



Australian Government



Disability Employment Services Provider User Guide

Disclaimer

This document is a summary and not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of Disability Employment Services Providers' obligations. It should be read in conjunction with the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement and any relevant guidelines or reference material issued by the Department of Social Services under or in connection with the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement. If there is any conflict or inconsistency with advice in this document and the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement, the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement has precedence.

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Document Change History

Version	Issue Date	Effective Date	End Date	Change & Location
1.0	April 2018	1 July 2018		Original version of document
1.1	March 2020	9 March 2020		Change Newstart Allowance to some types of income support Change Department of Human Services to Services Australia

Overview of Disability Employment Services (DES)

Disability Employment Services (DES) provide a suite of employment services to people with disability, injury or health condition who are looking for ongoing employment in the open labour market. The services provided include: assistance with job search; resumé preparation; support for education and training, as well as wage subsidies and employer engagement. These supports should be tailored to each individual and are aimed at helping them into long-term, sustainable work. Participating in DES also satisfies mutual obligation requirements for people on some types of income support who are required to actively look for work in order to receive their payments.

DES also assists in boosting the productive capacity of the workforce, addressing skills shortages and better meeting the needs of employers. Emphasis is placed on building local linkages with employers and enhancing employer engagement to meet employer needs and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for participants.

Services are demand driven – that is, every eligible job seeker with disability will have access to employment services.

Servicing and funding are dependent on the program type and on the level of disadvantage of the job seeker.

There are two separate programs within DES:

- **DES-Disability Management Service (DMS)** - provides services to eligible job seekers with disability, injury or health condition who need assistance to find a job and occasional support in the workplace to keep a job.
- **DES-Employment Support Service (ESS)** - provides assistance to eligible job seekers with permanent disability to find a job and who need regular, ongoing support in the workplace to keep a job.

How is DES program eligibility determined?

The employment program in which an eligible job seeker will receive assistance in is generally determined by the nature of the job seeker's disability and the need for and intensity of ongoing support (if required), as assessed through an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt) or Job Capacity Assessment (JCA).

An ESAt provides a comprehensive work capacity assessment for people with disability and/or other potentially serious barriers to work.

ESAts recommend the most appropriate employment service assistance and support interventions based on an assessment of the job seeker's barriers to finding and maintaining employment, and work capacity in hour bandwidths.

JCAs provide a similar level of assessment for employment programs, but are primarily used to inform decisions about access to the Disability Support Pension (DSP).

The assessment is conducted by a Services Australia assessor and is used to determine a job seeker's eligibility for DES. Job seekers are referred to either DES or jobactive, or to a different Australian Government program where appropriate, based on the nature of their disability, injury or health condition and the assessed need for ongoing support in the workplace.

For more information on ESAts go to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website
For information on JCAs see [Services Australia website](#)

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Eligibility, Referral and Commencement Guidelines
- DES Job Seeker Classification Instrument Guidelines

Eligible School Leavers (ESL) Eligibility

ESL eligibility arrangements recognise that secondary students with significant disability are likely to have already undergone assessment and will have documentation to support their eligibility for state or territory educational disability funding, and that this information can be used to support eligibility for DES. ESLs who directly register with a DES-ESS provider are assigned an eight hour employment benchmark. The participant's funding level is determined by the Department's IT Systems using the 2018 funding level tool.

In accordance with the DES Grant Agreement, an ESL participant means a job seeker who directly registers with a DES provider and who is seeking to transition from:

- secondary school to post-school open employment, or
- School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES) or an eligible state/territory government disability post-school employment or transition to work program

and the DES provider has evidence that the job seeker:

- attracts additional educational funding due to their disability in the year they were commenced; or
- is in a disability special school or disability special class in a mainstream school; or
- is receiving the Disability Support Pension (DSP).

A job seeker must also meet all other requirements set out in any DES guidelines and the DES Grant Agreement.

To be eligible to commence in DES as an ESL, a student must be:

- a current full-time student in their final year of secondary school or earlier if undertaking an Australian School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship
- in their final six months of participating in an eligible state/territory government post-school employment or transition to work program for people with disability, or
- within 20 business days of having exited an eligible post-school employment or transition to work program for people with disability.

In addition, the ESL must:

- be of legal working age
- be assessed by the Provider as having capacity to work for a minimum of eight hours a week within two years of commencing in DES with the assistance of a provider
- not currently be employed for eight hours or more per week, and
- meet all other eligibility requirements for DES.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Eligible School Leaver Guidelines

Work Assist Eligibility

Work Assist Services provide support to workers at risk of losing their employment due to the impact of their injury, disability or health condition. Potential Work Assist participants may directly register with a provider. Eligible workers are not required to have an ESAt or JCA. They must have been employed for at least eight hours per week, on average, for 13 consecutive weeks prior to registering with the DES provider, or there is an expectation that at the time of registration, their current employment will continue for at least 13 weeks. The provider must keep documentary evidence of the participant's eligibility for Work Assist.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Work Assist Guidelines

Special Class Client Eligibility

Special eligibility provisions may be made for job seekers who have acquired a disability, injury or illness as a result of being present at, and directly affected by, extreme events such as natural disasters and acts of terrorism. Job seekers may be Special Class Clients (SCCs) as a result of the Bali bombings, the December 2004 Tsunami, the London bombings, or other incidents that may be defined by the Australian Government from time to time. Job seekers may directly register with a DES-DMS provider as a SSC. They are not required to undertake an ESAt or JCA or be in receipt of a qualifying Income Support Payment from Centrelink. The provider must keep documentary evidence of the participant's SCC eligibility.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Disability Management Service Special Class Clients Guidelines

Disability Management Service Participants Not Receiving Income Support (Non-beneficiary) Eligibility

Normally non-beneficiary job seekers who are not in receipt of Income Support Payments would not be eligible for DES Services. However, under the *Disability Services Act 1986* certain individuals may have access to DES-DMS if they meet all the general DES-DMS eligibility and must be one of the following:

- eligible for assistance under a Structural Adjustment Programme
- under 21 years of age
- receiving Work Assist
- considered a Special Class Client (SSC)
- considered an Eligible School Leaver (ESL), or
- assessed as having a low income.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Disability Employment Service Participants Not Receiving Income Support Guidelines

Pre-release Prisoners (PRP) Eligibility

The PRP policy in DES aims to maximise employment opportunities for people leaving prison, and reduce their reliance on welfare by improving their job search skills and building connections with employers at the earliest opportunity. The PRP initiative is available to adult prisoners, as well as prisoners and detainees aged 15 to 21 years not in full-time education and training who are registered with Human Services as

looking for work. PRPs must be directly registered by a DES provider following referral by a state or territory corrective services agency. Eligibility for DES is determined via an ESAt. The ESAt referral must be made with the involvement and approval of the relevant corrective services agency. A PRP must meet all of the following criteria to commence in DES:

- be in the last 12 months of their sentence
- be considered by corrective services case manager to be granted a licence for release to engage in paid work, and
- be considered work ready.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Providing Services to Pre-release Prisoners Guidelines

How do Participants Connect to DES?

In most cases, job seekers will connect with a DES provider (provider) following an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt) or a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA).

Job seekers will have an employment benchmark of eight, 15, 23 or 30 hours per week. The employment benchmark is generally based on a job seeker's capacity for work within two years with intervention assistance, as assessed through an ESAt or JCA. This may also be known as a job seeker's future work capacity.

While most job seekers are referred to DES by Centrelink, job seekers may also register directly with a DES provider. Direct registration enables providers to work with other disability and employment services such as health facilities, training providers and schools to directly engage with people with disability (who choose to participate in DES) without needing a referral from Centrelink. In most cases, the provider needs to refer a directly registered job seeker for an ESAt to determine their eligibility for DES.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Direct Registration Guidelines

Job Seeker choice

All eligible job seekers are able to choose their provider. To inform this choice, job seekers will be encouraged to find out more information about employment service providers from the JobAccess or JobSearch websites, just prior to their ESAt or JCA.

Job seekers are able to access *Connections for Quality* on the JobAccess or JobSearch webpages. *Connections for Quality* provides detailed information about employment services including the range and relevance of services they offer at each of their sites. Job seekers are also able to review and rate their experience on an employment service provider. [Note: DES providers can update the information on the *Connections for Quality* site, via ESSWeb.]

A job seeker who nominates a preferred provider (including specialist service providers if the job seeker is within the speciality group) will be referred to that provider as long as that provider has not already achieved its maximum caseload and has diary appointments open. Where the provider has already achieved their nominated maximum caseload and does not have appointments open, the job seeker will be requested to nominate another provider. A provider can increase their nominated maximum caseload at any time but cannot reduce its caseload without approval from the Account Manager.

For participants who choose not to nominate a provider, the Department's IT Systems will automatically allocate the job seeker to an appropriate provider with available appointments, close to where they live.

Referral of Job seekers to Specialist Service Providers

A provider contracted as a specialist service provider assists a defined group of job seekers (for example, job seekers with vision impairment or Indigenous). Specialist service providers are only able to deliver services to participants from that specialist client group (including those who directly register with the specialist service provider).

Changing Providers during Period of Service

Participants are entitled to a period of service of 18 months, or up to two years subject to their program review, which can be delivered by one or by several different DES providers.

Participants are able to choose their own provider, including the ability to change provider up to five times within the period of service.

In addition to the five transfers, a DES participant may change providers, if the participant:

- changes residential address and can no longer access one of their provider's sites (i.e. because their new location is not within a reasonable distance of one of their provider's sites)
- is able to demonstrate to the Department that they cannot maintain a reasonable and constructive service relationship with their provider
- requests to change providers and both the providers agree to the change
- can demonstrate to DSS that another provider would enhance their employment prospects, or
- requires a change of provider as a result of an Ongoing Support Assessment (OSA) or ESAt recommendation.

Funding is associated with individual participants, and follows the participant when they transfer to a new provider. For service fees, which are paid in advance for a three month period, the proportion of the latest service fee that relates to the remaining part of the current service period will be recovered from the participant's current provider and paid to the new provider. Outcome fees are payable to the provider that is servicing the participant at the time they fall due.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Transfers Guidelines

How does the Program work?

Providers consider the information provided by the ESAt or JCA and can also make their own assessment of the impact that a job seeker's injury, disability or health condition is having on their ability to find and retain a job.

Providers work with participants to develop an individually tailored job plan. The job plan identifies the mix of vocational and non-vocational activities that providers will purchase or deliver, and participants will undertake, to achieve an employment outcome.

Depending on the needs of the individual participant, the job plan integrates education, training, non-vocational assistance, interventions to address ESAt identified barriers, rehabilitation services, work experience, job search, job placement assistance and other assistance.

Providers must be able to:

- help all eligible participants, regardless of their level of disadvantage, by providing individually tailored assistance to develop pathways into sustainable employment
- build linkages with employers to understand and meet their skills and labour needs, including working with employers to identify job vacancies and match suitable candidates to those vacancies
- connect participants to appropriate skills development opportunities, and
- build linkages and work cooperatively with other stakeholders, such as local community and health services, Registered Training Organisations, state, territory and local government, and other service providers.

Providers are paid service fees to assist participants in each program, until the participant is placed in a job or moves into full-time education.

If a participant has not found a job after 18 months of service, a program review (usually conducted by a Services Australia assessor) will determine the next appropriate steps for each participant. Services Australia assessors refer participants to the most appropriate service that best suits their needs, including referral to other employment services. If the assessor considers the DES participant is likely to benefit from an additional period of assistance, the participant may be granted an additional six months of service with their current provider or provider of their choice.

Outcome payments are available to providers where DES participants achieve sustainable employment or education. All fees and payments are fixed and not subject to price competition.

Once a DES participant is placed in a job, providers continue to deliver services as required up until the 52 week outcome to ensure the success of the placement in the form of post placement support or ongoing support.

Most DES participants exit DES as independent workers once a 52 week outcome has been achieved.

However, providers can determine that a DES participant requires ongoing support, and the level of ongoing support best suited to the participant's individual needs, following the achievement of a 26 week outcome. For those who require ongoing support after achieving a 26 week employment outcome to retain their job, three support options are available:

- Flexible Ongoing Support—available in both DES-DMS and DES-ESS
- Moderate Ongoing Support—available in DES-ESS only, and
- High Ongoing Support—available in DES-ESS only.

Following the achievement of a 52 week outcome, the DES program is complete and the DES participant will be exited as an independent worker *unless* they require further ongoing support to maintain their employment. Once a DES participant has been supported in work for 52 weeks from the date they started their employment (taking into account allowable breaks), further support is determined by an Ongoing Support Assessment (OSA).

Period of Service

A provider must provide program services to a participant during their period of service. A participant's period of service begins on commencement and ends when the participant begins ongoing support or is exited, whichever happens earlier.

During a participant's period of service, there may be times when service is suspended because of the participant's individual circumstances. For example, service may be suspended where:

- the Services Australia (Centrelink) notifies the provider of an exemption from participation (Centrelink will also notify the provider when the exemption is lifted) via the Department's IT Systems, or
- the participant is a volunteer (non-mutual obligation) who faces a situation that affects their ability to participate for a period of time. This suspension period must be recorded by the provider in the Department's IT Systems.

Service fees are payable, in advance, for three month service periods. Progression through a service period, and towards the next service fee, ceases when a provider starts an employment or education outcome period for the participant. If progress towards the outcome ceases, the participant reverts to their current place in the service period, and progress towards the next service fee resumes.

Once a provider anchors a participant in an education or training related activity or employment activity which, when completed, is expected to satisfy the requirements for an outcome, the participant commences progress towards outcome fees. The provider is paid an outcome fee when the participant meets the requirements of four, 13, 26 and 52 week outcomes. If a participant achieves a 52 week Full or Pathway Outcome for an education placement, they will Exit the service. Similarly, if a Participant achieves a 52 week Full or Pathway Outcome for an employment placement, they will exit the service unless they need ongoing support.

Participants may exit the service for a number of reasons, including if the participant:

- stops receiving income support payments and does not volunteer for further services
- has a partial capacity to work or is a Principal Carer Parent who commences in a job that fully meets their part-time participation requirements and does not volunteer for further services
- commences education or training that changes their income support status to Austudy, ABSTUDY or Youth Allowance (Student) and does not volunteer for further services
- completes the full period of service (18 or 24 months) without achieving a Full or Pathway Outcome
- has an ESA or JCA that determines that DES is no longer an appropriate service
- is a volunteer (non-mutual obligation) participant and chooses to withdraw from services
- cannot progress towards a 52 week Full or Pathway Outcome after achieving a 26 week Full or Pathway Outcome for employment, due to loss of job or reduction in work hours
- has achieved a 26 week Full Outcome for education
- has achieved a 52-week Full or Pathway Outcome for employment and does not need ongoing support to retain their job, or
- no longer requires ongoing support and has achieved a 52-week Outcome.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Period of Service Guidelines

Volunteers

Volunteers are able to exit DES at any time. If a volunteer (non-mutual obligation) participant does not attend activities or appointments with a provider and has not advised that they wish to cease services, the provider must try to contact the participant at least once on each of the two consecutive business days

before exiting the participant. This is a courtesy to confirm that the participant no longer wishes to participate in the service. If the participant advises they no longer wish to receive services, the provider must exit the participant. If the provider's attempts to contact the participant are not successful, the provider may exit the participant or, alternatively suspend the participant and continue to make reasonable attempts to contact them.

Support to DES Participants (Program Services)

DES Services

Services within DES are tailored to the individual needs and circumstances of each participant. Services focus on providing a pathway to open employment for the participant and ensuring that participants are best placed to meet employers' needs.

All services for participants should be delivered within a framework that recognises and is sensitive to all factors relevant to the individual; for example, type and nature of disability, caring responsibilities, age, cultural and linguistic diversity, skills and experience.

The provider must:

- conduct an Initial Interview face-to-face with the participant (subsequent Contacts can be delivered in other modes, as agreed with the participant and specified in the Grant Agreement)
- work with the participant to develop a job plan, and regularly review and update the job plan when necessary
- have regular contact with the participant in the modes as agreed with the participant
- undertake any necessary assessments or evaluations of the participant
- provide services or interventions required to address the participant's vocational and non-vocational barriers to employment, including work experience
- provide or link the participant to training and development activities that meet the skills and labour needs of employers and assists the participant to obtain sustainable employment
- assist with job search, job placement, workplace assessments and modifications
- monitor the participant's attendance at appointments and participation in activities such as education or training, as set out in the participant's job plan
- provide Post Placement Support while a participant is progressing towards a 26 week, or a 52 week Employment Outcome
- once a participant has achieved a 26-week Employment Outcome, initially determine if Post Placement Support is appropriate or if the participant needs Flexible, Moderate or High Ongoing Support, provide services as required and refer the participant to an OSA as soon as possible to verify the participant's ongoing support needs
- assess whether the participant is able to be exited as an independent worker once a participant has achieved a 52-week Employment Outcome
- arrange a program review once the participant has received 18 months of service, and
- maintain appropriate records (for example, attendance at appointments with the DES provider).

Providers should also work cooperatively with other programs and services provided by DSS, other Australian Government agencies, state or territory or local governments and community services to maximise a participant's capacity to obtain sustainable employment.

Initial Interview

When a participant commences services the provider is, at a minimum, required to:

- confirm the participant's identity;
- explain the services the provider delivers and the type of activities the participant may undertake
- for those with obligations under Social Security Law, explain the rights and obligations of the participant to participate in DES, including the required level of contacts and participation, and the implications of not meeting their obligations
- prepare and approve a job plan with the participant, which includes interventions required at that point
- provide access to an interpreter, where required
- explain the Service Guarantee and Code of Practice
- record completion of the initial interview on the Department's IT Systems, and
- provide advice/inform participant that they may choose/change to another provider if they are unsatisfied with the services they are receiving.

The initial job plan will contain activities that satisfy the participant's mutual obligations/compulsory participation requirements (where relevant) and that are specifically tailored to address a participant's most urgent barriers to finding and maintaining a job and specify any immediate interventions required.

A detailed job plan may not be possible at the initial assessment because it is likely that the provider will need to:

- build trust and rapport with the participant over time to develop or update the job plan
- assess and identify appropriate interventions to address the participant's vocational and non-vocational barriers for inclusion in the job plan, and
- identify relevant activities and timing for inclusion in the job plan.

Although the initial job plan may not be as detailed as future job plans, the provider must include as much detail as possible and ensure that a follow up appointment is made where the job plan will be reviewed and updated with more detail as appropriate.

During the initial interview and subsequent interviews, the provider must continue to develop and update an individually tailored job plan with the participant. In order to do this, the provider should undertake a thorough assessment of each participant's circumstances, including their abilities, goals, education and training needs and employment assistance requirements.

If the participant does not attend their initial interview, the provider must attempt to contact the participant within two business days to make another appointment.

Employment Assistance

The focus of the initial assistance is to assess the impact of the participant's disability on their capacity to find and maintain employment. Once the initial assessment is complete, the provider should focus on assisting the participant find sustainable employment in the open labour market by addressing vocational and non-vocational barriers and building a participant's capacity to work.

The provider must provide a suitable and flexible mix of services and support to meet the varying needs and personal circumstances of different participants, which may include:

- functional capacity evaluation, physical assessment or other assessments to determine a person's abilities or limits
- a skills assessment
- support in managing whole-of-life issues that affect a participant's employment prospects
- training, work hardening or physical conditioning programs
- job design – assisting employers to design jobs that incorporate the necessary flexibilities to successfully employ people with disability
- job carving – analysing work duties in a given job and identifying tasks that could be performed by a participant with disability
- providing information on how employment opportunities will be sourced including an outline of how the provider will canvass and approach employers regarding employment opportunities
- job search services, including job search and career option advice
- work experience through the National Work Experience Program (NWEPP)
- employment placements that provide the participant with opportunities to build new skills and experiences, but would not meet the quality and sustainability criteria required for it to be an outcome
- employment preparation and employment placement, and
- accessing and arranging employer incentives such as wage subsidies, workplace modifications or the Supported Wage System (SWS).

The assistance or services provided can be delivered in a number of ways, for example:

- through in-house service provision
- purchased from an external provider, or
- accessed within the local community.

Regular contact with the participant should be maintained throughout the period of employment assistance. During this period, the provider must provide a minimum of six contacts over each period of three months to participants. The timing and duration of these contacts will depend on the individual circumstances of each participant.

The contacts must focus on:

- reviewing and updating the participant's job plan
- reviewing the participant's progress towards overcoming identified vocational and non-vocational barriers

- guiding the participant's job search activities including identifying appropriate vacancies, and Referring the participant to such vacancies
- identifying relevant training, work experience or other Interventions, and
- identifying and recording any relevant changes in the Department's IT Systems.

Providers should work with participants to determine the most appropriate and effective mode of delivering contacts. Except for the circumstances as specified in the Grant Agreement, contacts may be flexible as agreed by the participant and the provider.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Contacts Guidelines

Job Plan

The job plan underpins the provision of services to a participant and is recorded on the Department's IT Systems.

The job plan will set out the steps to be taken by both the participant and the provider to work towards achieving suitable employment, based on the participant's individual circumstances.

A job plan outlines the agreed activities to be undertaken by the participant to gain sustainable employment. For the purposes of the Social Security Law, the job plan is an 'employment pathway plan' for Participants with Mutual Obligation Requirements, and a 'participation plan' for Disability Support Pension recipients with compulsory requirements. The job plan must contain activities that will help the participant meet their Mutual Obligation/Compulsory Participation Requirements under the Social Security Law. Guidelines on job plans, Disability Support Pension Recipients (Compulsory Requirements) and Mutual Obligation Requirements can be accessed via the Provider Portal. Information on Mutual Obligation Requirements can be found in the [Guide to Social Security Law](#).

Participants undertaking activities or participating in services voluntarily also have their activities outlined in a job plan.

Elements that must be included in each job plan are:

- the frequency of contact between the provider and participant
- the timing and details of vocational and non-vocational activities such as education, training, job search, work trials and activities to address Employment Services Assessment (ESAt) identified barriers that the Participant will undertake with the objective of gaining employment, and
- details of any mandatory obligations, such as job search requirements.

In addition to these requirements, the job plan for a participant with Mutual Obligation/Compulsory Participation Requirements can also include voluntary activities (for example, psychological counselling). Providers must develop a job plan with each participant at their initial interview. Providers must update the job plan regularly throughout the period of service as a participant progresses and their needs change, including when a participant is in receipt of ongoing support. Providers must retain a copy of the job plan and supply a copy of the job plan to the participant.

The Department will monitor the quality of job plans to ensure that providers are meeting the requirements of the Grant Agreement and Social Security Law, and to ensure job plans are tailored to the individual needs of the participant.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Job Plans Guidelines
- DES Quality Assessment Instructions Measure 3.1 Individualised Job Plans

Support while a Participant undertakes an Employment or Education Placement

A participant does not necessarily commence progress towards an outcome when they are placed into one or more employment positions. Participants remain in the employment assistance phase until the provider is confident that the placement is a good fit for the participant and that the job is a quality, sustainable option for the participant. The provider can then commence the outcome period by anchoring the placement, which moves the participant from an employment assistance phase to one where they receive post placement support.

Once the provider starts the outcome period they are expected to maintain contact with the participant as they progress towards the four-week, 13-week, 26-week and 52-week outcomes. Providers should be available to ensure the participant settles into the placement and that any issues that arise for either the participant or the employer are addressed. When placing a participant with an employer, providers should assist with job design, workplace assessments and modifications, and access to the SWS, as required. The provider should assist employees to adjust to their duties or to learn new skills, where requested, and should provide advice and training to co-workers about issues related to the employment of people with disability.

Should the placement not result in a 26 week outcome, the participant will resume their period of employment assistance.

A participant exits DES once they achieve a 26 week education outcome, or a 52 week employment outcome and do not require ongoing support to remain in employment, or lose their employment after achieving a 26 week employment outcome. However, some participants will require ongoing support to retain their job once the 26 week outcome has been achieved. Three levels of ongoing support are available to participants—Flexible Ongoing Support, Moderate Ongoing Support or High Ongoing Support.

Work Based Personal Assistance Only

Work Based Personal Assistance is additional regular personal support for eligible DES-ESS participants in the workplace, unsubsidised self-employment and, apprenticeships (including traineeships). It is available to any DES participant (including Work Assist) who has commenced in DES-ESS and requires support within the workplace because of their physical or neurological disability or medical condition. Work Based Personal Assistance is not available for DES Participants in the DES-DMS program.

Work Based Personal Assistance is provided by specially trained personnel who provide personal assistance with feeding by mouth or tube or personal hygiene, such as care of catheter, or a registered nurse to administer medical interventions.

DES-ESS providers can deliver Work Based Personal Assistance where the provider has qualified personnel available, or purchase this service from third party providers with appropriate specialist skills.

DES-ESS providers must not deliver Work Based Personal Assistance to any DES-ESS Participant that:

- currently receives the Work Based Personal Assistance service and has a funded plan under the National Disability Insurance Scheme; or
- does not currently receive Work Based Personal Assistance services and meets the requirements to enter the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Other DES-ESS Participants that require personal support may receive Work Based Personal Assistance from a DES-ESS provider.

A participant receiving Work Based Personal Assistance cannot receive any other Program services (i.e. Ongoing Support).

While there is no limit to the amount of Work Based Personal Assistance that can be provided, a DES-ESS provider may only claim Work Based Personal Assistance fees for a maximum of 10 hours of Work Based Personal Assistance per week, per participant.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Work Based Personal Assistance Guidelines

Program Review

If a participant is not in an employment placement or education placement at the completion of approximately 18 months of service in DES, the provider must arrange a program review for the participant. This review is normally completed by a Services Australia assessor who will determine whether the participant has capacity to benefit from a further six months of service in DES, or whether they would benefit from being referred to another program.

The only exception to an employment services assessor conducting the program review is where a participant is taking part in employment or undertaking significant education or training. These participants may be assessed by their Provider to determine if a further six months of assistance is likely to result in the participant achieving an employment outcome.

If a participant is not happy with the program review they can raise their concerns with the Services Australia assessor who conducted the assessment or they can lodge a complaint with Services Australia. Services Australia will investigate the complaint and take appropriate action.

Program Summary

The program summary is a record of the participant's achievements in DES. A provider must complete a program summary using the Department's IT Systems when a participant exits a program or prior to referring a participant to a Services Australia assessor for a program review.

The program summary is available to Services Australia should the participant require further assistance after exiting DES. The program summary may also be made available to DSS for monitoring purposes.

The program summary provides the Services Australia assessor with information on the participant's progress, achievements and barriers to maintaining sustainable employment identified during the participant's participation in DES. Where the participant is being referred for a program review, the program summary includes information on the participant's capacity to benefit from a further six months of servicing in DES.

The program summary details:

- the reason for the exit, where relevant
- assistance provided or purchased on behalf of the participant
- barriers to future employment, and
- comments or other issues that might assist the Services Australia assessor to determine the next step for the participant.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Program Review, Program Summary and Exits Guidelines

Ongoing Support in the Workplace

Providers are expected to maintain contact with participants in a job up until the 52 week employment outcome. After participants have achieved a 26-week employment outcome, providers can choose to deliver ongoing support to maintain their employment, where required. After a participant achieves a 52-week outcome, the participant must be exited as an independent worker, unless they require ongoing support to maintain their employment.

A participant's requirement for ongoing support will be initially determined by the provider for the first four weeks. Providers must refer the participant to an OSA to verify the participant's ongoing support needs. Access to any further ongoing support will also be determined through an OSA.

Ongoing support is not available to participants who have achieved an outcome through education.

Participants must be employed for at least eight hours per week in order to continue receiving ongoing support.

Flexible Ongoing Support

Flexible ongoing support provides a safety net for participants who have been placed into work, and who require irregular or less predictable access to support to maintain employment. This support option enables providers to offer flexible assistance, including short bursts of intensive support in the workplace, and better supports participants with mental health and other episodic conditions.

Flexible ongoing support is available to participants achieving either a full or pathway employment outcome.

Flexible ongoing support is funded on a fee-for-service basis. Providers are able to claim a maximum of six instances of support over a six month period. An instance can cover an accumulated number of smaller contacts that equate to approximately four hours of service (for example, telephone calls or emails), or a single instance of more intensive support (for example, visiting the workplace to adjust equipment).

If this cap is reached, the provider must arrange for an OSA before further ongoing support can be provided. If the participant is assessed as having moderate or high ongoing support needs, the participant may then move to one of the two longer-term ongoing support options in DES-ESS. The participant may also be assessed as eligible for a further period of flexible ongoing support.

Moderate and High Ongoing Support

The moderate and high ongoing support options are specific to DES-ESS.

Moderate Ongoing Support

Participants receiving moderate ongoing support require regular and ongoing support from a DES-ESS provider to maintain employment, unsubsidised self-employment, apprenticeships or traineeships. Participants requiring moderate ongoing support receive a minimum of six contacts over each period of three months. Moderate ongoing support is funded on a four weekly or 13 weekly basis.

High Ongoing Support

Participants who receive high ongoing support require significant on the job assistance, either in hours of support or intensity. A minimum of 12 contacts over each period of three months must be provided to high

ongoing support participants. High ongoing support is funded on a four weekly or 13 weekly quarterly basis.

Mode of Ongoing Support Contacts

All ongoing support contacts can be delivered face-to-face, by video conference, phone, email or instant chat as detailed in the Grant Agreement and the Ongoing Support Guidelines. Contacts delivered via instant chat and email methods are not considered formal appointments and should only be used to supplement the contact modes above. Contacts via instant chat and email will contribute to ongoing support servicing.

Independent Assessment of Ongoing Support needs

Ongoing support in the workplace is available for participants for as long as it is required. An ongoing support assessor independently assesses the ongoing support needs of Participants.

An Ongoing Support Assessment (OSA) is completed where:

- a participant has achieved a 26-week employment outcome and their provider considers that they require ongoing support to maintain their employment
- a participant has reached 52 weeks since they started their employment, taking into account allowable breaks, and their provider considers that they require ongoing support to maintain their employment (for participants that were in ongoing support at the commencement of the DES Grant Agreement on 1 July 2018)
- the maximum number of instances over a six month period has been reached for a participant in flexible ongoing support, and further support is required within the six month period
- a work assist participant has achieved a 26 week outcome and their provider considers that they require ongoing support to maintain their employment
- the participant's last OSA was not a change of circumstances reassessment, it recommends the same level of ongoing support as the previous OSA, and it has been 78 weeks since the participant's last OSA
- the participant's last OSA was a change of circumstances reassessment or the two most recent OSAs have not recommended the same level of ongoing support, and it has been 52 weeks since the participant's last OSA, or
- a change in circumstances means that a participant may need a higher level of ongoing support than identified in the participant's last OSA.

An ongoing support assessor determines that the participant should be exited, or that they are eligible for flexible, moderate or high ongoing support.

The assessment normally consists of:

- an interview with the participant's provider
- a file assessment of support provided in the period since employment placement or since the last OSA
- a participant interview, and
- a workplace assessment, which should include an interview with the participant's employer.

Where non-disclosure or privacy issues are identified, or where a participant or their employer is reluctant to include a workplace assessment, an ongoing support assessor may exclude this aspect of the assessment with the agreement of the participant.

The different elements of the assessment are not weighted. The assessment is considered as a whole in determining the ongoing support needs of a participant. Results of the assessment are documented in a report that is maintained on the Department's IT Systems.

Where the provider disagrees with the OSA recommendation, a dispute process is available.

Ongoing support assessors may also be providers of DES under DES–DMS or DES–ESS. However, ongoing support assessors are not permitted to undertake an OSA of participants for whom they, or a related entity, are providing services under DES–ESS or DES–DMS.

Movement between levels of Ongoing Support

Once a participant in DES has achieved a 26 week outcome, the provider is able to determine that the participant requires ongoing support, and will initially determine the most appropriate ongoing support level for the participant in accordance with the DES program guidelines. The provider must refer the participant to an OSA as soon as possible to verify the participant's ongoing support needs.

Any increase in ongoing support levels (for example, from moderate ongoing support to high ongoing support) between scheduled OSAs will need to be verified by an OSA.

Should a participant's ongoing support needs decrease at any point between scheduled OSAs, the provider can adjust the level of ongoing support down without the need for an OSA. Should the participant's circumstances subsequently change, the provider can move the participant back to the previously assessed higher ongoing support level without the need for an OSA.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Ongoing Support Assessment Allocation Guidelines
- DES Ongoing Support Assessment Guidelines
- DES Ongoing Support Assessments Quality Framework
- DES Ongoing Support Guidelines

Moving between DES Programs

From time to time, a participant receiving ongoing support may also need to change programs. For example, where it becomes apparent that a participant in DES–DMS needs more regular support than is available through flexible ongoing support, they can move from DES–DMS to DES–ESS. This will require an OSA.

Once assessed as needing more regular ongoing support, the participant may then be:

- transferred into DES–ESS, if the existing provider offers both services, or
- referred to another provider who provides DES–ESS.

Movement between DES–DMS and DES–ESS will not constitute an exit from DES and the participant will continue in their current period of service.

Support to Employers (Program Services)

Meeting Employer needs

DES focuses on providing participants with the skills and training to meet the needs of employers. Providers are required to work with industry and local employers to identify and, where appropriate, create employment opportunities for participants and develop skills and training activities suited to vacancies with local employers.

Providers should develop strong labour market knowledge and use this knowledge to develop and adapt strategies to meet the diverse needs of employers in the Employment Service Area (ESA).

As well as working with employers in the ESA to meet their labour needs, providers should support individual employers to maintain quality, sustainable outcomes for people with disability.

There are bonus outcome fees for placing participants in apprenticeships, traineeships or when a participant is placed in employment after completing training directly related to the job.

Engagement with other services in the community

Providers are expected to work cooperatively with other programs and services in the community provided by DSS (for example, the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator, NDIS Regional Co-ordinators); other Government agencies, state, territory and local governments and community services to maximise opportunities for participants.

Providers can access a range of other government assistance for eligible participants. Programs accessible for participants in DES include:

- Personal Helpers and Mentors Service (PHAMS) [*Note: this program is transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)*].
- Australian Government Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program

Providers must maintain regular contact with the participant during participation in these programs.

National Work Experience Program (NWEP)

In addition to paid employment placements, DES providers are able to arrange a variety of observational unpaid placements to give participants experience and confidence in the workplace. While providers can arrange observational placements under their own terms, the Australian Government's National Work Experience Program (NWEP) allows participants to engage in real life work experience and offers a defined structure with protections including Government-funded liability insurance.

NWEP should assist with capacity building, enable a participant to gain vocational skills and have a likelihood of leading to sustainable ongoing employment. Placements are hosted by different types of organisations, including not-for-profit organisations.

NWEP must not displace paid employment, and employers must not use placements inappropriately. Providers must monitor these placements to ensure participant interests are protected, as are those of existing employees.

NWEP can occur in for-profit and not-for-profit organisations and should have a likelihood of an outcome of sustainable paid employment. However, an NWEP is not employment, training, an apprenticeship or other similar scheme. As there must be a likelihood of ongoing, paid employment for participants, NWEP cannot take place in volunteer or unpaid jobs, or non-ongoing or temporary positions.

In addition, NWEPP must not take place in an organisation that has downsized its workforce in the previous 12 months. Similarly, NWEPP must not be used as a stop-gap measure while an organisation is undertaking recruitment exercises or as a way of meeting ad hoc needs in lieu of creating paid employment opportunities.

The Australian Government purchases personal accident insurance and public and/or product liability insurance to cover participants participating in NWEPP. Insurance purchased by the Australian Government is additional to the insurance providers are required to obtain themselves (as specified in the DES Grant Agreement).

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES National Work Experience Programme Guidelines
- DES Incident Management and Reporting for NWEPP Guidelines
- DES Risk Assessment for National Work Experience Programme Guidelines

Work Assist

Work Assist is available for an employee who is at risk of losing their employment due to the impact of their injury, disability or health condition. To be eligible for Work Assist, the employee must have been employed for at least eight hours, on average, per week over the previous consecutive 13 weeks, or there is an expectation that the employee's current employment will last 13 weeks, in combination with an average of eight hours being worked per week.

This arrangement allows workers employed for less than 13 weeks to receive assistance, with the exception of where the job is very short term.

A provider can claim up to two quarterly service fees, and an outcome fee once the participant remains in employment and continues to be employed at their normal number of hours per week for 26 consecutive weeks. If the participant requires ongoing support to retain their employment, a Work Assist participant may be eligible to receive ongoing support (flexible, moderate or high) after achieving the 26 week outcome. Access to ongoing support is determined by an OSA.

If a Work Assist participant who is receiving service from a DES–DMS provider is assessed as needing flexible ongoing support, they can remain with their DES–DMS provider. If the participant is assessed as needing more regular ongoing support, the participant must be transferred into DES–ESS—if the existing program provider offers both services—or referred to a DES–ESS provider.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Work Assist Guidelines

Wage Subsidies

A range of wage subsidies enable providers to offer financial assistance to employers who employ eligible participants and are designed to encourage employers to provide sustainable employment.

The following wage subsidies are available for DES participants:

- Wage Subsidy Scheme – provides a financial incentive to employers to employ participants with disability in the open employment market at award wages. Providers can reimburse an employer up to \$1,650 (inclusive of GST) to employ a participant for at least eight hours per week for at least 13 weeks (at least six weeks for employment in a seasonal activity).
- Restart Wage Subsidy – provides a \$10,000 (GST inclusive) subsidy for employers who take on participants who are 50 years or older, unemployed and are receiving income support payments for six months or

more. The jobs must be for at least 20 hours per week, and employers can negotiate how often they receive the subsidy payments. Employers may also be able to receive a 'kickstart' payment of up to 40 per cent of the total subsidy amount after four weeks of the job starting.

- Wage Start subsidy – from December 2017, Wage Start will provide up to \$6,000 (GST inclusive) for employers who take on DES participants of at least 15 hours per week, for 26 weeks. Eligible participants must have an assessed work capacity of at least 15 hours per week, and must have been receiving DES services for at least 12 months; or, have found employment with the host employer after completing a Youth PaTH Internship.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Wage Subsidy Scheme Guidelines
- DES Restart Wage Subsidy Guidelines
- DES Wage Start Subsidy Guidelines

Supported Wage System (SWS)

The SWS enables employers to pay a productivity based wage to people whose work productivity is reduced as a result of disability. Eligible workers undergo an assessment of their productivity in comparison to other workers. Assessments must be conducted annually in accordance with the model SWS provisions contained in awards and agreements.

DSS manages a National Panel of Assessors (NPA) to deliver a range of assessment services, including SWS Assessments.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Supported Wage Systems Assessment Guidelines

National Panel of Assessors (NPA)

The NPA provides independent assessment services for people with disability in the workplace. Services include OSAs, SWS assessments and Workplace Modification assessments for access to the Employment Assistance Fund (EAF). Panel providers are approved by the Department to provide one or more of occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, rehabilitation counsellor and vocational training or similarly qualified services for the assessments.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES NPA Performance Framework Guidelines and OSA Quality Framework

Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)

The EAF helps people with disability and their employers by providing financial assistance for work-related equipment, modifications and services. The EAF is a pool of funds available to pay for the cost of special workplace equipment, services and modifications that are needed to accommodate an employee with disability, including mental illness. The EAF has the flexibility to provide workplace solutions that meet the individual needs of both employers and employees.

Financial assistance may be used for things like assistive technology, electronic and communication equipment, specialist support for employees with learning disability or mental health condition, Auslan interpreting for job interviews and work-related activities, deafness awareness training and other disability awareness training. Providers, employers and Participants may apply for EAF assistance.

Providers access the EAF by submitting an online EAF application form to obtain assistance to purchase modifications, equipment and services for their eligible participants. Assistance available through the EAF is

subject to meeting eligibility and application requirements, and funds being available. Providers access the EAF via the [JobAccess website](#) and may obtain help with completing the form from JobAccess on 1800 464 800.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Applying for EAF – DES and Jobactive Provider Guidelines

JobAccess

Website: www.jobaccess.gov.au Phone: 1800 464 800

JobAccess is the Australian Government’s national hub for workplace and employment information for people with disability, employers and service providers. It is there to help anyone who is interested in disability in the workplace.

The JobAccess Service provides access to a number of services: the JobAccess advice service and website, administration of the Employment Assistance Fund, the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC), The Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) and the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline (the Hotline).

The JobAccess advice service is delivered by a team of allied health professionals who can provide free, confidential, expert advice on disability employment matters.

The JobAccess advisers are skilled in a range of areas including workplace adjustment, occupational therapy, vocational training, recruitment strategies for the sustainable employment of people with disability and mental illness, workplace training, workplace assessment and work health and safety.

Applications for the Employment Assistance Fund and the Supported Wage System can be made online through the JobAccess website www.jobaccess.gov.au.

JobAccess Employer Engagement - National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC)

The JobAccess Employer Engagement - NDRC is focussed on supporting employers to increase their disability confidence and develop the skills and “know how” to enable them to employ more people with disability. The work of the NDRC helps to increase the “demand” for workers with disability, thereby providing greater opportunities for people with disability to experience the social and economic benefits that a job can bring.

The NDRC can work with any sized employer to create a job vacancy that is intended for a person with disability. The NDRC works strategically with larger employers to teach them to develop and maintain sustainable disability recruitment and employment policies. This work is supported by a Memorandum of Understanding or Letter of Intent, demonstrating an employer’s commitment to increasing the number of people with disability employed within their organisation.

The NDRC service delivers several employer seminars across Australia each year to help improve employer’s knowledge and awareness of disability employment and the available government support including Disability Employment Services, the Employment Assistance Fund, Wage Subsidies and the Supported Wage System.

To help ensure a “supply” of ready, willing and able job seekers with disability, the NDRC works with Disability Employment Services providers to help create working relationships with employers. This helps Disability Employment Services providers develop an understanding of an employers’ business needs and culture, so they can match candidates with disability appropriately.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES National Disability Recruitment Coordinator Guidelines

New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)

The NEIS assists eligible participants to start and run their own small business, by providing accredited small business training, and mentoring for up to 52 weeks and income support up to 39 weeks.

Eligible DES participants can access NEIS while concurrently receiving assistance in the DES program. DES providers are required to work together with NEIS panel members and continue to deliver DES services to the participant during their participation in NEIS. Where required, providers will continue providing ongoing support to the participant after completing NEIS.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES How people access NEIS and participate in NEIS Training
- DES NEIS Concurrency with DES Guidelines

Payments to providers

The payment model for DES includes service fees, outcome fees, ongoing support fees and work assist fees. All fees and payments are fixed and are not subject to price competition.

DES-ESS and DMS both have five funding levels that participants will be assigned, with level one being the lowest funding level and level five the highest. A participant's funding level will be determined by a number of factors, including labour market data, demographic characteristics, disability type and other relevant statistical data. This allocation is based on the principle of risk-adjusted funding that is, achievement of outcomes for harder-to-place participants, those less likely to gain employment, is encouraged by having proportionately higher payments available.

The Department periodically recalibrates the fee schedule, where appropriate to reflect changes in the relative likelihoods of employment on which payments are based. Adjustments to the model are based on both client characteristics and local labour market characteristics using data already collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Services Australia, the ESAt or JCA, and the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI). Other relevant sources of data may also be incorporated into the adjustment process.

The Department will notify providers of any changes to the fee schedule before these changes come into effect. Where a provider is assisting a participant with moderate intellectual disability, the provider may claim an 88 per cent Moderate Intellectual Disability Loading (MIDL) on four, 13 and 26 week full outcome fees where these are for jobs of at least 15 hours per week.

Service Fees

Service fees are paid in advance for each 13 week service period for commenced participants.

The first service fee is paid automatically when the participant commences in DES. Subsequent payments are made for each further 13 weeks of service, and after a tax invoice is lodged by the provider (within 28 days).

Progress towards the next service fee is paused when the participant starts an outcome period, and ends when the participant exits the service.

Where a participant transfers to a different provider, the current provider retains the proportion of the last service fee corresponding with the part of the service period completed; the remaining amount is recovered

by the Department and paid to the participant's new provider to enable delivery of services for the remainder of the current service period.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Service Fee Guidelines

How will providers be paid?

The Department's IT Systems will determine the number of participants who have commenced the service or entered into a subsequent 13 weeks of service during each fortnight and generate a list of eligible participants for whom the provider is entitled to claim a service fee payment. Payments are made automatically every 13 weeks of employment assistance. The provider is able to see the payments in the Department's IT Systems for participants who have just commenced and payments for participants who have progressed into a subsequent 13-week service period.

Service fees are subject to pro-rata recovery. The Department will recover or offset a pro-rata amount of a service fee from the provider if in employment assistance or extended employment assistance:

- the participant transfers to another DES provider for any reason: or
- the participant exits

The pro-rata amount of a service fee to be recovered or offset will be calculated based on the time left in the 13 week period applicable to the participant.

Outcomes and assessed work capacity

Most participants are assessed by a Services Australia assessor to determine their current and future work capacity, expressed in weekly work capacity bandwidths. The lower end of the participant's future employment bandwidth is usually the participant's employment benchmark, which is the number of hours of employment that the participant must undertake in order to achieve a full employment outcome.

Work capacity bandwidths, and associated employment benchmarks, are:

- zero to seven hours – participant normally not eligible for DES
- eight to 14 hours – employment benchmark of eight
- 15 to 22 hours – employment benchmark of 15
- 23 to 29 hours – employment benchmark of 23, and
- 30 plus hours (or full-time) – employment benchmark of 30.

Participants may sometimes have an employment benchmark that is lower than their assessed work capacity, in recognition of other circumstances such as sole parenting responsibilities.

Employment outcomes for participants who are not required to have an ESAt or JCA for entry into DES, for example ESLs, will be based on an employment benchmark of eight hours of work per week.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Outcome Guidelines

Quality Outcomes for Participants

The focus for providers should be on obtaining sustainable, meaningful employment outcomes for participants, and this is reflected in the DES program fee structure. The outcome fees are set high in recognition of, and expectation that, providers will work with each participant to assist them to find quality

employment that suits their individual skills and interests. Participants are entitled to twelve months of support from their provider once they start the outcome period. This is to give them the best chance of achieving long-term employment.

The DES model allows providers to offer participants exposure to multiple job opportunities without having to start an outcome period. This means that participants can try their hand at a range of jobs, including, for example, transitional employment available through social enterprises.

Participants build their skills with this type of exposure while in employment assistance. It is only when a quality, sustainable job has been identified for the participant that the provider should start the participant in an outcome period.

Outcome Fees

Outcome fees are paid to providers for participants who complete appropriate hours of employment for the minimum four, 13, 26 and 52 week outcome periods, or remain in qualifying education for at least one semester of a course of two or more semesters.

Payment claims are automatic once the participant's ID and employment or education details have been placed into the Department's IT Systems by the provider following the submission of a tax invoice. The Department's IT Systems will calculate the outcome fee owing to the provider who can confirm the payment online. The claims are paid fortnightly to the provider.

Employment outcomes are payable where employment is undertaken over a period of consecutive weeks. However, there are some situations where the consecutive weeks can be broken by one or more permissible break. A permissible break is a period of time during which a participant has a break in their employment, caused by a situation which is outside their control, and returns to the same employer. Participants can have permissible breaks of up to:

- four weeks during the first 13 weeks, while working towards a 13 week outcome,
- four weeks during the next 13 weeks, while working towards a 26 week outcome, and
- eight weeks during the next 26 weeks, while working towards a 52 week outcome (four weeks over the first half of the 52-week period, and an additional four weeks over the second half).

In addition, if a participant chooses to leave a job to move to alternative employment, for example to take up a better job, a break of five days between jobs will be allowed. Where a participant loses their job and needs to find alternative employment, a break of up to 20 business days is allowed.

If the allowed breaks are not sufficient to cover a break in employment, the consecutive employment period is ended. Where the participant has already achieved a 26 week outcome, the participant must be exited from DES, unless they are receiving ongoing support. Where the participant has not achieved a 26 week outcome, the participant will resume in their period of service and 13 week service fees will resume, although the provider can re-anchor the employment placement to recommence the outcome period if the participant resumes their normal hours of employment.

Types of Outcomes – Full and Pathway

There are two main types of outcomes: a Full Outcome and a Pathway Outcome.

A Full Outcome is paid in recognition of a participant achieving sustainable employment that equals or exceeds the minimum of their employment benchmark, on average, each week for a 13 week period or 26 week period, or (for certain participants) remaining in a Qualifying Education Course.

A Full Outcome will occur where, for the duration of a 13 week period or 26 week period, an eligible participant remains in employment, self-employment, apprenticeship, traineeship or qualifying education.

A Pathway Outcome recognises progress towards the achievement of sustainable employment, such as through education or substantial part-time work. The requirements for achieving a Pathway Outcome are less than those for a Full Outcome and recognise that the participant is making progress towards achieving sustainable employment or education. The payments associated with a Pathway Outcome are less than the payments for a Full Outcome.

Providers can claim a 52 week outcome, when the participant achieves 52 weeks of consecutive employment, regardless of whether the 13 week outcome and 26 week outcome were Full or Pathway Outcomes.

Types of Outcomes – Bonus Outcome Fees

A bonus outcome fee of 20 per cent on top of payments for Full and Pathway Outcomes is available when a provider places a participant in an apprenticeship or traineeship or, for an employment outcome, where the:

- participant has completed a Qualifying Training Course
- employment is directly related to the Qualifying Training Course, and
- participant commences employment within 12 months of completing the Qualifying Training Course (that is, a minimum of a Certificate II Training course related to the role the participant is placed in).

Bonus outcome fees can be claimed for both Full and Pathway Outcomes.

Non-payable Outcomes

There are some situations that do not attract outcome fees and as such are listed as a non-payable outcome. These situations include:

- where the employment involves illegal activity, is associated with the sex industry, is a voluntary or unpaid position, or is in another country
- where the employment is discriminatory, or contravenes legislation or relevant workplace relations laws
- where the employment is funded or subsidised by another government program (including state or territory government programs), or
- where the participant was undertaking the employment or education before commencing the DES program.

Ongoing Support Payments

Subject to the participant's initial OSA verifying the participant's ongoing support needs, ongoing support payments are available to assist participants placed in employment to maintain their job beyond the 26-week outcome, if they require it. Flexible ongoing support is paid on a 'Fee-for-Service' basis for each instance of support. A maximum dollar cost will apply for flexible ongoing support, equivalent to six instances of support in a six month period. When the participant reaches this limit, the participant's support requirements must be independently assessed by the OSA to determine if the participant requires further or a higher level of support.

Moderate and high ongoing support fees are paid either 13 weekly in arrears or four weekly in arrears.

Work Assist Fees

Work assist provides immediate and appropriate support to a person in employment who is at risk of losing their employment due to the impact of their injury, disability or health condition.

The fees available for eligible work assist participants are two 13 week service fees and a 26 week outcome fee.

The service fees are paid in advance for each 13 weeks of service commenced by the work assist participant, after a tax invoice is lodged by the provider through the Department's IT Systems (no later than 28 calendar days of the fees becoming available).

The 26 week work assist outcome fee can be claimed when the participant remains in active employment for 26 consecutive weeks after commencement in the service through the Department's IT Systems (within 56 calendar days of the work assist participant achieving the work assist outcome).

Relevant Guidelines:

- Work Assist Guidelines

Overview of mutual obligations

Under the Social Security Law, people receiving income support payments with Mutual Obligation Requirements generally must show that they are actively looking for work and are participating in a range of activities that will help them into employment, unless Services Australia has granted the participant an exemption from these requirements.

Mutual Obligation Requirements include the range of requirements a participant can be compelled to fulfil under the Social Security Law in return for activity-tested income support. These include attending provider appointments, undertaking job search, acting on referrals to jobs, and participating in any other activity that is relevant to their personal circumstances and that will help the participant improve their employment prospects.

Participants on the following income support payments have Mutual Obligation Requirements:

- Newstart Allowance
- Youth Allowance (other)
- Parenting Payment Single (PPS) when their youngest child turns six (6), or
- Special Benefit (Nominated Visa Holders).

Participants must meet their Mutual Obligation Requirements to continue to receive their income support payment.

Disability Support Pension (DSP)

Recipients under 35 year of age who are subject to compulsory participation requirements

Since 1 July 2014, most (DSP) recipients under age 35 with an assessed work capacity of at least eight hours per week are required to undertake compulsory activities as outlined in their job plan, which is their Participation Plan under Social Security Law.

The intent of compulsory activities is to support the person to prepare for, find and maintain employment and may include work experience, education and training, or rehabilitation activities to overcome individual barriers.

If the DSP recipient's compulsory activity is participation in DES, the DSP recipient is required to agree to a job plan, attend participation interviews with Services Australia, attend scheduled appointments with their provider and undertake the activities included in their job plan, or their DSP payment may be suspended or cancelled.

If a DSP compulsory recipient is failing to meet their requirement, the provider will consider whether there is non-compliance to report to Services Australia, taking into account reasonable excuses and circumstances beyond the person's control.

Relevant Guidelines:

- DES Disability Support Pension recipients under 35 years Guidelines

Glossary of Definitions

CRRS - The Complaints Resolution and Referral Service

DES - Disability Employment Services

DES-DMS - Disability Management Service

DES-ESS - Employment Support Service

DSP - Disability Support Pension

EAF - Employment Assistance Fund

ESA - Employment Service Area

ESAt - Employment Services Assessment

ESL - Eligible School Leavers

GST - Goods and Services Tax

JCA - Job Capacity Assessment

JSCI - Job Seeker Classification Instrument

MIDL - Moderate Intellectual Disability Loading

NDIS - National Disability Insurance Scheme

NDRC - National Disability Recruitment Coordinator

NEIS - New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

NPA - National Panel of Assessors

NWEP - National Work Experience Program

OSA - Ongoing Support Assessment

PHaMS - Personal Helpers and Mentors Service

PPS - Parenting Payment Single

SEE - Skills for Education and Employment

SWS - Supported Wage System

The Hotline - National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline