



The Hon Peter Dutton MP

Minister for Workforce Participation

Welfare to Work – Increasing participation of people with a disability

What funding is the government committing to increase participation of people with a disability?

- ▶ The Government will provide additional funding of \$554.6 million over four years to assist people with a disability. Of this, \$482.3 million over four years will be spent on employment related assistance.

Why is the Government introducing these changes for people with disabilities?

- ▶ To assist people with disabilities who can work 15 or more hours a week into work.

What are the changes to the Disability Support Pension?

- ▶ People on the Disability Support Pension (DSP) prior to 1 July 2006 and who stay on DSP will not be affected.
- ▶ From 1 July 2006, people with a disability who have the capacity to work 15 hours or more a week within a two year period, at award wages in the open labour market, will receive Newstart Allowance (NSA) or Youth Allowance (YA), if they meet the means test and other eligibility criteria.
- ▶ People applying for DSP between 11 May 2005 and 30 June 2006 will be assessed for DSP under the existing 30 hours test. However they will be reassessed in periodic reviews (usually every two or five years) against the 15-29 hours test after 1 July 2006. Those able to work 15-29 hours per week will have a part-time obligation to seek work and receive enhanced Newstart.
- ▶ People who are permanently blind will continue to be eligible for the DSP.
- ▶ People who leave the DSP because of earnings from work will be able to return to the DSP, for any reason, within two years.

What other allowances and incentives are available to job seekers with disabilities?

- ▶ NSA and YA recipients with disabilities with a work capacity between 15 and 29 hours a week will receive the Pensioner Concession Card (PCC), Pharmaceutical Allowance and Telephone Allowance.

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- ▶ Mobility Allowance will be increased to \$100 per fortnight for people on NSA or YA with an assessed work capacity of 15-29 hours a week, and for those people on DSP being assisted with job search by an employment service provider. If these people increase their hours of work to move off income support they will retain eligibility for Mobility Allowance.
- ▶ Job seekers with an assessed work capacity of 15-29 hours a week and who are on income support will be eligible for an Employment Entry Payment (EEP) of \$312.
- ▶ People with disabilities who move into work will be able to keep the PCC for 12 months if they lose entitlement to DSP, NSA or YA because of earnings.

What are the new obligations for people with disabilities with a capacity to work 15 hours or more a week?

- ▶ People with a disability who are receiving income support and are assessed as being able to work 15 hours or more a week in the open labour market within a two year period will be required to undertake job search activities and have part time Mutual Obligation requirements.
- ▶ Mutual Obligation requirements include activities such as part-time employment or education or part time Work for the Dole.

How will these obligations be applied to older people with disabilities or people who are temporarily unable to work due to illness, injury or disability?

- ▶ NSA recipients aged 55 or over who have partial work capacity due to disability will be able to satisfy their participation requirements through volunteer work.
- ▶ Job seekers with temporary medical conditions will have new flexible participation requirements and be expected to participate in suitable activities to help them prepare for work. Requirements will be flexible to ensure they do not exceed a person's capacity. People who cannot participate in any suitable programs of assistance will be exempt from the activity test.



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How will work capacity be assessed?

- ▶ New comprehensive work capacity assessments, to be conducted by relevant rehabilitation professionals, will determine medical impairment, work capacity, intervention needs and referral options.
- ▶ Comprehensive work capacity assessors will have access to a new stream of funds – the pre-vocational account, to help people with short term rehabilitation interventions where appropriate.

What extra services will be available to help people with disabilities to get jobs?

- ▶ The Government is providing extra employment services to assist more people in:
 - ▶ disability open employment services;
 - ▶ Job Network;
 - ▶ vocational rehabilitation; and
 - ▶ the Personal Support Programme.