manage financial stress and hardship, and to improve financial wellbeing for individuals and families.

The department provides grants to FWC service providers to deliver Financial Crisis and Material Aid, including the provision of Emergency Relief and Food Relief (ER/FR).

- ▶ ER provides immediate financial and/or material support to people in financial crisis.
- ▶ FR increases emergency relief organisations' access to a cost-effective supply of food items which are provided to people in need across Australia.

Financial Counselling, Capability and Resilience provides financial counselling, financial literacy education, and access to financial services including microfinance products such as low- or no-interest loans.

- ▶ Commonwealth Financial Counselling helps people in financial difficulty to address their financial problems and make informed choices.
- ▶ Financial Capability services aim to help people build longer-term capability to budget and manage their money better.
- ▶ Financial Resilience offers a variety of financial services and products targeted at financially vulnerable people that help build self-reliance and provide access to financial products.

The department is responsible for designing and implementing services and initiatives for FWC. The department's role is to:

- ▶ design and implement policy
- ▶ undertake research and evaluation
- ▶ design and management of grants to service providers.

Enhanced Income Management (enhanced IM) is a component of the Financial Wellbeing and Capability key activity in the Families and Communities Program.

Former Cashless Debit Card (CDC) participants in the Northern Territory and the Cape York and Doomadgee regions transitioned from the CDC to enhanced IM on 6 March 2023, along with volunteers from the former CDC regions. From 4 September 2023, Income Management (IM) participants were able to request to transition to enhanced IM.

Enhanced IM does not change the amount of payments a person receives. The objective of enhanced IM is to assist people to budget their income support payments to meet essential household needs and expenses, like food, rent, bills and education.

The department is responsible for designing, delivering and implementing the Australian Government's commitment to reform policy for enhanced IM and ensuring that appropriate supports are in place, while Services Australia is responsible for service delivery and implementation. The department is currently undertaking consultation and engagement to inform these future reforms.

The department also provides a broad range of community driven, locally tailored and evidence-based support services that respond to specific needs identified by communities in the Northern Territory, Ceduna and surrounds, Bundaberg and Hervey Bay, the Goldfields, Cape York and the East Kimberley region.

Services Australia is responsible for delivery of the enhanced IM program, including:

- ▶ providing card and account support to enhanced IM customers
- ▶ managing customer accounts and interaction with the third party financial institutions to support its operation.

Performance Measure

2.1.5-1 Extent to which individuals and families can navigate through financial crises, build financial resilience and reduce vulnerability to financial shock.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 2.1.5-1A - 20% or less of people with multiple requests for Emergency Relief.	≤20%	≤20%	≤20%	≤20%
◆ 2.1.5-1B - At least 70% of people report an improvement in their financial wellbeing following engagement with a funded service.	≥70%	≥70%	≥70%	≥70%

Rationale

This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of FWC in achieving the objective of the key activity: to support vulnerable individuals and families to navigate financial crises, address financial stress and hardship, and increase financial literacy for individuals and families.

- ▶ Targeting 20% or less of people with multiple requests for ER demonstrates the effectiveness of the key activity by showing people who have experienced financial crisis (i.e. require ER) have reduced their reliance on ER as a result of being more financially resilient and navigating through financial crisis.
- ▶ Targeting at least 70% of people who report an improvement in their financial wellbeing following engagement with a funded service demonstrates the effectiveness of the key activity by showing improvements in ‘financial wellbeing’ of services provided to clients as they navigate life transitions and/or financial stress or crisis.

Methodology

Target 1A - The percentage for Emergency Relief is based on the cohort of clients that had at least five sessions of ER on different days within a 90-day period in the current reporting year. The data source used for this calculation is the Department of Social Services Data Exchange using Statistical Linkage Key matching of de-identified clients.

Target 1B - The percentage for financial wellbeing is based on improved financial wellbeing measured as a positive change in financial wellbeing circumstances during the assistance period as compared to initial circumstances, recorded on the five-point Data Exchange Client Circumstances Standard Client/Community Outcome Reporting. The circumstance domain Standard Client/Community Outcome Reporting used in this measure are Financial Resilience and Material Wellbeing and Basic Necessities.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; background-color: #004a69; color: white; border-radius: 5px;">Tertiary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 3</div> </div>	The Department of Social Services Data Exchange

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Number of individuals assisted
- ▶ Number of organisations contracted or receiving grant funding to deliver services.

Performance Measure

2.1.5-2 Participants on Enhanced Income Management have food expenditure proportional to individuals on similar payments in similar regions.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 2.1.5-2A – Enhanced Income Management participant proportional spend on food is within 5 percentage points of the average food expenditure of people on similar payments in similar regions.	≤5%	≤5%	≤5%	≤5%

Rationale

Enhanced IM is a transitional program that includes greater choice for people to support management of their income support payments. From 4 September 2023, individuals were able to choose to move from Income Management to enhanced Income Management. Participants using their enhanced IM account for food is a measure of whether people are using their card to purchase essential needs. It demonstrates that participants in metropolitan and regional areas are managing their finances similarly to people not on income management programs.

Methodology

Services Australia is responsible for the delivery of enhanced IM. The department will work in collaboration with Services Australia to provide information on account usage, such as transaction data, to determine if participants in metropolitan and regional areas are purchasing food at a similar level to those not on income management programs in comparable regions. The classification of transactions for this measure will be based on the merchant category code.

Targeting a spend on food of within 5 percentage points of the average expenditure weight for Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index in major cities and regional areas, per the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Selected Living Costs Index 2024, demonstrates the performance of the program against its stated objectives.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source		Data source
Secondary source	Tier 1	Services Australia Administrative data
Tertiary source	Tier 1	Financial Institution Administrative data

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Number of individuals assisted
- ▶ Number of organisations contracted or receiving grant funding to deliver services.

PROGRAM 2.1 FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

To strengthen relationships, support families, improve wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, and strengthen family and community functioning.

Key Activity — 2.1.7 National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

The National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (the Scheme) is a key activity of the Families and Communities program. The Scheme provides support to people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse. The Scheme:

- ▶ acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions
- ▶ recognises the harm caused by this abuse
- ▶ holds institutions accountable for this abuse
- ▶ helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling and psychological services, a direct personal response, and a monetary payment.

The Scheme has been developed with the needs of survivors at its core. The Scheme provides support to people through free access to Redress Support Services and independent legal support. Eligible people will be able to access the 3 components of redress: counselling; a redress payment; and a direct personal response from an institution (e.g. an apology).

The department is responsible for:

- ▶ policy, guidelines, eligibility criteria, and legislation for the activity
- ▶ processing and managing applications:
 - Considering applications; deciding if an applicant can access redress, and which redress the institution(s) needs to make to the applicant.
 - Asking the relevant institution(s) for information.
 - Communicating with the applicant, including requesting more information and about the outcome of the application (an offer of redress).
- ▶ providing free access to Redress Support Services and redress-specific financial counselling support
- ▶ working with institutions to join the Scheme
- ▶ publicly identifying institutions that decline to join the Scheme.

The institutions are responsible for:

- ▶ joining the Scheme
- ▶ providing information to the department about relevant applicants
- ▶ when required, providing redress to people who experienced child sexual abuse while in the care of their institution (counselling, a redress payment and a direct personal response from an institution).

The role of **the applicant** is to:

- ▶ complete and submit an application form
- ▶ provide true and correct information
- ▶ provide extra information when requested from the department
- ▶ accept, decline or ask for a review of an offer of redress.

Performance Measure

2.1.7-1 Ensure quality and timely decisions are made on applications to the Scheme.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
2.1.7-1A - The Scheme will notify at least 75% of survivors about an outcome within 6 months of the date that all required information is received.	≥75%	≥75%	≥75%	≥75%
2.1.7-1B - The Scheme will maintain quality decision-making, with at least 95% of initial determinations reflecting the final outcome.	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%

Rationale

Measuring the quality and timely finalisation of National Redress Scheme applications and offers made to survivors aims to demonstrate the department has efficiently processed and managed applications. This is a **proxy measure of efficiency** that demonstrates achievement of a key output of the National Redress Scheme key activity: the department has called or sent the applicant a letter about the outcome of their application. Further, the proportion of initial determinations that reflect the final outcome indicates the quality of decision making – that the details in the application have been fully considered in the determination made, and, where a further review of a decision is requested, the review does not lead to the original decision being overturned in more than a small number of instances.

Targeting at least 75% of applications that name institutions that participate in the Scheme have a decision communicated to the applicant within 6 months of all required information being received by the Scheme demonstrates **proxy efficiency** of the key activity by showing applications are processed within a reasonable timeframe and is reflective of the complexity of the assessment process, available resources to process applications, and institutions that have joined the Scheme.

Methodology

2.1.7-1A - The percentage of applications that progress with at least one named institution participating in the Scheme and are advised of their redress outcome within 6 months of all required information being received, as a proportion of all applicants who are advised of their redress outcome.

2.1.7-1B - The percentage of completed applications where the initial outcome was accepted or where a review was requested and the initial outcome was upheld, as a proportion of all applications completed after the initial outcome was advised.

Performance Measure

2.1.7-2 Maximise institution participation with the Scheme.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
2.1.7-2A - The Scheme will engage and maintain participation, with institutions on-board to cover at least 95% of applications in progress.	≥ 95%	≥ 95%	≥ 95%	≥ 95%

Rationale

Measuring maximising institutional participation with the Scheme aims to demonstrate that the department **effectively** worked with institutions to join the Scheme. This measure demonstrates achievement of a key **output** of the National Redress Scheme key activity: institutions have joined the Scheme and provide redress.

Targeting engagement and maintenance of participation of institutions, with institutions on-board to cover 95% of applications in progress demonstrates achievement of a key output of the key activity, by showing a significant percentage of people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse are supported by the institutions who have joined the Scheme and are providing redress.

Methodology

Percentage of applications on hand where all of the named institution(s) are participating in the Scheme, or an applicant has chosen to progress with only some of the named institution(s) are participating in the Scheme.

Performance Measure

2.1.7-3 Provide survivors a redress payment.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
2.1.7-3A - The Scheme will issue at least 80% of eligible survivors an advance payment within 7 days of receiving acceptance documentation.	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%
2.1.7-3B - The Scheme will issue at least 80% of survivors a redress payment within 14 days of receiving acceptance documentation.	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%

Rationale

Measuring issuing survivors a redress payment within 7 days (advance payments) or 14 days (redress payments) of receiving acceptance documentation aims to demonstrate the department **effectively** administering the Scheme. This measure demonstrates achievement of a key output of the National Redress Scheme key activity: people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling and psychological services, a direct personal response and a monetary payment.

Of the 3 redress outputs (payment, counselling and apology), the payment is the only output delivered by the department. The other 2 are delivered by (mostly) state and territory governments and institutions.

Targeting providing survivors an advance payment or a redress payment demonstrates achievement of a key output of the Scheme.

Advance payments are made to survivors with exceptional circumstances. The shorter timeframe for advance payments reflects the importance placed by the Scheme on making these payments available to survivors.

Methodology

2.1.7-3A - Percentage of survivors who accept an offer of an advance payment and receive the payment within 7 days, as a proportion of all eligible survivors who have received the advance payment.

2.1.7-3B - Percentage of survivors who receive the monetary component of redress within 14 days of the Scheme receiving acceptance of the offer, as a proportion of all applicants with completed redress payments.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source		Data source
Secondary source	Tier 1	Services Australia Enterprise Data Warehouse
Primary source	Tier 1	Department of Social Services administrative data
Primary source	Tier 1	Institutions Customer Relationships Management System (SIEBEL)

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ Number of National Redress Scheme applications received
- ▶ Number of institutions that have joined the National Redress Scheme

Outcome 3: Disability and Carers

Programs and activities

Outcome 3 comprises of 2 programs and a number of activities that contribute to the achievement of the disability and carers outcome. The table below depicts how this purpose is translated into measurable activities.

An in-depth description of each of the activities, performance measures, targets, rationale, methodology and outputs are in the Performance Tables Section on the pages to follow.



PROGRAM 3.1 DISABILITY AND CARERS

To support people with disabilities and carers to actively participate in community and economic life.

Key Activity — 3.1.1 Disability Employment Services

Disability Employment Services (DES) is a key activity of the Disability and Carers Program. DES helps individuals with injury, disability, or a health condition to secure and maintain sustainable open employment. Through DES, eligible participants receive assistance to prepare for, find and keep employment.

Grants are provided to **DES providers** to deliver 2 services:

- ▶ **Disability Management Service** for job seekers with disability, injury or health condition who need assistance to find employment and occasional support in the workplace to keep a job.
- ▶ **Employment Support Service** for job seekers with permanent disability who need assistance to find employment and who are expected to need regular, ongoing support in the workplace to keep a job.

DES providers are a mix of large, medium, and small for-profit and not-for-profit organisations that are experienced in supporting people with disability, as well as providing assistance to employers to put in place practices that support the employee in the workplace.

When a person with disability has been placed in a job, their DES provider will support them and their employer for up to 52 weeks to ensure the placement is successful. Support is available beyond 52 weeks, where needed.

DES can help employers by providing advice and support to employ a person with disability, finding a suitable employee and offering a wage subsidy while the employer tests the person's suitability. DES providers can also help employers access funding for workplace adjustments or information through JobAccess. JobAccess is an Australian Government funded program delivered by industry professionals to provide free and expert support to help remove barriers to employing people with disability.

The current DES program continues to strengthen its focus on improving quality. A new performance framework came into effect from 1 July 2024 and will continue to support the focus on quality services for participants with the new performance scorecards supporting participant choice.

The government has committed to implementing a new specialist disability employment service from 1 July 2025 that will replace the existing Disability Employment Services (DES) program. Providers for the new program will be sourced through an open tender process. Implementation includes moving to a new digital platform with a focus on delivery of essential features for program commencement on 1 July 2025.

The Disability Employment Centre of Excellence will be a partner for the new disability employment program. It will commence from March 2025 and will provide resources, tools, and training to help providers deliver quality employment services and supports to both participants with disability and employers.

The **department's** role is to:

- ▶ manage the current grants for DES
- ▶ conduct the assurance and compliance program
- ▶ manage service providers against the DES performance framework
- ▶ manage the JobAccess website and telephone service
- ▶ implement the new specialist disability employment program and Disability Employment Centre of Excellence.

Performance Measure

3.1.1-1 - Extent to which people with disability are supported to find and maintain employment through Disability Employment Services.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 3.1.1-1A - At least 40% of job placements sustained to 13 weeks.	≥ 40% to 13 weeks	≥ 40% to 13 weeks	≥ 40% to 13 weeks	≥ 40% to 13 weeks
◆ 3.1.1-1B - At least 30% of job placements sustained to 26 weeks.	≥ 30% to 26 weeks	≥ 30% to 26 weeks	≥ 30% to 26 weeks	≥ 30% to 26 weeks
◆ 3.1.1-1C - At least 20% of job placements sustained to 52 weeks.	≥ 20% to 52 weeks	≥ 20% to 52 weeks	≥ 20% to 52 weeks	≥ 20% to 52 weeks

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which people with disability are supported to find and maintain employment through DES aims to demonstrate the extent to which the DES program has assisted people with disability, injury, or a health condition to secure and maintain sustainable open employment. This measures the effectiveness of the program in achieving the objective of the key activity and in particular measuring the **effectiveness** of the program in supporting sustained employment outcomes.

Targeting at least 40, 30 and 20% of job placements sustained to 13, 26, and 52 weeks respectively demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing the extent to which the disability employment service providers have provided support to individuals with injury, disability, or a health condition to secure and maintain sustainable open employment.

Methodology

The per cent is the proportion of job placements sustained to 13, 26 and 52 weeks.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; background-color: #004a60; color: white; border-radius: 5px;">Secondary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; background-color: #e0f2f1; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Employment Business Intelligence Warehouse

PROGRAM 3.1 DISABILITY AND CARERS

To support people with disability and carers to actively participate in community and economic life.

Key Activity — 3.1.2 Disability and Carer Support

Disability and Carer Support is a key activity of the Disability and Carers Program which aims to provide assistance, support, and services for carers.

The department is responsible for managing activities that provide supports and services to carers under the Integrated Carer Support Service (ICSS) model, publicly branded as Carer Gateway.

Carer Gateway provides a range of tailored supports and services to help carers manage their daily challenges, reduce stress and plan for the future. The supports and services are delivered face-to-face and through digital channels delivered by a national network of local Carer Gateway service providers. Services include providing carers with access to early-intervention, preventative and skill building supports to improve wellbeing and long-term outcomes.

The department is responsible for managing the ICSS which includes:

- ▶ managing grants for the Carer Gateway service providers, Young Carer Bursary and Young Carer Network Service Provider, Tristate Vocational Outcomes Pilot Program
- ▶ managing contracts for the Digital Counselling Service Provider, Online Peer Support Service and Social Media Account Provider, Online Carer Coaching and Skills Service Provider
- ▶ managing Carer Gateway communications and social media content
- ▶ conducting evaluations and performance monitoring.

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (ADS) is the enabler across all levels of governments to create an inclusive and accessible Australia to enable people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal members of their communities.

ADS delivers against 7 Outcome Areas that people with disability told us needed to improve to achieve the vision for ADS; namely: Employment and Financial Security; Inclusive Homes and Communities; Safety, Rights and Justice; Personal and Community Support; Education and Learning; Health and Wellbeing; and Community Attitudes.

Younger People in Residential Aged Care

Residential aged care is generally not an appropriate setting for people under the age of 65 years, noting the aged care system is designed to support the needs of older people.

Younger people in residential aged care (YPIRAC) is a complex issue and requires extensive one-on-one support and regular conversations with individuals, their families/guardians and service providers across the disability, aged care, health and housing sectors at all levels of government.

In collaboration with the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), the **department** oversees cross-agency actions to support the achievement of targets to prevent younger people from entering into and/or residing in residential aged care, except in exceptional circumstances.

Significant effort across the Commonwealth, states and territories governments is in place to support the achievement of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety target of 'no people under the age of 65 living in residential aged care by 2025'.

Performance Measure

3.1.2-1 Extent to which wellbeing of carers who are registered with Carer Gateway local service providers is assessed as improved.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 3.1.2-1A - Percentage (at least 30%) of carers registered with Carer Gateway local service providers assessed as having improved carer wellbeing in the current reporting period.	≥30%	≥30%	≥30%	≥30%
◆ 3.1.2-1B - Percentage (at least 35%) of carers registered with Carer Gateway local service providers assessed as having improved level of carer wellbeing since the program commenced.	≥35%	≥35%	≥35%	≥35%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which wellbeing of carers who are registered with Carer Gateway local service providers is assessed as improved aims to demonstrate the **effectiveness** of support for carers in relation to one of the long-term outcomes of the ICSS: improve carer wellbeing.

Targeting the proportion of carers registered with Carer Gateway who are assessed as having improved wellbeing demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the program activity in improving outcomes for carers. This is an ongoing measure with 2 targets:

- ▶ static target measuring the proportion of carers within the performance reporting period assessed as having improved wellbeing
- ▶ an increasing target in out-years for the proportion of all registered carers since the program commenced assessed as having improved wellbeing. This target recognises that improved carer wellbeing is a longer-term outcome. Reporting on the proportion of all registered carers with increased wellbeing on an annual basis also reflects an expectation of increasing levels of carer wellbeing as the program matures and carer uptake increases.

The 2 targets together will align with annual reporting timeframes by reporting on financial year, while also demonstrating the long-term outcome of carer wellbeing over time.

The targets will continue to be monitored and re-assessed over future years, as more wellbeing outcomes trend evidence becomes available. The target results that are currently set for future years are informed by trends to date.

Methodology

The methodology for each of the targets is:

- ▶ The static target result of the number of carers assessed as having improved wellbeing within the performance reporting period is calculated using Carers Star™ needs-assessments data, where an assessment is reported in the current reporting period. A previous assessment must have occurred in either the same reporting period or a previous period.
- ▶ The increasing target result of carers assessed as having improved wellbeing for all registered carers since the program commenced is calculated using data from Carers Star™ needs-assessments, across all reporting periods from 1 January 2020 to the end of the current reporting period.

Data results are produced using Data Exchange QLIK Sense reporting of client outcomes. QLIK Sense pairs available earliest and latest SCORE data entered in DEX for each client in each reporting period, and produces the percentage of carers who are assessed as having improved wellbeing.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Tertiary source Tier 3	Carers Star™ 'needs assessments' conducted by Carer Gateway service providers and entered into the Department of Social Services Data Exchange.

Supporting Information

- ▶ Number of carers assisted
- ▶ Number of organisations funded to provide supports for carers

Performance Measure

3.1.2-2 Extent to which the evidence base is built for Australia's Disability Strategy.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
3.1.2-2A – Increase measures under ADS 2021–2031 Outcomes Framework with data reported	≥55 measures (2023–2024 baseline)	Increase on previous year	Increase on previous year	Increase on previous year

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which the evidence base is built for ADS aims to improve tracking of what is happening for people with disability over time and build an understanding of the effectiveness of ADS.

Increasing the number of measures under the ADS 2021–2031 Outcomes Framework relies on the department successfully leading efforts to build the evidence base for reporting progress for ADS. Reporting is available for 55 of the 85 measures as of 30 June 2024, and is found at [Australia's Disability Strategy - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/australias-disability-strategy).

Methodology

3.1.2-2A –Determining the total number of measures reported under ADS Outcomes Framework involves counting the outcomes measures that have data available at the end of the relevant financial year. The measure aims to increase transparency through increasing the number of ADS measures that are reported on above the 2023–24 baseline of 55 of the 85 measures.

A Data Improvement Plan is being further developed through 2024 to improve the data needed to track progress against the ADS Outcomes Framework. The focus is on developing and collecting data on those measures (future measures) that are currently not being reported.

Performance Measure

3.1.2-3 - Extent to which the department contributes to attracting, recruiting, and retaining more people with disability in the Australian Public Service.

Target	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
3.1.2-3A - That the department’s workforce includes at least 7% of people identifying with disability	7%	7%	7%	7%

Rationale

Measuring the extent to which the department’s workforce is contributing to the Australian Public Service targets, exemplifies the **effectiveness** of the department’s role in leading by example to increase the employment of people with disability as the steward of ADS. Employment and Financial Security is one of the 7 Outcome Areas under ADS.

ADS states that employment supports people with disability to have more control over their lives, be financially independent and have a better standard of living. Paid employment also leads to better mental and physical health and wellbeing. Rates of employment for people with disability are significantly lower than for those without disability.

Methodology

3.1.3-3A - As a steward of ADS, the department has a role in leading by example and increasing the employment of people with disability. As of 30 June 2024, the department employs 6.3% of people with disability. Noting that 1 in 5 (or around 21%) of people in Australia have a disability, further increases and representation in the workplace is required and achievable (*Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022*).

The percentage of staff within the department who self-identify as a person with disability is tracked through the department’s Essentials HR reporting system. Staff are encouraged and supported to identify but it is important to note this is voluntary and as such the reported percentage may not reflect the actual number of staff with disability in the department.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source		Data source
Secondary source	Tier 2	ADS Outcomes Framework - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Secondary source	Tier 2	National Disability Data Asset
Primary source	Tier 1	DSS SAP Essentials reporting

Performance Measure

3.1.2-4 Progress towards the target relating to younger people in residential aged care (YPIRAC).

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
3.1.2-4A - No people under 65 years living in residential aged care by 2025 apart from in exceptional circumstances.	No people under 65 years living in residential aged care by 2025 apart from in exceptional circumstances.	The target recommended by the Aged Care Royal Commission was for 1 January 2025.	N/A	N/A

Rationale

The performance measure aligns to the key activity long-term outcomes: participants are empowered to live an ordinary life. This includes supporting their independence, and social and economic participation; and participants exercising choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports, including their living arrangements.

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety canvassed YPIRAC as part of both its interim and final reports. Recommendation 74 of the Final Report of the Aged Care Royal Commission sought to ensure that, apart from in exceptional circumstances, there are no people under the age of 65 living in residential aged care from 1 January 2025. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of DSS achieving the objective of the key activity.

The target demonstrates the **effectiveness** of achieving the key activity. It is based on the Government's view that residential aged care is not designed for younger people living with disability nor age-appropriate in most circumstances, and younger people should be supported to have choice in finding more appropriate accommodation and support.

The department respects the decision of people under 65 in residential aged care who have no goal to move.

Methodology

The number of people aged under 65 years living in residential aged care is sourced from Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Gen Aged Care Reports. AIHW reports are considered the authoritative source for publicly available YPIRAC figures and are published on a quarterly basis.

In collaboration with the NDIA and DoHAC, the department oversees activities delivered and coordinated by NDIA and DoHAC to prevent the entry and facilitate the exit of younger people in residential aged care.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Secondary source Tier 1	NDIA's NDIS Quarterly Report to Disability Ministers
Secondary source Tier 1	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Gen Aged Care Reports

Supporting Information

- ▶ Total number of First Nations younger people aged 50 to 64 years living in residential aged care.
- ▶ Total number of exits of people under 65 years from residential aged care by exit reason.

PROGRAM 3.2 NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

To improve the wellbeing and social and economic participation of people with disability, and their families and carers, by building a NDIS that delivers individualised support through an insurance approach. This program also includes the Jobs and Market Fund.

Key Activity — 3.2.1 NDIS Transition

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Transition is a key activity of the NDIS Program which aims to support national implementation of the NDIS in accordance with inter-government agreements. The completion of transition is defined by:

- ▶ The execution of full scheme bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and all states and territories (target = full scheme agreements signed with all states and territories by 30 June 2025).

The department's role is to facilitate transition to the NDIS, including:

- ▶ execute full scheme bilateral agreements with all states and territories
- ▶ administer inter-government agreements about the NDIS, governing state financial contributions to the scheme, including the recognition of in-kind provision of services by states and territories, and commitments to phase these out, and advising on payments from the DisabilityCare Australia Fund
- ▶ monitor the implementation of the NDIS in each state and territory through trilateral governance arrangements with the NDIA and state and territory governments.

Performance Measure

3.2.1-1 DSS works with states and territories and the NDIA to support national implementation of the NDIS in accordance with inter government agreements.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 3.2.1-1A - Full scheme agreements signed with all states and territories by 30 June 2025.	Full scheme agreement signed with all states and territories	N/A	N/A	N/A

Rationale

The execution of full scheme bilateral agreements with all states and territories demonstrates the completion of transition as all states and territories would be contributing to the NDIS under full scheme bilateral agreements, as opposed to transition bilateral agreements. Western Australia is the only state or territory remaining to negotiate full scheme arrangements. Negotiation of full scheme arrangements for WA was due to be completed by 30 June 2024. Due to ongoing negotiations this has been updated to by 30 June 2025. This measure demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the NDIS Transition in achieving the objective of the key activity: for eligible persons to be supported by the NDIS rather than by services provided under arrangements in place prior to the NDIS becoming available across all of Australia.

Methodology

Reporting against this measure will be based on the execution of a full scheme bilateral agreement with the Western Australian government. Once executed, full scheme agreements will be in place with all states and territories.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Primary source Tier 1	Signed full scheme agreements with all jurisdictions

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays (NDIS; NDIS Transition; NDIS Participant Plans; Information, Linkages and Capacity Building; Establishment of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission; Boosting the Local Care Workforce; Payments to Corporate Entity – National Disability Insurance Agency costs)

PROGRAM 3.2 NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

To improve the wellbeing and social and economic participation of people with disability, and their families and carers, by building a NDIS that delivers individualised support through an insurance approach. This program also includes the Jobs and Market Fund.

Key Activity — 3.2.2 Sector Development Fund and Jobs and Market Fund

Oversight of the NDIS Market is a shared responsibility of Commonwealth (the department, the NDIA and NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission), state and territory governments.

The department's role: enabling the ongoing functioning of the NDIS

The department's role is primarily *enabling*. The department has ongoing responsibility for activities that enable the continued functioning of the NDIS, including:

- ▶ monitoring Scheme costs projections and the impact of policies on Scheme cost growth targets providing advice to government, to be implemented by the NDIA and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, on ways to build a more responsive, supportive and sustainable market and workforce for provision of supports to NDIS participants.

The department works closely with a range of agencies and entities each playing their part in the NDIS, including the:

- ▶ NDIA
- ▶ states and territories
- ▶ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

The role of these in the NDIS is summarised briefly below.

The role of other agencies and entities in the NDIS

The NDIA is responsible for:

- ▶ providing support and education to current and potential providers to ensure supply in the NDIS Market
- ▶ monitoring local market trends and risks in demand and supply (including provider issues and barriers) and escalate identified trends and issues to the department, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and states and territories when a policy or regulatory response is required.

The states and territories' role in governing and implementing the NDIS includes:

- ▶ Ensuring state funded and/or regulated services make reasonable adjustments to support people with disability whether they are NDIS participants or not.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission's role includes:

- ▶ market engagement and oversight, by intervening in the market to drive quality and ensure safeguarding to achieve thriving, diverse markets.

Performance Measure

3.2.2 The extent to which the department is advising on and/or delivering market initiatives that influence the development of the market and workforce for NDIS participants.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 3.2.2-1A Number of market initiatives advised on and/or delivered by the department to develop the market and workforce.	8	TBD	TBD	TBD

Rationale

The department has a role in providing advice to government on ways to build a more responsive, supportive and sustainable market and workforce for provision of support to NDIS participants. Measuring effectiveness or impact can be challenging to connect policy development and advice to tangible impacts, especially on an open market environment, therefore the department is using a measure to assess effectiveness, advising on and/or delivering market initiatives, as this will show the department's role in building a more supportive and sustainable market and workforce for provision of support to NDIS participants.

Methodology

The department will report an output measure on the count of market intervention and workforce development projects and initiatives advised on and/or delivered by the department in 2024-25.

The department will advise on and/or deliver in collaboration and/or consultation with care and support economy stakeholders where necessary. This will be through a range of channels and forms dependent on who is being advised, including the Australian Government, other government entities, state and territory jurisdictions.

Market initiatives to be advised on and /or delivered in collaboration with other government agencies:

- ▶ Pricing and Payments Framework development
- ▶ Blended Payments trials
- ▶ Integrated Care and Commissioning trials
- ▶ Alternative Commissioning pilots
- ▶ Market Stewardship Framework development
- ▶ HumanAbility Workforce Plan development

Market initiatives to be delivered by the department but developed in consultation with other government agencies:

- ▶ Market Monitoring and Workforce Insights development
- ▶ Care Sector Demand Map development

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #004a60; color: white; padding: 5px 10px; border-radius: 5px;">Primary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #004a60; padding: 5px 10px; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	The department's Electronic Documents and Records Management System, ARC.

PROGRAM 3.2 NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

To improve the wellbeing and social and economic participation of people with disability, and their families and carers, by building a NDIS that delivers individualised support through an insurance approach. This program also includes the Jobs and Market Fund.

Key Activity — 3.2.3 NDIS Participant Plans

The NDIS supports the independence and social and economic participation of people with disability.

The NDIS provides funding directly to people with disability, moving away from the previous system of providing block funding to agencies and community organisations.

The NDIS gives participants choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports, ensuring the provision of reasonable and necessary supports, including early intervention supports where this can reduce the impact of disability for eligible people including children.

The NDIS is co-governed by Commonwealth and state and territory disability ministers via the Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC) and administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

Oversight of the NDIS Market is a shared responsibility of Commonwealth (the department, the NDIA and NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission), state and territory governments.

The department's role: enabling the ongoing functioning of the NDIS

The department has policy responsibility for the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* (Cth) (NDIS Act) and subordinate legislation (rules made under the Act) (NDIS Rules), which underpin the governance and operations of the NDIA's role in the NDIS.

The department's role is primarily *enabling*. The department has ongoing responsibility for activities that enable the continued functioning of the NDIS, including:

- ▶ providing advice to government on the design, operation and performance of the NDIS including leading the development of legislative reform
- ▶ liaising with states and territories and other Commonwealth agencies regarding the interface between the NDIS and other services systems (such as housing, health, mental health, education, transport, justice and child protection) and future provision of additional disability supports outside the NDIS
- ▶ administering Australian Government payments to the NDIA
- ▶ supporting meetings of Australian, state and territory disability ministers at the Ministerial Council under the NDIS Act.

Following the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) and the Independent Review of the NDIS – *Working together to deliver the NDIS Review* (the NDIS Review), there are significant reforms underway. In addition to the above, the department's current focus includes:

- ▶ supporting the government in its response to the independent NDIS Review
- ▶ implementing legislative changes to the NDIS to improve the experience of participants and restore the original intent of the Scheme to support people with permanent and significant disability, within a broader ecosystem of supports

- ▶ input to the First Secretaries Group which is overseeing work to design additional Foundational Supports as part of the broader service ecosystem for people with disability. Foundational Supports are to be jointly funded and commissioned by Australian, state and territory governments
- ▶ settling in-kind disability support arrangements with the states and territories.

The department works closely with a range of agencies and entities each playing their part in the NDIS, including the:

- ▶ NDIA
- ▶ states and territories
- ▶ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

The role of these in the NDIS is summarised briefly below.

The role of other agencies and entities in the NDIS

The NDIA is responsible for:

- ▶ delivery of the NDIS program
- ▶ managing the financial sustainability of the NDIS, and advising and reporting on this to the DRMC
- ▶ developing and enhancing the disability sector including by facilitating innovation, research, and contemporary best practice in the sector
- ▶ collecting, analysing, and exchanging data about disabilities and the supports (including early intervention supports) for people with disability through the NDIS
- ▶ undertaking research relating to disability, the supports for people with disability, and the social contributors to disability.

The states and territories' role in governing and implementing the NDIS includes:

- ▶ contributing to the development of and agreeing NDIS Rules, which underpin the governance and operations of the NDIS
- ▶ delivering in-kind supports to NDIS participants, and phasing these out in agreed timeframes
- ▶ providing financial contributions to the NDIS
- ▶ monitoring and contributing to the outcomes and financial sustainability of the NDIS
- ▶ providing continuing support for people not eligible for NDIS via continuity of support arrangements
- ▶ providing accommodation support, community support, community access, and respite for people with disability and their carers.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission's role includes:

- ▶ responding to concerns, complaints and reportable incidents, including abuse and neglect of NDIS participants
- ▶ promoting the NDIS principles of choice and control, and working to empower participants to exercise their right to access quality services as informed, protected consumers
- ▶ registration and regulation of NDIS providers, and oversight of the new NDIS Code of Conduct and NDIS Practice Standards
- ▶ monitoring the use of restrictive practices within the NDIS with the aim of reducing and eliminating such practices

- ▶ working in collaboration with states and territories to design and implement nationally consistent NDIS worker screening
- ▶ education, capacity building and development for people with disability, NDIS providers and workers

Performance Measure

3.2.3-1 National Disability Insurance Scheme cost growth is sustainable.

Target	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
<p>◆ 3.2.3-1A Annual growth target in the total costs of the Scheme of no more than 8% by 1 July 2026, with further moderation of growth as the Scheme matures*</p> <p>* Reporting for this target will commence from 2026–27.</p>	<p>Projected scheme costs for 2026–27 and each subsequent year, as reported in the 2024–25 Portfolio Budget Statements, are no more than 8% higher than the year prior.</p>	<p>Projected scheme costs for 2026–27 and each subsequent year, as reported in the 2025–26 Portfolio Budget Statements, are no more than 8% higher than the year prior.</p>	8%	8%

Rationale

The government and National Cabinet have committed to an annual growth target in the total costs of the Scheme of no more than 8% by 1 July 2026. Ensuring Scheme cost growth of no more than 8% per annum would secure the future of the NDIS, ensuring it can continue to provide life-changing support to future generations of Australians with disability.

The 8% target represents effective actions undertaken (following the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review recommendations) to see a decline in the Scheme’s annual growth and greater sustainability into the future.

Methodology

In 2024–25 and 2025–26 the department will report against projected scheme costs for 2026–27 and subsequent years as reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements. Tracking projected scheme costs for 2026–27 and subsequent years across the years will show if the 8% target is still expected to be met.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<p>Primary source Tier 1</p>	<p>Projected scheme costs for 2026–27 as obtained from the department’s Portfolio Budget Statements.</p>

Target	2024-25	2025-26
◆ 3.2.3-2A Legislative amendments developed for government	Criterion is met if 3 of the 3 progress milestones are delivered.	Criterion is met if 3 of the 3 progress milestones are delivered.

Rationale

This performance measure has been chosen to reflect the department's progress implementing legislative reform in response to the NDIS Review and the Disability Royal Commission.

The NDIS Review recommended a range of changes to NDIS access and budget-setting that require significant legislative amendments. The NDIS Review reforms will support the government in achieving the annual growth target agreed by National Cabinet on 28 April 2023. The annual growth target aims to limit annual growth in total costs of the Scheme to no more than 8% by 1 July 2026 and continue to moderate as the Scheme matures.

On 6 December 2023, the National Cabinet agreed to introduce legislation and other changes to the NDIS in the first half of 2024 to improve the experience of participants and restore the original intent of the Scheme to support people with permanent and significant disability. This agreement supports the long-term effectiveness of measure 3.2.3-1 to deliver on the annual growth target. This will be supported by further tranches of legislative amendments introduced in the second half of 2024 and in 2025.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Bill 2024 (Bill No.1) was introduced on 27 March 2024, passed the House of Representatives on 5 June 2024 and is still before the Senate. The Bill establishes a legislative framework for a range of reforms to access and budget setting, including a flexible budget based on consistent, transparent and holistic needs assessment. The Financial Impact Statement in the Explanatory Memorandum for the Bill confirms the Bill is expected to contribute to decisions made by National Cabinet to moderate cost growth of the NDIS in the medium to long-term and assist meeting the 8% sustainability target by 1 July 2026.

The detail of changes will be set out in new and updated NDIS Rules and legislative instruments, which sit under the NDIS Act. The NDIS Rules are being developed progressively, and in consultation with people with disability, their families and carers, disability sector and states and territories as key stakeholders in the co-governance of the Scheme. The department has undertaken a range of consultation processes to seek feedback from the disability community since the NDIS Review was finalised and following the introduction of Bill No.1. The NDIA, Disability Representative and Carer Organisations and the NDIS Independent Advisory Council have also been undertaking co-design.

Budget Savings anticipated by 2024–25 legislative reforms:

NDIS legislative reforms are projected to moderate the growth in NDIS expenses by \$14.4 billion in payment terms over four years from 2024–25, once the 8% annual growth target is accounted for. The NDIS will continue to remain a demand driven and needs based Scheme.

Methodology

3.2.3-2A

Milestones:

- 1. Develop policy advice and drafting instructions to support the Office of Parliamentary Counsel prepare a parliamentary bill.
- 2. Engagement with stakeholders (state and territory jurisdictions on legislation).
- 3. Develop supplementary materials to accompany the bill for introduction.

Criterion is met if all 3 of the 3 progress milestones are delivered.

Result	Criteria for success
Met	3 of the 3 milestones have been achieved within the reporting year. Evidenced by the department’s acceptance of milestones.
Partially Met	2 of the 3 milestones have been achieved within the reporting year. Evidenced by the department’s acceptance of milestones.
Not met	Fewer than 2 of the 3 milestones have been achieved within the reporting year. Evidenced by the department’s acceptance of milestones.

Data Categorisation

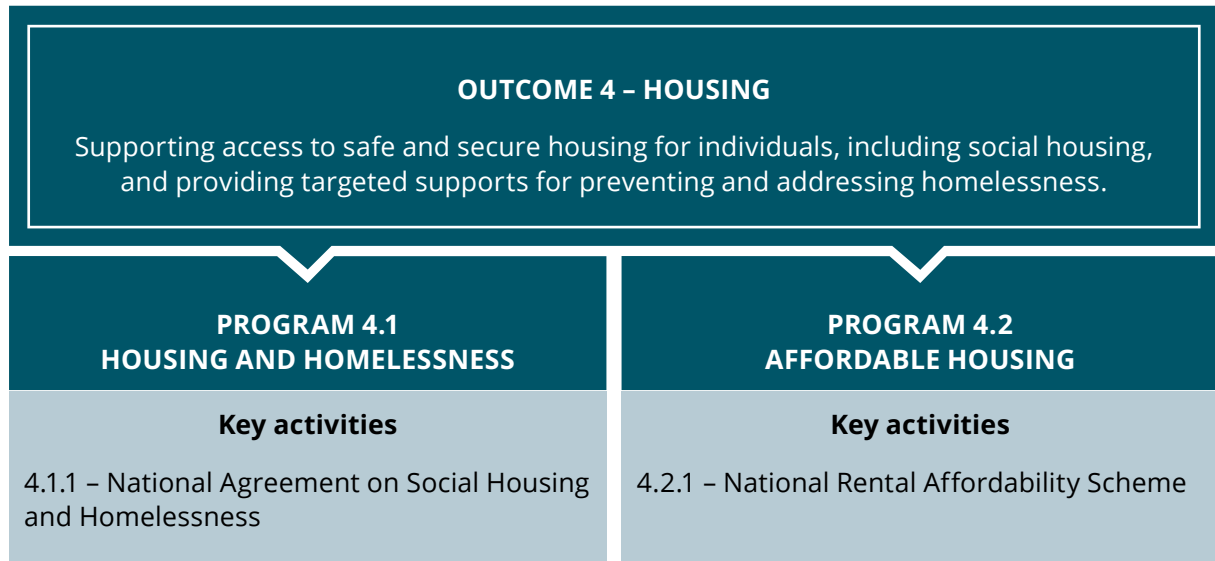
Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; background-color: #004a60; color: white; border-radius: 5px;">Primary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	Actual expenditure figures from the Central Budget Management System (CBMS).

Outcome 4: Housing

Programs and activities

Outcome 4 comprises 2 programs and a number of activities that contribute to the achievement of the housing outcome. The table below depicts how this purpose is translated into measurable activities.

An in-depth description of each of the activities, performance measures, targets, rationale, methodology and outputs are in the Performance Tables Section on the pages to follow.



PROGRAM 4.1 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Contribute to and provide support for social housing and homelessness prevention initiatives, including the design and implementation of innovative early stage projects.

Key Activity — 4.1.1 National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness

The National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness (NASHH) with state and territory governments (states) was signed on 31 May 2024. The annual funding under the new 5-year agreement is around \$1.8 billion a year from 2024–25. This includes doubling the Commonwealth homelessness funding component to \$400 million a year. The states are required to match their share of the homelessness funding. The NASHH is outcomes-focused, with an agreed monitoring and reporting framework. The objective is to help people who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness and support the effective operation of Australia's social housing and homelessness services sectors.

The NASHH requires states to have a publicly available housing and homelessness strategy, report annually against the compulsory measures in the National Outcomes Framework and the Statement of Assurance, and provide and improve data on social housing and homelessness. Bilateral schedules to the NASHH also provide the opportunity for states to account for their specific needs and circumstances, including nominating other measures for annual reporting.

The parties to the NASHH recognise the need to address the disproportionate housing inequality that affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The NASHH supports the Priority Reforms committed to in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and includes engagement that will ensure there is appropriate representation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in decision making.

The Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council oversees the NASHH, and has an important role in improving collaboration, coordination, innovation and outcomes across the whole housing and homelessness system. The department provides the secretariat for the Council.

Parties to the NASHH must also supply data and support data improvement, and share data for the purpose of monitoring and analysis. Reporting under the NASHH includes specific reporting on outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, an outcomes framework for monitoring and reporting progress against the objective and greater transparency about government expenditure on social housing and homelessness services. The department assists in determining the payments to the states, and ensuring that states report timely and complete data against the Outcomes Framework and Statement of Assurance.

Performance Measure

4.1.1-1 All parties to the NASHH meet its requirements.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 4.1.1-1A – a publicly available housing and homelessness strategy that meets the requirements outlined in the NASHH from each state	All states have strategies that meet the criteria in the NASHH and include this information in their bilateral schedule	All states have strategies that meet the criteria in the NASHH and include this information in their bilateral schedule	All states have strategies that meet the criteria in the NASHH and include this information in their bilateral schedule	All states have strategies that meet the criteria in the NASHH and include this information in their bilateral schedule
◆ 4.1.1-1B – complete and timely reporting by the states against the compulsory measures in the National Outcomes Framework on social housing measures, including number and change in social housing dwellings, overcrowding and dwelling condition	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures
◆ 4.1.1-1C – complete and timely reporting by the states against the compulsory measures in the National Outcomes Framework on homelessness, including unmet demand and supported requests for homelessness services, and return to homelessness	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures
◆ 4.1.1-1D – complete and timely reporting by the states against the Statement of Assurance	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures	All states report against all compulsory and other nominated measures

Rationale

Reporting on whether parties have met the terms and conditions of the NASHH will demonstrate that the department has effectively:

- ▶ ensured that states, consistent with the agreement between governments, have a publicly available housing and homelessness strategy, reported against the National Outcomes Framework and submitted annual Statements of Assurance in accordance with the NASHH
- ▶ engaged with states by supporting the Ministerial Council
- ▶ progressed data improvement activities and
- ▶ calculated payment allocation.

However, responsibility for meeting the requirements under the NASHH ultimately rests with state governments.

Methodology

Reporting will be based on qualitative assessment of whether parties to the NASHH have met their requirements under the NASHH to:

- ▶ annually report against the National Outcomes Framework and submit Statements of Assurance.
- ▶ publish a housing and homelessness strategy that meets the requirements outlined in the NASHH
- ▶ contribute to the ongoing collection and transparent reporting of agreed data.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Secondary source Tier 1	Productivity Commission's annual Report on Government Services
Secondary source Tier 1	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Specialist Homelessness Services database
Secondary source Tier 2	NASHH Statements of Assurance, submitted to the Commonwealth
Secondary source Tier 1	Relevant state and territory government departmental websites where housing and homelessness strategies are published

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays
- ▶ The department will link to publicly available data on the compulsory measures under the NASHH National Outcomes Framework – this data will be available after December of each year for the prior financial year:
 - After December 2025 for FY 2024–25
 - After December 2026 for FY 2025–26
 - After December 2027 for FY 2026–27
 - After December 2028 for FY 2027–28

PROGRAM 4.2 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

To improve the supply of affordable rental housing to low and moderate income households.

Key Activity — 4.2.1 National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)

The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS, the Scheme) has been a key activity of the Affordable Housing program since its commencement in 2008. The Scheme provides an annual retrospective financial incentive for approved participants who rent dwellings to eligible people on low to moderate incomes at a rate at least 20% below market rent.

As announced in the 2014–15 Budget, there will be no further funding rounds or new allocations of NRAS incentives beyond those allocated in the Scheme and held by approved participants. The scheme will conclude in June 2026, at the completion of the 10-year incentive period for the final allocations.

Under NRAS, the Australian Government in conjunction with the states and territories is providing financial incentives to:

- ▶ increase the supply of affordable rental housing
- ▶ reduce the rental costs for low to moderate income households
- ▶ encourage the large-scale investment and innovative delivery of affordable rental housing.

Performance Measure

4.2.1-1 Incentives are issued in a timely manner to approved participants.

Target	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
◆ 4.2.1-1A - At least 90% of statements of compliance are processed within 60 business days.	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%

Rationale

The performance measure aligns to 2 outputs of the National Rental Affordability Scheme key activity:

- ▶ statements of compliance processed and financial incentives calculated and communicated
- ▶ incentives are issued to approved participants.

The department will effectively demonstrate this by:

- ▶ administering the NRAS legislative framework
- ▶ processing statements of compliance for rental dwellings and calculating and communicating financial incentives
- ▶ making decisions on the transfer of NRAS dwellings between approved participants or to another rental dwelling; and
- ▶ publishing and maintaining guidelines for NRAS stakeholders.

Targeting 90% of statements of compliance are processed within 60 business days demonstrates the **efficient** achievement of a key output by showing that the department, in its role as the administrator of the Scheme, provided timely incentives for approved participants who rent dwellings to eligible tenants at a rate at least 20% below market rent.

Methodology

The per cent of statements of compliance processed within 60 business days is based on the date:

- ▶ an approved participant notifies the department they have submitted a finalised statement of compliance
- ▶ funds are released or the refundable tax offset certificate is issued for the relevant statement of compliance.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #004a60; color: white; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Primary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #004a60; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	Department of Social Services' Grants Payments System
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #004a60; color: white; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Tertiary source</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #004a60; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Tier 1</div> </div>	Date of notification email from the approved participant

Performance Measure

4.2.1-2 Incentives delivered through the National Rental Affordability Scheme are maximised to improve the supply of affordable rental housing to low and moderate income households.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
◆ 4.2.1-2A - At least 90% of allocations set under the National Rental Affordability Scheme are active and receiving incentive payments.	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%

Rationale

Achievement of the key outcome of the Scheme, within the legislative allocation cap set by Parliament, will be demonstrated by:

- ▶ at least 90% of allocations (NRAS dwellings) that remain in the Scheme being active (i.e. being rented or in the process of); and
- ▶ approved participants receiving incentive payments in respect of those allocations.

Measuring the allocations that received an incentive payment within the framework of the Scheme aims to demonstrate the department is improving the supply of affordable rental housing to low and moderate income households. While the department does not control whether an approved participant of the Scheme will act in accordance with the regulations to receive an incentive payment, the department seeks to maximise the proportion of active allocations and payments issued to maximise the supply of affordable rental housing to low and moderate income households.

Methodology

The active, provisional and total allocations under the Scheme are reported quarterly, while incentives are paid on a yearly basis. For the purposes of this measure, the maximum number of allocations in the year is used.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Primary source Tier 1	Department of Social Services' Grants Payments System

Supporting Information

- ▶ Administered outlays

Cross Outcome-Program Support

Key Activity — Advice and Support to Ministers

Advice and support to Ministers is a key activity of Program Support for Outcomes 1 – 4 and aims to support programs across all outcomes to ensure that Ministers and Assistant Ministers are provided with timely advice and support from the department.

Performance Measure

CO-1 Timeliness of advice and support provided to Portfolio Ministers and Assistant Ministers by the department across the 4 outcomes.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
CO-1A At least 95% of ministerial briefs and correspondence across the 4 outcomes are provided on time.	≥ 95%	≥ 95%	≥ 95%	≥ 95%

Rationale

Measuring timeliness of advice and support provided to Portfolio Ministers and Assistant Ministers aims to demonstrate timely advice and support in order to allow Ministers and Assistant Ministers to make decisions that support the department to achieve its objectives. This measure demonstrates the efficiency of the Program Support in achieving the key activity: Timely advice and support to Ministers and Assistant Ministers.

Methodology

A report generated within the record keeping system, filtering records not relevant to the evaluation of the performance measure. The number of records provided on time is represented as the percentage of records provided to the relevant Ministers' Office on or before the associated due date.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Primary source Tier 1	The Department of Social Services' Parliamentary Document Management System (PDMS)

Cross Outcome – Grants Administration

Key Activity — Community Grants Hub

Improving the customer experience is a key activity of the Community Grants Hub. Through the application of person-centred design principles, the Community Grants Hub places the needs of people and families at the centre of grants administration.

The Community Grants Hub is responsible for delivering a positive grant experience through the entire life of a grant, from the initial application process to the ongoing management of the grant agreement through the department’s geographically dispersed network of Funding Arrangement Managers.

Performance Measure

CO-2 Proportion of grant applicants and recipients satisfied with their Hub grant experience.

Target	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
CO-2A Grant applicant and recipient experience is 70% positive or above.	≥ 70%	≥ 70%	≥ 70%	≥ 70%

Rationale

The Community Grants Hub was established to streamline and standardise grants administration by mandating grants delivery through centralised grants hubs. A benefit of this program is to deliver an improved user experience with grant administration. By understanding and measuring the experience of grant applicants and grantees, the Hub can target investment towards reducing barriers and costs for the community sector in accessing and managing Commonwealth grants.

The target of 70% demonstrates the **effectiveness** of the key activity by showing that the majority of stakeholders who interact with the Hub have a positive experience reflecting the benefits of providing a consistent granting experience.

Methodology

The Community Grants Hub customer satisfaction survey seeks to identify grant users’ experiences of the Hub across the various Hub interaction purposes (applicants / recipients) and channels (Helpdesk / point-of-service interactions / engagement with Funding Arrangement Managers), and the different attributes of user satisfaction.

Customer experience is measured through periodic sample surveys of grant applicants (successful and unsuccessful) and grant recipients – disaggregated across the different Hub interaction channels and phases of the grant process.

Data Categorisation

Categorisation of data source	Data source
Tertiary source Tier 2	Department of Social Services survey of grant stakeholders

