



National Disability Employment Strategy Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Government is developing a National Disability Employment Strategy ('the Employment Strategy') to address the disadvantage experienced by people with disability looking for work.

The Employment Strategy will aim to increase the number of Australians with disability in secure employment.

The Employment Strategy will be the catalyst for transforming the way Government delivers employment supports. This will include introducing changes to existing programs and the development of new initiatives to address any service gaps.

The Disability Employment Advisory Committee (DEAC) will support the development of the Employment Strategy.

The DEAC will incorporate a broad range of expertise to ensure the Employment Strategy meaningfully addresses barriers preventing people with disability from securing employment. Membership will include representatives for people with disability, employers, service providers, peak bodies and academics.

There are five priority areas, which will act as the framework for designing the Employment Strategy:

1. *Lifting employer engagement, capability and demand*: providing employers with the tools and abilities to confidently hire more people with disability.
2. *Early intervention – transition from school to work and return to work*: helping students with disability and people with newly acquired disability to be able to successfully transition into a meaningful career and/or job of their choice.
3. *Driving better performance and quality from employment service providers*: assisting employment service providers to be able to offer high quality, personalised services to jobseekers.
4. *Making the system simpler for jobseekers with disability and employers*: improving the systems jobseekers with disability and employers interact with during their employment journey, including the welfare system, the assessment process and employment programs.
5. *Changing community attitudes*: changing people's perception and expectation about the capability of people with disability in the workplace. This will be achieved through challenging conscious bias, unconscious bias and misconceptions by increasing: positive perceptions; social awareness; recognition of skills; and expectations around the valuable contribution people with disability make in the workplace.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Committee will:

- provide expert advice to the Department of Social Services (the department)/Government to inform the development of the Employment Strategy on:
 - the employment opportunities people with disability are seeking
 - actions to improve employment outcomes,
 - creating meaningful pathways to career progression, and
 - empowering employers to confidently recruit and manage people with disability.

Any discussion and materials provided to the DEAC are to be kept confidential, unless it is agreed by all committee members the information can be shared more broadly.

Timing

The inaugural meeting will be on 1 September 2020, with the DEAC ceasing July 2021.

Governance

The DEAC will provide advice to the department to inform the development of the Employment Strategy.

DEAC Sub-Groups

Establishment of sub-groups, including representation on sub-groups will be the responsibility of DEAC members. DEAC members may share information with sub-group members, who will also be bound by these Terms of Reference. Any established sub-group must:

- have a defined role with a targeted outcome/action item which supports the development of the Employment Strategy
- be time-limited, and
- report outcomes to back to the DEAC.

The department will provide support to sub-groups as required.

Duties of the Joint Chairs

The Joint Chairs are identified in the list of members.

The role of the Joint Chairs is to:

- approve the agenda for each meeting
- direct business at the Committee meetings, ensuring the committee is operating within this terms of reference, and
- promote participation by members during meetings.

Observers and attendees

- Observers are invited at the discretion of the Joint Chairs.
- Attendees may be invited to speak on a specific topic or agenda item.

Meetings

- The DEAC will meet as required via videoconference, or as determined by the Joint Chairs.
- Out of session papers may be circulated with approval of a Joint Chair, and shall be recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled meeting.
- Meeting papers will be circulated electronically as soon as possible, in advance of scheduled meetings, unless agreed by a Joint Chair.

Secretariat

- The department will undertake Secretariat functions unless otherwise directed by the Joint Chairs.
- Should it be required, the Secretariat will circulate action items and meeting minutes to the DEAC following approval of a Joint Chair, within the time frames specified in the protocols.

Conflict of interest

All members of the DEAC will declare all existing or potential conflicts of interest, and stand aside when the majority of Committee members consider the conflict of interest may have undue influence on the members' ability to remain impartial.