

Parent Pathways Guidelines

Part B: Operational Guidance

Disclaimer

This Guideline is not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of Provider obligations. It must be read in conjunction with the *Parent Pathways Deed 2024-2027* (the Deed), including any relevant Guidelines and reference material issued by Department of Employment and Workplace Relations under or in connection with the Deed.

This Guideline is not legal advice, and the Commonwealth accepts no liability for any action purportedly taken in reliance upon it and assumes no responsibility for the delivery of the Services. This Guideline does not reduce the obligation of Providers to comply with their relevant legal obligations and, to the extent that this Guideline is inconsistent with obligations under the Privacy Act, Social Security Law, the WHS Laws or any other legislation or laws relevant to the respective jurisdictions in which Providers operate, the relevant legislation or laws will prevail.

Version History

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In this version of the Guideline, updates to supporting document links and titles have been made throughout the document, and the following Chapters have been updated:

- Planning, Engagement and Review Phases
- Provider Payments
- Parent Funds
- Attachments

A full version history of this Guideline can be found on the Archived Guidelines page on the Provider Portal.

Related information

Reference information and websites relevant to this Guideline include:

- Learning Centre

- [Records Management, Privacy and External Systems Assurance Framework Guideline](#)
- [Fair Work Act 2009 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Social Security Act 1991](#)
- [Social Security \(Administration\) Act 1999](#)
- [Guide to Social Security Law](#)
- [Fair Work Ombudsman - Minimum Wages](#)
- [Child Care Subsidy information](#)

Contents

Guideline Interpretation and Glossary	7
Chapter 1. The Service Offer	8
1.1. Planning phase	8
1.2. Engagement phase	8
1.3. Review phase	8
Chapter 2. Connections and Eligibility	9
2.1. Overview	9
2.1.1. Types of Connections	10
2.2. Eligibility	12
2.2.1. Eligible Parents or Carers	12
2.3. Ineligible Parents or Carers	12
2.4. Initial Contact	13
2.5. Initial Contact is not made - Parents connected by Services Australia	15
Chapter 3. Planning, Engagement and Review Phases	16
3.1. Overview	16
3.2. Initial Discussion	16
3.3. Appointments and Contacts	19
3.3.1. Scheduling Appointments	19
3.3.2. Rescheduling Appointments	20
3.3.3. New Connections	20
3.3.4. Location of Appointments	21
3.4. Commencement	22
3.4.1. Privacy and Consent	22
3.4.2. Checking Eligibility	22
3.4.3. Registration	23
3.4.4. Commencing a Participant referred from ParentsNext	24
3.4.5. Commencement	24
3.4.6. Assigning a Mentor	25
3.4.7. Parent Snapshot	25
3.4.8. Follow-up Discussions	25
3.4.9. Check-In Appointments	26
3.4.10. 12 Month Review	27
Chapter 4. Goal Plans	29
4.1. Overview	29
4.2. Goal Plans	29
4.2.1. Goal Plan Status	29
4.2.2. Developing Goal Plans	30
4.2.3. Explaining Goal Plans to Participants	31
4.2.4. Participant goals	31
4.2.5. Setting up a Goal Plan	31
4.3. Goal Plan Reviews	32
4.3.1. Goal Plan change request - Updating a Goal Plan that is awaiting agreement	32
4.3.2. Goal Plan change request - Updating an agreed Goal Plan	32
Chapter 5. Activities	35
5.1. Overview	35
5.1.1. Arranging Activities	35
5.1.2. Inappropriate and excluded Activities	36
5.2. Managing work health and safety for Activities	37
5.2.1. Managing work health and safety	37

5.2.2.	Ensuring Work Health and Safety measures are in place	37
5.2.3.	Managing work health and safety on Specified Activities	38
5.3.	<i>Risk Assessments</i>	38
5.3.1.	Risk Assessment Considerations	39
5.3.2.	Reviewing, Maintaining and Updating Risk Assessments	40
5.4.	<i>Managing Activity-related Incidents</i>	41
5.4.1.	Work health and safety incidents	43
5.4.2.	Insurance coverage for Participants	44
5.5.	<i>Complementary Activities</i>	45
5.5.1.	Self-Employment Assistance Program (S-EA)	46
5.5.2.	Career Transition Assistance (CTA)	47
5.5.3.	Employability Skills Training (EST)	48
5.5.4.	Voluntary Work	50
5.5.5.	Observational Work Experience (OWE)	52
5.5.6.	Skills for Education and Employment (SEE)	53
5.5.7.	Transition to Work (TtW)	54
5.5.8.	Workforce Australia Digital Platform Online Individuals	55
Chapter 6.	Pauses, Transfers, Exits and Post Placement Support	56
6.1.	<i>Overview</i>	56
6.2.	<i>Pauses</i>	56
6.2.1.	Effect of Pauses	56
6.2.2.	Management during a Pause	57
6.2.3.	Delivery of Service following cessation of a Pause	58
6.3.	<i>Transfers</i>	58
6.3.1.	Transfers to and from Providers	58
6.3.2.	Transfers between Provider Sites	58
6.4.	<i>Exits</i>	59
6.4.1.	Parent or Carer not yet Registered	60
6.5.	<i>Recommencements</i>	60
6.6.	<i>Vacancy Management</i>	61
6.6.1.	Checking Minimum Wage	61
6.6.2.	Placing a Participant in a Vacancy	62
6.7.	<i>Post Placement Support</i>	62
6.7.1.	Post Placement Support Overview	62
6.7.2.	Offering a Period of Post Placement Support	62
6.7.3.	Post Placement Support Period	63
6.7.4.	Ending a Post Placement Support Period - resume normal servicing	64
6.7.5.	Automatic Exits following Post Placement Support	64
6.8.	<i>Transition Support and Warm Handovers for Participants moving to employment services</i>	64
6.8.1.	Transition Support	65
6.8.2.	Warm Handovers	65
6.8.3.	Initiating a Warm Handover	66
6.8.4.	The Warm Handover Appointment	66
Chapter 7.	Provider Payments	68
7.1.	<i>Overview</i>	68
7.2.	<i>Service Fee Entitlements</i>	68
7.2.1.	Service Fees Overview	68
7.2.2.	Payment Periods	69
7.2.3.	Advance Payment Calculations	69
7.2.4.	Offsetting the Advance Payment	69
7.3.	<i>Community and Parent Engagement Fund</i>	70
7.3.1.	Community and Parent Engagement Fund Overview	70

7.3.2.	Timing of Payments	70
7.3.3.	Site changes	71
7.3.4.	Eligible purchases	71
7.3.5.	Ineligible Purchases	72
7.3.6.	Separate Bank Account	72
7.3.7.	Acquittal Process	73
7.3.8.	Documentary Evidence	74
7.3.9.	Recovery of Funds	74
7.4.	<i>Capacity Building Fund</i>	74
7.4.1.	Overview	74
7.4.2.	Organisational eligibility	74
7.4.3.	Accessing the Fund	74
7.4.4.	Eligible expenses	75
7.4.5.	Cyber security costs	76
7.4.6.	Right Fit for Risk	76
Chapter 8.	Parent Funds	77
8.1.	<i>Overview</i>	77
8.1.1.	Parent Funds Eligibility	77
8.1.2.	Parent Funds Principles	77
8.1.3.	Eligible Purchases	78
8.1.4.	Privacy considerations when making purchases	78
8.1.5.	Creating commitments	78
8.1.6.	Claiming Reimbursement	79
8.1.7.	Prohibited Purchases	81
8.1.8.	Recovery of Payments	83
8.1.9.	Summary of Documentary Evidence	83
8.2.	<i>Individual Fund</i>	84
8.2.1.	Individual Fund Overview	84
8.2.2.	Gaining consent through the Goal Plan	85
8.2.3.	Transfers and Exits and the impact on credits	85
8.2.4.	Engagement Support	86
8.3.	<i>Pooled Fund</i>	87
8.3.1.	Pooled Fund Overview	87
8.3.2.	Transfers, Exits and the Impact on Credits	88
Chapter 9.	Wage Subsidy	89
9.1.	<i>Overview</i>	89
9.2.	<i>Wage Subsidy Eligibility Requirements</i>	90
9.2.1.	Participant Eligibility	90
9.2.2.	Employer Eligibility	90
9.2.3.	Placement Eligibility	92
9.3.	<i>Offering and Negotiating Wage Subsidy Agreements</i>	93
9.3.1.	Head Agreements and Schedules	93
9.3.2.	Negotiating Terms of the Wage Subsidy	93
9.3.3.	Time requirements for approving a Wage Subsidy	94
9.4.	<i>Payments to Wage Subsidy Employers</i>	95
9.4.1.	Assessing Periods of Leave	95
9.4.2.	Change of Business Ownership	96
9.4.3.	Calculating Payments for Early Terminations	96
9.4.4.	Wage Subsidy Calculator	96
9.4.5.	Concurrent Funding	97
9.4.6.	Wage Subsidy Employers Not Registered for GST	97
9.5.	<i>Claims for Reimbursement</i>	97

9.5.1.	Time requirements for claiming a Reimbursement	97
9.5.2.	Recovery of Reimbursement Claims Paid	98
9.6.	<i>Managing Wage Subsidy Agreements for Wage Subsidy Participants</i>	98
9.6.1.	Supporting Participants on Wage Subsidies	98
9.6.2.	Managing Wage Subsidy Agreements for Transferred Participants	99
9.7.	<i>Summary of Documentary Evidence</i>	99
9.7.1.	Wage Subsidy Agreements	99
9.7.2.	Evidence from Wage Subsidy Employers – Participant Employment	99
9.7.3.	Evidence from Provider – Claims for Reimbursement	100
Chapter 10.	Relocation Assistance	102
10.1.	<i>Overview</i>	102
10.2.	<i>Eligibility</i>	102
10.2.1.	Participant Eligibility	102
10.2.2.	Placement Eligibility	102
10.3.	<i>Relocation Assistance Payments</i>	102
10.3.1.	Definition of a dependent	103
10.4.	<i>Claims for Reimbursement</i>	104
Chapter 11.	Sites	106
11.1.	<i>Overview</i>	106
11.2.	<i>Site types and definitions</i>	106
11.3.	<i>Site requirements</i>	106
11.3.1.	General requirements	106
11.3.2.	Accessibility	107
11.3.3.	Parent Pathways Material	107
11.3.4.	Co-located Sites	107
11.4.	<i>Site details</i>	107
11.5.	<i>Site visits</i>	108
11.6.	<i>Site Changes</i>	108
Chapter 12.	Provider Performance	110
12.1.	<i>Overview</i>	110
12.2.	<i>Performance Modules</i>	110
12.3.	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>	110
12.4.	<i>Frequency of Performance Assessments</i>	110
12.5.	<i>Underperformance</i>	111
Chapter 13.	Provider Requirements	112
13.1.	<i>Provider Level Servicing</i>	112
13.1.1.	Information Technology systems	112
13.1.2.	Staff Requirements	112
13.1.3.	Ratios	113
13.1.4.	Qualifications	113
13.1.5.	Lived Experience	115
13.1.6.	Provider Staff - Training	115
13.1.7.	General Assistance to Participants	116
13.2.	<i>Feedback and Continuous Improvement</i>	118
13.2.1.	Community of Practice	118
13.2.2.	Complaints and Participant Feedback Process	119
Chapter 14.	Attachments	120
Attachment A.	<i>Goal Plan Categories</i>	120
Attachment B.	<i>Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements</i>	123
Attachment C.	<i>Wage Subsidy Types and Participant Eligibility Requirements</i>	138
Attachment D.	<i>Manual Approach for Workforce Australia Wage Subsidy Agreements</i>	140

Guideline Interpretation and Glossary

Reading Notes

In this Guideline, 'must' means that compliance is mandatory and 'should' means that compliance represents best practice for Providers and is expected by the Department.

While reading this document, please note the following Icons and their meaning:



This icon represents 'System Steps' – information contained under this dot point will relate to usage of the Department's IT System.



This icon represents 'Work, Health and Safety Steps' – information contained under this dot point will relate to matters of work, health, and safety.



This icon represents 'Documentary Evidence' – information contained under this dot point will relate to matters of Documentary Evidence.

Glossary

All capitalised terms in this Guideline have the same meaning as in the Deed unless otherwise defined below.

'Carer' refers to a Grandparent, Foster Carer or Kinship Carer who has primary responsibility for caring for a child under the age of 6 years and is yet to Register for Parent Pathways.

'Engagement Method' means the method in which Appointments and Contacts take place, these can be face-to-face, **online** or over the phone.

'Family Member' means, in relation to and for the purposes of a Wage Subsidy, a particular individual (such as a Participant or an Employer):

- any spouse, de facto partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling, including where any of these are adopted relations, of the particular individual;
- any child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling, including where any of these are adopted relations, of the spouse or de facto partner of the particular individual; or
- any in-law of any individual referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) above, including any in-law of the particular individual.

'Parent' means the person who is a primary carer of a child under the age of 6 years and is yet to Register for Parent Pathways.

'Transition Support' refers to support provided by a Mentor to Participants after their youngest child turns 5 years and 6 months and the Participant is likely to have mutual obligation requirements to participate in employment services when their youngest child turns 6 years.

'Warm handovers' are part of Transition Support and refers to an optional 3-way meeting between the Participant, Parent Pathways Mentor and employment service provider. Warm handovers will occur at the first Appointment with the employment services provider, after the Participant has Exited Parent Pathways after their youngest child turns 6 years and when the Parent notifies their Mentor of the Appointment details.

Chapter 1. The Service Offer

Parent Pathways services will be delivered over 3 phases (Figure 1).

1.1. Planning phase

In the first 4 weeks after a Participant Commences, Mentors must help Participants to identify their strengths, abilities, experience and needs so Participants can determine their personal goals. Mentors must help Participants identify local activity and support options. Further information regarding the Planning phase is outlined in the [Planning, Engagement and Review Phases Chapter](#).

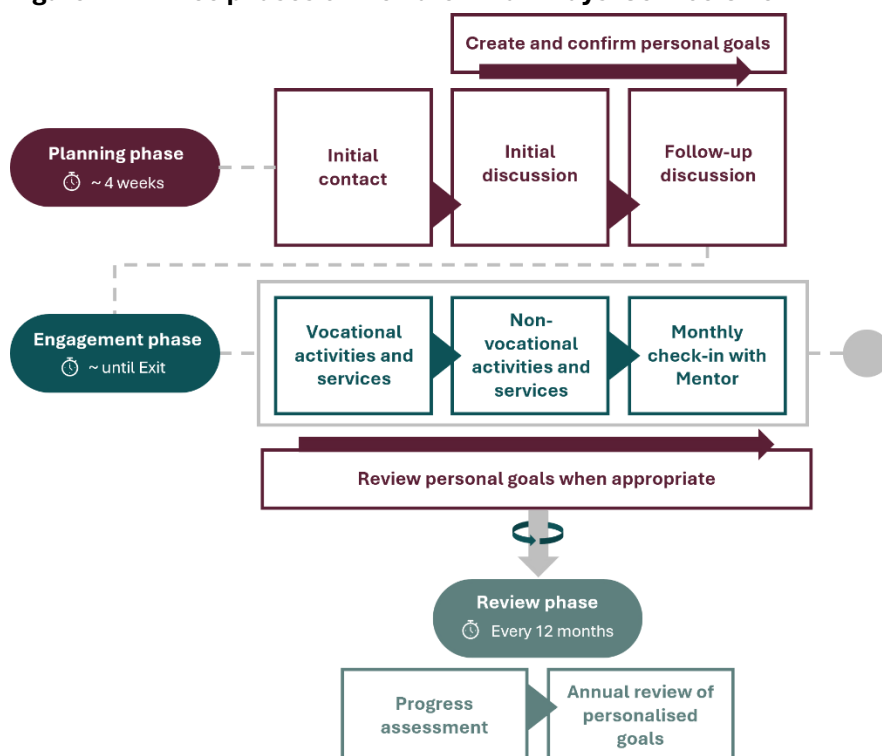
1.2. Engagement phase

Participants will be supported by their Mentor to participate in activities or services they have chosen during the development of their Goal Plan. Participants may choose to have weekly contacts, and Monthly Check-Ins with their Mentor, or Appointments, depending on their preferred arrangement and Engagement Method. Participants will be able to discuss their progress with their Mentor and move to new activities when they are ready. Further information on Appointments and Contacts is outlined in the [Planning, Engagement and Review Phases Chapter](#).

1.3. Review phase

After each 12 months of servicing, the Mentor must review and discuss the Goal Plan with the Participant, including their progress, activities, and identified goals. Mentors must update Goal Plans, support strategies and activities where needed. This phase runs concurrently with the Engagement phase. Further information on the Review phase is outlined in the [12 Month Review section](#).

Figure 1-A: Three phases of the Parent Pathways' Service Offer



Chapter 2. Connections and Eligibility

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Parent Pathways Fact Sheet for Participants](#)
- [Privacy Notification and Consent Form](#)
- [Parent Pathways - Direct Registration Form](#)

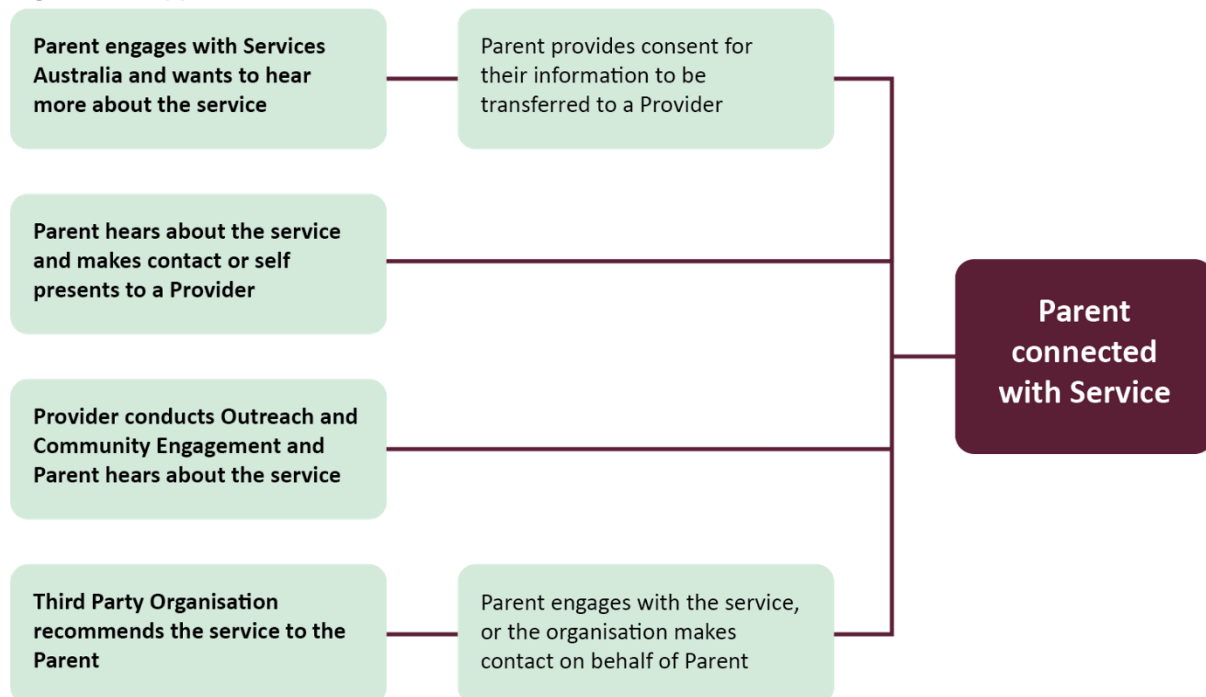
2.1. Overview

This Chapter outlines the following ways a Parent or Carer can connect to Parent Pathways:

- Services Australia connects a Parent or Carer over the phone or face-to-face and shares their information with the Department.
- A Parent directly registers their interest via the Centrelink self-service platform through myGov.
- A Provider recruits the Parent through Provider Outreach or Community Engagement.
- Parent or Carer presents themselves to a Provider over the phone or face-to-face.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 89, Attachment 1)

Figure 2-A: Types of Connections



2.1.1. Types of Connections

Services Australia

Services Australia staff can connect Parents or Carers to Parent Pathways by sharing their information with the Department. Providers must have a conversation with the Parent or Carer about engaging with the service. This will require the following steps:

1. Services Australia staff makes an offer to Parents or Carers to hear more from a Provider and the Parent or Carer accepts.
2. Parent or Carer consents to Services Australia sharing their information to the Department.
3. If the Parent or Carer is Eligible, the Department's IT System creates a pending Connection referral to a Provider based on the postcode in which they reside. The Parent or Carer will be connected to the Site closest to their residential address, in the Provider's Service Area.
4. The Parent or Carer contact details will be loaded to the Provider's dashboard for the Provider to make contact with the Parent or Carer to promote the benefits of Parent Pathways and encourage their engagement in the service.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 89.1(a), 89.1(b)(i)(B), Attachment 1)

Centrelink Online Account

Eligible Parents or Carers who receive a qualifying income support payment can directly register their interest to be connected to a Provider via the self-service function in their Centrelink Online Account linked in myGov. The following steps will occur:

1. After the Parent or Carer registers their interest and provides their consent to Services Australia sharing their information to the Department via the self-service function in their myGov Centrelink Online Account, Services Australia will send the Parent or Carer's details to the Department's IT System.
2. If the Parent or Carer is Eligible, the Department's IT System creates a pending Connection referral to a Provider based on the postcode in which they reside. The Parent or Carer will be connected to a Site closest to their residential address, in the Provider's Service area.
3. Parent or Carer contact details will be loaded to the Provider's dashboard for the Provider to contact the Parent or Carer to promote the benefits of Parent Pathways and to encourage their engagement in the service.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 89.1(a), 89.1(b)(i)(B), Attachment 1)

Community and Parent Engagement

Providers must actively recruit new Parents or Carers by holding promotional activities in their Service Area. Activities may include holding a stall (obtain relevant permission first) at a local community hub, shopping centre, community events or local libraries, or engaging with local services to display and distribute promotional flyers at childcare centres, playgroups, or family health clinics. Providers can use their Community and Parent Engagement Fund (CPEF) to pay for promotional activities outlined in the [CPEF section of Provider Payments Chapter](#).

Participation in Parent Pathways is completely voluntary. When engaging with Parents or Carers who may be interested in participating in Parent Pathways, Providers must explain the benefits of the

service to Parents or Carers, including the Engagement Support voucher to encourage participation. However, Providers must accept the Parent or Carer's decision if they do not wish to participate. Providers must not force or pressure a Parent or Carer into participating in Parent Pathways.

If Parents or Carers express an interest in Parent Pathways, Providers must:

- confirm the Parent or Carer is Eligible for Parent Pathways (see [Eligible Parents or Carers](#)). Any information collected from the Parent or Carer must be stored in accordance with [Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines](#).
- organise a time to meet with the Parent or Carer to undertake an Initial Discussion. As the Parent or Carer is not yet on the Provider's Caseload, it is not possible to schedule an Initial Discussion Appointment in the Department's IT Systems. Providers must create a Provider Event for the Initial Discussion, so it is visible in the Provider Calendar in the Department's IT System.
- meet with the Parent or Carer at the agreed time and go through the [Initial Discussion](#) requirements.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 89.1 (b)(ii), Attachment 1)

Parent or Carer directly presents to Provider

Parents and Carers may directly present (via phone or in person) at a Provider's Site without a Connection from Services Australia. Where a Parent or Carer expresses an interest in the service directly to a Provider, the Provider must explain to the Parent or Carer the services that will be delivered and the benefits of participating in Parent Pathways.

If the Parent or Carer confirms they are interested, the Provider must then:

- confirm the Parent or Carer is Eligible for Parent Pathways (see [Eligible Parents or Carers](#)).
- ask to collect information such as contact details to facilitate an Initial Discussion, noting that any information collected from the Parent or Carer must be stored in accordance with the Records Management Instructions, the Department's Security Policies, and the Privacy Act. See [Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines for more information](#).
- organise a time to meet with the Parent or Carer to undertake an Initial Discussion (this can be straight away if a Mentor is available and the Participant would like this). As the Parent or Carer is not yet on the Provider's Caseload, it is not possible to schedule an Initial Discussion Appointment in the Department's IT Systems. Providers must create a Provider Event for the Initial Discussion so it is visible in the Provider calendar.
- meet with the Parent or Carer at the agreed time and go through the [Initial Discussion](#) requirements.

Where a Parent or Carer is deemed to be ineligible for Parent Pathways, the Provider should, if appropriate and with the Parent or Carer's agreement, refer them to either:

- a relevant support service (if the individual is in crisis), or
- another service that may be of assistance.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 89.1 (b)(ii), 89.2 Attachment 1)

2.2. Eligibility

Before Commencing a Parent or Carer, the Provider must be satisfied that the Participant is Eligible by checking the Eligibility requirements outlined below.

2.2.1. Eligible Parents or Carers

To be Eligible to participate in Parent Pathways, Parents or Carers must:

- be a primary carer of a youngest child aged under 6, and
- not be in paid employment (that is, they declare they are not in employment and have not declared earnings to Services Australia in the previous reporting fortnight) at the point of Commencement in the service, and
- be living in a non-remote area (that is, an Employment Region).

In addition, they must be either:

- in receipt of one of the following income support payments:
 - Parenting Payment Single, or
 - Parenting Payment Partnered, or
 - Carer Payment, or
 - Special Benefit.
- not in receipt of an income support payment and:
 - under 22 years old, or
 - an Early School Leaver (that is, someone who has not completed the final year of school or an equivalent or higher level of education), or
 - a First Nations Australian.

Only Australian residents, including Australian citizens, permanent visa holders, or nominated Visa Holders (including a New Zealand Special Category Visa, Temporary Protection Visa Holder, and a Safe Haven Visa Holder) can participate in Parent Pathways.

Participants can be Parents, but also Carers, grandparents, foster carers, kinship carers and any other form of primary carer relationship, if they meet the eligibility criteria above.

Note that Participants who start work after Commencing in the service remain eligible to participate in Parent Pathways. See the [Post Placement Support Chapter](#) for more details on servicing requirements.

(Deed Reference(s): Attachment 1)

2.3. Ineligible Parents or Carers

Ineligible Parents and Carers include those who are:

- under the age of 15
- not an Australian resident or do not have the right to work in Australia

- incarcerated, or
- participating in Workforce Australia Services, Workforce Australia Online Full Service or Disability Employment Services.

(Deed Reference(s): Attachment 1)

2.4. Initial Contact

Upon Connection through Services Australia, the Provider dashboard will present the Parent or Carer's contact details. Providers must attempt to contact the Parent or Carer within 2 business days (for advice on timing for Parents connecting from ParentsNext see ParentsNext transition advice) of receiving the contact details from Services Australia. Providers must make up to 4 attempts to make the Initial Contact. If the first 3 attempts via phone are unsuccessful, the Provider must send a letter to the Parent or Carer as a final attempt to make contact. See [Initial Contact is not made](#) section.

The Initial Contact is the first step in the Planning Phase of the Service Offer. During the Initial Contact the Provider must:

- ask the Parent or Carer if they require a gender-specific Mentor. If they request a gender which is different to that of the staff member making the Initial Contact, ask if they would like to proceed with the Initial Contact or would like a call back from a staff member of their preferred gender
- explain to the Parent or Carer the services that will be delivered to them and how they can benefit from Parent Pathways, including the financial support that is available to them, and eligibility
- explain that the Service is voluntary, and that support provided is based on what the Parent or Carer chooses is right for them, and which fits in with their caring responsibilities. As the Service is voluntary, their income support payment will not be impacted if, at any time, they are unable to participate in the service
- inform the Parent or Carer that their contact details and information on privacy and consent will be discussed at the Initial Discussion.

Where the Parent or Carer agrees to continue, the Provider must:

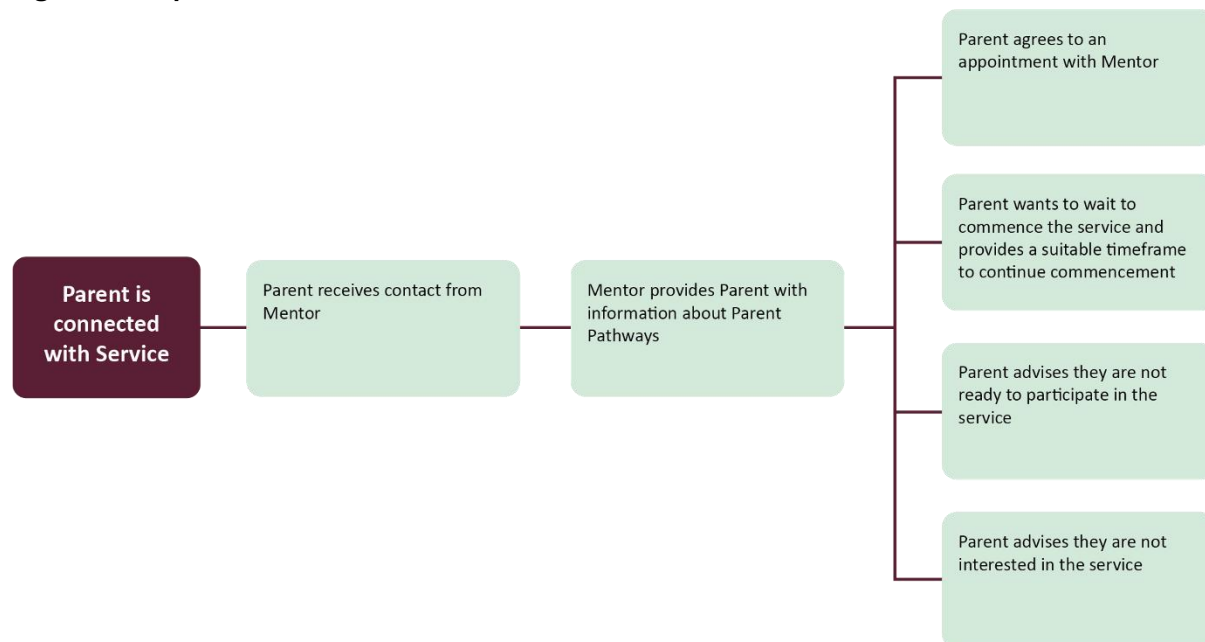
- organise a suitable time for the Initial Discussion to take place (this can be on the same day as the Initial Contact if the Participant requests this)
- check if the Parent or Carer requires an interpreter and arrange one if required, as well as any other adjustments the Parent or Carer may require so they can participate in the Initial Discussion - for example assistance with parking or transport to attend the Appointment
- advise that they can bring their child with them to the Initial Discussion Appointment and, for Parents or Carers who would like to access child care in the future, help with finding child care or accessing subsidies will be provided once they have Commenced
- advise the Parent or Carer to bring acceptable forms of proof of identity to the Appointment if available, and, if not, the Provider can assist the Parent or Carer in obtaining these
- assign a Mentor to the Parent or Carer in the Department's IT Systems. The Department may use this information to help determine Mentor to Participant ratios. See the [Workforce](#)

After providing the information above, the Provider must seek the Parent or Carer's preferred choice on their pathway, the table below outlines the options and associated steps.

Table 2-A: Parent Response to Initial Contact

Parent or Carer Response	Provider Step
Would like to participate and Commence in Parent Pathways straight away.	Provider must ensure a Mentor is assigned to the Parent or Carer and arrange for the Mentor to book in and conduct an Initial Discussion.
Wishes to wait before Commencing in Parent Pathways and provides a suitable timeframe for Commencement.	Provider creates a reminder that contact is due on the date provided - task management.
	Provider is presented with open task on the dashboard on the date provided.
	Provider accesses the task and makes a call to the Parent or Carer.
Is not ready to participate in Parent Pathways at this time and does not provide a timeframe.	Provider manually exits the Parent or Carer by selecting the exit reason 'No longer wishes to participate'.
Is not interested in Parent Pathways at this time.	Provider manually exits the Parent or Carer by selecting the exit reason 'No longer wishes to participate'.

Figure 2-B: Options for a Parent at Connection



After the Parent or Carer confirms they would like to Commence in Parent Pathways, they may choose to continue the Initial Discussion that day if time allows. Some Parents or Carers may have relevant identity documents with them, however, if not, the Mentor may ask the Parent or Carer to obtain

verification of their identity from a trusted referee (for example, a social worker) or a reputable organisation.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses: 93.3 (a), 94.4, 96, 97, Attachment 1)

2.5. Initial Contact is not made - Parents connected by Services Australia

To undertake an Initial Contact, the Provider must make the first attempt to make Initial Contact via a phone call within 2 Business Days of receiving the connection from Services Australia (that is, when the Provider dashboard shows the Parent or Carer's contact details).

Where the first call is unsuccessful, the Provider must make an additional attempt by phone call. Repeat attempt again if unsuccessful the second time.

Contact attempts must not be more than 2 weeks apart and they must not exceed 2 phone call attempts in the same week.

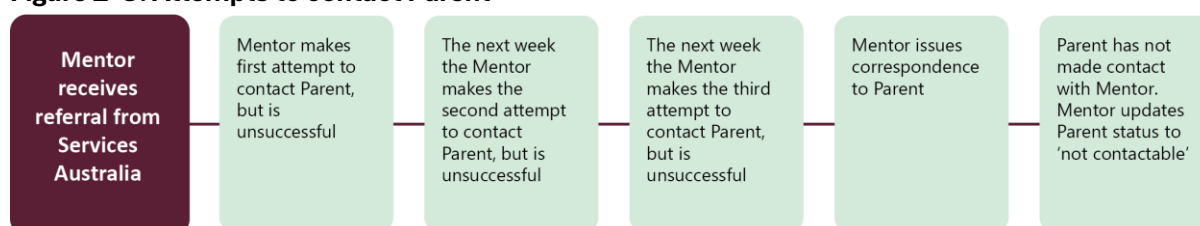
If a third attempt is unsuccessful, the Provider must issue correspondence via letter (by post or email) and make a note in the Parent or Carer's summary screen that a letter has been sent.

If contact with the Parent or Carer has not been made within an 8-week timeframe, or the Provider has been informed that the Parent or Carer is no longer interested in engaging in the Service, the Provider must manually Exit the Parent or Carer by using the exit reason: 'Participant not contactable' or 'No longer wishes to participate'.



For every attempt to communicate with the Parent or Carer, the Provider must make a note in the Department's IT Systems, stating; contact type, time, contact details and outcome of the communication.

Figure 2-C: Attempts to contact Parent



If a Parent or Carer is not contactable, the Exit reason must be 'Participant not contactable'.



If a Parent or Carer has been contacted and advises they are not interested, the Exit reason must be 'No longer wishes to participate'.

Chapter 3. Planning, Engagement and Review Phases

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Privacy Notification and Consent Form](#)
- [Parent Pathways - Direct Registration Form](#)
- [Parent Pathways - Brochure](#)
- [Service Guarantee and Key Service Commitments](#)
- [Parent Snapshot Supporting Document](#)

3.1. Overview

This chapter continues to provide guidance on the Planning Phase of Parent Pathways (Initial Contact, Initial Discussion and Follow-Up Discussion), the Engagement Phase (Monthly Check-In), and the Review Phase (12 Month Review). These phases encompass the day-to-day operations of Parent Pathways.

3.2. Initial Discussion

Initial Discussions are an opportunity for Mentors to build rapport and set the scene for a supportive working relationship that is tailored to the unique circumstances of the Parent or Carer. This relationship will be the basis for the delivery of services. Mentors must have an Initial Discussion with:

- Parents or Carers who are engaging following Connection from Services Australia
- Participants transferring from another Parent Pathways Provider
- Parents or Carers who Direct Register by approaching a Provider
- Parents or Carers that have been recruited following Provider Outreach and Engagement.

The Initial Discussion must be scheduled for at least 90 minutes but can be longer at the discretion of the Provider.

During the Initial Discussion, the Mentor must confirm the Parent or Carer wishes to participate in Parent Pathways. If the Parent or Carer advises they do not wish to continue, the Mentor must Exit them (this step is only possible if they have been connected by Services Australia).

If the Parent or Carer confirms they would like to participate in Parent Pathways, the Mentor must:

- Explain the benefits of participating in Parent Pathways.
- Refer them to, or provide a copy of, the [Parent Pathways Brochure](#).
- Outline the objectives of the service.
- Explain the services and support available, including access to financial assistance to undertake activities (for example: accredited and non-accredited training, non-vocational activities, transport assistance, child care assistance).

- Identify the elements of the Service that are of most interest to the Parent or Carer through an open discussion.
- Outline what the [Individual Fund](#) and [Pooled Funds](#) are and how they differ.
- Provide a copy of the Service Guarantee (which includes information on the Individual Fund and Pooled Funds and what they can be used for to support a Participant to achieve their identified goals) and Key Service Commitments.
- Explain to Parenting Payment recipients that if they choose to participate, their Parenting Payment will not be impacted if they do not attend Appointments or Activities.
- Explain to Carer Payment recipients that they may participate in the Service and Activities for up to 25 hours per week while receiving their Payment. Refer to Carer Payment information - [Time off to work, study or train if you get Carer payment - Carer Payment - Services Australia](#).
- Provide the Parent Pathways [Privacy Notification and Consent Form](#) to the Parent or Carer (unless organised earlier), explain the form and the types of Personal Information they may be required to provide and how this information will be used and disclosed.
- Obtain a signed Privacy Notification and Consent Form from the Parent or Carer.
 - note that if the Parent or Carer is a Services Australia customer, to participate in Parent Pathways, they are only required to consent to the collection of personal information from Services Australia. Consent to the collection of sensitive information is not required to participate.
- Retain the signed [Privacy Notification and Consent Form](#), in accordance with Records Management Instructions, the Department's Security Policies, and the Privacy Act. See Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines for more information.
- Commence the Parent or Carer in the Department's IT Systems (once the Parent or Carer has Commenced, they will be referred to as Participants. For more information, please see [Commencements](#)).
- Support Participants to identify their strengths, skills, experience, and circumstances by taking a strengths-based practice approach and by completing the Parent Snapshot ([see Parent Snapshot section](#)).
- Offer the Participant an Engagement Support voucher.
- Explain that Parent Pathways content such as Goal Plans can be viewed using the Workforce Australia Online digital platform. Support the Participant to sign up if they agree.
- Identify a date and time to book the next Appointment for [Follow-Up Discussion](#) with the Participant and confirm the Participant's preference for Engagement Method; either face-to-face (also agree to location), via phone or online.
- Ask the Participant what their preferred Engagement Method is for future Contacts and record their response in the Department's IT system.

Providers must conduct Initial Discussions with new Participants face-to-face.

In exceptional circumstances, an Initial Discussion may be conducted via another format such as online or by phone. Circumstances where it is unreasonable for Providers to require a Participant to attend face-to-face include where:

- it is not safe, including where face-to-face Service delivery:
 - cannot be carried out in a safe manner
 - is inappropriate for the relevant Participant, the Provider's staff and others from a work health and safety perspective; and
 - is not permitted by or is inconsistent with any other legal requirement
- they reside in an area that is affected by:
 - extreme weather conditions
 - a natural disaster
 - lack of access to reasonable transport
- cultural reasons
- travel time and/or cost is not reasonable
- the Participant has an ongoing medical condition and will not be medically fit to attend in person for at least two weeks and wishes to proceed with the Appointment rather than reschedule.

Note: If an Initial Discussion is conducted online or by phone, the Participant must email their identity documents to the Provider (preferably prior to their Initial Discussion). The Provider must not retain this information and must delete the email once the Participant has been Commenced in the service.

If a Participant is unable to attend the Initial Discussion in person due to minor illness or any other reason, the Initial Discussion should be rescheduled for a time suitable for the Participant.

Where a Provider determines it is not reasonable for an Initial Discussion to be conducted in a face-to-face format, the Provider must:

- if the unreasonable circumstances are temporary and may change in the immediate future, discuss with the Participant and suggest rescheduling the Initial Discussion to a more suitable time.
- if the unreasonable circumstances do not appear as though they will change in the immediate future, the Provider can organise the Initial Discussion via an alternative Engagement Method.

For example, where a Participant has a history of serious incidents and a Managed Service Plan, including Services Australia incidents, and poses a risk to other Participants and Provider staff that cannot be reasonably managed at the Site. Providers must record their reasons and what alternative options were considered in the Comments section of the Department's IT Systems. Please see the Challenging Behaviours Chapter in Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines for more information on incidents and Managed Service Plans.

The Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form must be completed by the Provider on the Department's IT Systems.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 92.2(b)(ii), 93.3(b) 96 98, Attachment 1)

3.3. Appointments and Contacts

An Appointment is where a date and time is recorded for the following, including: Initial Discussions, Follow-Up discussions, Monthly Check-Ins and 12 Month Reviews. A Contact is either a face-to-face interaction (including an Appointment), an email, phone call, SMS between the Provider and the Participant (it can be scheduled or unscheduled and should ideally be conducted via the preferred Engagement Method requested by the Participant at their Initial Discussion).

Providers must schedule and conduct Appointments based on the requirements as detailed in these Guidelines and advice from the Participant about their ability and preference of frequency. Appointments must be held via the Engagement Method requested by the Participant, this can be face-to-face, via phone, or online. The only exceptions to this are:

- the Initial Discussion, which must be conducted face-to-face unless there are exceptional circumstances, or
- where the Participant has requested a face-to-face Engagement Method but the Provider determines face-to-face service delivery is not safe (for example, because of a natural disaster or a history of serious incidents). Providers must record their reasons and what alternative options were considered in the Comments section of the Department's IT Systems.

See the [Initial Discussion](#) section for more information on exceptional circumstances and considerations to make when determining whether face-to-face servicing is safe.

For all Contacts, Providers must conduct them in a professional manner as well as ensuring they are tailored to the individual Participant's circumstances and supports their choice. All Contacts must be accurately recorded in the Department's IT Systems.

Example: a Mentor contacts a Participant who has paused their servicing to check-in and offer any support by phone (this is the Engagement Method preferred by them). This Contact is recorded in the Department's IT Systems.

At each Appointment and Contact, the Mentor must:

- confirm the Parent or Carer/Participant's identity
- confirm contact details (home address, email, contact number)
- update any information if applicable, and
- in relation to Appointments, record the Participant's attendance and relevant notes in the Department's IT Systems.

Note: Providers must not record any sensitive information in relation to a third party (partner, ex-partner, child or family member) if they are aged 15 years or over.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 94, Attachment 1)

3.3.1. Scheduling Appointments

Providers must consult with the Participant before booking Appointments to ensure the date and time is suitable. This includes taking into consideration any personal events in the Participant's calendar.

The duration of an Appointment is at the Providers' discretion based on the Participant's availability. However, Initial Discussions and Follow-up Discussion must be scheduled for at least 90 minutes. This allows Providers to start establishing a working relationship with each Participant and complete Initial Discussion requirements.

When arranging an Appointment with the Participant, the Provider must:

- ensure the Participant agrees on the time and place for the Appointment
- ask if an interpreter or any other adjustments are required to ensure the Participant can attend (virtually or face-to-face).



The Provider must record the date and time of the Appointment in the Calendar.



Before each scheduled Appointment, the Department's IT Systems will send a reminder email or text message to the Participant 1 Calendar Day prior to the Appointment.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 94.3, 96.1, Attachment 1)

3.3.2. Rescheduling Appointments

If the Provider or Participant needs to reschedule an Appointment, the Provider must reschedule the Appointment at the next available time that is suitable for the Participant.

The Provider may only cancel an Appointment under exceptional circumstances such as the Site has had to close due to a natural disaster.



If the Participant fails to attend three consecutively rescheduled Appointments or if the Provider cannot contact the Participant, the Provider must record the reason in the Department's IT Systems indicating the repeated non-attendance by the Participant, if known.



If the Participant is uncontactable, enter a comment after each attempt in the Department's IT Systems. If a third attempt is unsuccessful, the Provider must issue correspondence via letter (by post or email) and make a note in the Parent or Carer's summary screen that the Parent or Carer is not contactable.



If the Provider contacts the Parent or Carer and is informed that the Parent or Carer is no longer interested in engaging in the Service, the Provider must manually Exit the Participant.



The Department's IT Systems will automatically Exit the Participant where a Provider cannot Commence the Parent 6 months after connection from Service Australia or a Commenced Participant has not attended an Appointment for 6 months.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 6, 91.2, 95.4, Attachment 1)

3.3.3. New Connections

Providers must ensure the Initial Contact is made within 2 Business Days for new Connections (from Services Australia or another Provider). This means the next 2 Business Days of operation for the Site, whether Full-time, or Part-time, in accordance with, Schedule 1 of the Deed.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 105, Attachment 1)

3.3.4. Location of Appointments

Face-to-face Appointments must be held at locations that are accessible, appropriate and safe for Participants, children, and Provider staff. Location options include a Provider's Site, or another agreed suitable location where it is more convenient to the Participant. Suitable locations include:

- libraries
- cafes
- shopping centres
- parks.

Alternative locations must be to the primary benefit of the Participant and should not be influenced by factors that convenience the Provider. The Provider must consider the suitability of the venue for any discussions that may involve sharing private or sensitive information, and if children are present.

Example: A Participant requests a change of location from the Provider Site to a café because this will reduce travel time for the Participant while providing convenience and increasing the likelihood of the Participant attending.

More information regarding locations and Sites can be found in the [Sites Chapter](#).

+ Mentors must not conduct Appointments or Contacts at a private residence under any circumstances.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 6, Attachment 1)

Sensitive Records (restricted access)

Participants with sensitive information in their records will need to Direct Register with a Provider.

Services Australia will advise these Participants to contact a Provider directly if they wish to participate in Parent Pathways. Participants will be required to provide their contact details to the Provider at the first Appointment.

Homeless Participants and Participants with Temporary Addresses

Where a Provider is engaging with a Parent or Carer/Participant who is Homeless or has a temporary home address, there is no change to the service they will receive. However, the Provider should provide targeted servicing to assist the Parent or Carer/Participant in securing stable and safe living arrangements for themselves and their child(ren).

An address is mandatory for registration and if a residential address is not supplied but a postal address or temporary address is, then the postal or temporary address will be used as the residential address.

A Provider cannot remove an address from the Department's IT System without supplying another address.

If the Participant has been connected to Parent Pathways via Services Australia, the Provider will not be able to update the address at their end.

3.4. Commencement

3.4.1. Privacy and Consent

The [Privacy Chapter in Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines](#) and the [Initial Discussion](#) section above outline Provider obligations with respect to the Privacy Notification and Consent Form. This includes requirements in relation to explaining the form to Parents and Carers, and obtaining their consent to the collection of information.

By completing and signing the Privacy Notification and Consent Form, the Parent or Carer confirms that they understand and consent to their personal and/or sensitive information being collected. Parent Pathways services can only be provided once the Participant consents to the collection of personal information from Services Australia by completing and signing the relevant section in Part B of the Privacy Notification and Consent Form. The Provider must book the Follow-up Discussion (see [Appointments and Contacts](#)) at this time.

If a Participant has Commenced and then withdraws their consent to the collection and disclosure of their information, Providers must record this decision in the Department's IT Systems and Exit the Participant with the Exit reason: Privacy and Consent withdrawn.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 35, 91.1(b), 98.1(a)(iii), Attachment 1)

3.4.2. Checking Eligibility

Before Commencing Parents or Carers, Providers must first confirm the Parent or Carer is eligible to participate in Parent Pathways. Providers must confirm eligibility for Direct Registrations during the completion of the Parent Pathways Registration Form process.

Providers must also check eligibility for Parents or Carers that have Connected via Services Australia by specifically checking for personal situations that may have changed their eligibility since Connection, such as loss of an Income Support Payment or commencing in paid employment. Providers should ask Parents or Carers if there have been any changes to their circumstances.

Where a Participant is no longer eligible due to an Income Support Payment being cancelled, the Participant will be automatically Exited except if it is known that the Parent or Carer is under 22 or First Nations. Where the Parent or Carer loses their Income Support Payment and is either under 22 or First Nations, the Provider must confirm if the Parent or Carer is eligible. If it is determined that they are not eligible, the Provider must manually Exit the Parent or Carer using the reason, 'No longer eligible - cancellation of Income Support Payment'.



Where a Parent or Carer is pending and no longer eligible due to commencing in employment, the Provider must manually Exit the Parent or Carer.



The Provider must manually Exit the Parent or Carer and use the reason No longer eligible - commenced employment.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 91.1(a), 91.1(c), 91.3 Attachment 1)

3.4.3. Registration

Where Participants Direct Register, Providers must complete the Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form for Participants before commencing them in the service. Completion of the Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form includes confirming that the Participant is eligible and has completed the online Privacy Notification and Consent Form.

Providers are required to complete the Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form in the Department's IT Systems for each Participant prior to delivering Parent Pathways services.

Where Participants are connected to Parent Pathways via Services Australia registration details will be transferred to the Department's IT Systems. The Provider will need to check details and then Commence the Participant in the Department's IT Systems.

When a Provider starts the online Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form for a Parent or Carer that may have previously started a form, they should initially search for an existing registration record for the Participant. If the Parent or Carer has been registered previously, the Provider can continue with the re-registration process in order to commence them in Parent Pathways.

If an existing registration record does not display in the results, then the Provider must complete a new Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form for the Participant.



The Mentor will be presented with a review page and must complete the acknowledgment section which confirms that they have completed all requirements, including:

- seeking the Parent's agreement to participate in the Service voluntarily
- ensuring the Privacy statement is read/provided to the Parent and that they read, understand and agree to the Parent Pathways Privacy Notification and Consent Form
- ensuring the information entered in the Department's IT System is true and correct to the best of their knowledge
- sighting documents to establish the Parent's proof of identity
- completing all tasks relating to eligibility (where relevant).

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 98.1(a)(iii), 98.1(a)(iv), Attachment 1)

Verifying a Parent's identity

When completing the Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form, Providers must sight proof of identity documentation to confirm each Parent's identity, and record this has been sighted in the Department's IT System. If the Participant does not have access to these documents, the Provider must assist the Participant in accessing them or obtaining alternative identification. Refer to example below.

The Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form provides a list of acceptable forms of identity. If a Parent has genuine difficulty in providing the documents listed in the Parent Pathways Direct Registration Form, other documents containing the Parent's name and address (postal or residential) may be used.

Example: The Parent or Carer is unable to provide the relevant documentation to confirm their identity, however, they do have a copy of a utility bill that clearly shows their full name and residential address. This can be used in lieu of the original verification documents suggested.

Where a Parent or Carer, who is in receipt of income support, does not have identification with them, their CRN and JSID (if they have one), should be accepted as proof of identity.



Providers record that they have sighted proof of identity documents in the Department's IT Systems. No copies of identity documents should be made.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 94.5, Attachment 1)

3.4.4. Commencing a Participant referred from ParentsNext

In September 2024, the Department contacted ParentsNext Participants about their interest in participating in Parent Pathways.

Parents were asked to provide consent for their details to be shared with a Parent Pathways Provider. If the Parent or Carer agreed, the Parent's or Carer's details were shared with the Provider in their area (they will have a connection referral status of pending (PND)) from 1 November 2024).

A Provider task will show on the Provider's dashboard to reflect that the Parent or Carer was previously a ParentsNext Participant and has been referred to the Parent Pathways service.

A Provider must then make an Initial Contact, see ParentsNext transition advice and [Initial Contact](#) section and follow the appropriate steps.

3.4.5. Commencement

During the Initial Discussion, Registration of a Participant will initiate their Commencement in Parent Pathways.

Commencement will occur at the Initial Discussion and Providers must:

- record the Participant's attendance in the Department's IT System
- record the Participant's Commencement in Parent Pathways and confirm the Participant's consent to engage in the Service
- receive the signed Parent Pathways Privacy Notification and Consent Form and retain in their External IT system
- provide the Participant with Engagement Support.



To Commence a Services Australia connected Participant (these Participants will have a status of Pending when connected), Providers must complete the following steps:

- Record the Participant's attendance at the Initial Discussion in the Department's IT System.
- Manually change the Pending status to Commenced.




To Commence other new Participants, Providers must:

- Successfully complete the registration process, which will automatically commence Participants.

(Deed Reference(s): Attachment 1)

3.4.6. Assigning a Mentor

 On Commencement, Providers must assign a Mentor to the Participant in the Department's IT Systems, where they have not done so previously. The Department may use this information to help determine Mentor to Participant ratios. See the [Workforce Australia/Parent Pathways - Caseload - Managing Your Caseload](#) Employment System Task Card for more details.

3.4.7. Parent Snapshot


The Parent Snapshot must be completed within the Planning Phase. Providers must initially complete the Parent Snapshot with the Participant at the Initial Discussion and within 28 days of commencing in the service. However, Providers may need additional time to complete it for some Participants.


While completing the Parent Snapshot, if the Participant requires any immediate support or assistance, the Mentor must determine if they should cease completing the Snapshot and refer them to other organisations or support services immediately and attempt to revisit the Parent Snapshot at another time within the 28 days from commencement. Some Participants may wish to continue with the Initial Discussion even though they have disclosed that they need immediate support. Mentors should consider the Participant's wishes in this situation and determine if it is appropriate to continue.

The Parent Snapshot can be delivered in conjunction with other assessment tools chosen by the Provider to identify a Participant's strengths, experience, skills and any challenges they may face.

The Provider must update the Parent Snapshot within 28 days of the Participant experiencing any significant changes in circumstances. The Mentor must also update the Parent Snapshot within 28 days of the Participant entering the Review Phase.

Example: A Mentor is completing the Parent Snapshot with a Participant, and the Participant confides that they are worried about their safety. The Mentor asks the Participant if they should stop and call the police.

 Complete the questions and answers in the Parent Snapshot with the Participant and enter responses in the Department's IT Systems.

 If the Mentor determines that the Participant requires immediate assistance or referral to support services, Exit the Parent Snapshot and record the reason for Exiting the Parent Snapshot on the Participant's summary screen.

Providers must comply with their legal obligations in relation to any mandatory reporting requirements.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 96.2(c), 98(a)(v), 101, Attachment 1)

3.4.8. Follow-up Discussions

The Follow-up Discussion is the last Appointment during the Planning Phase, the Appointment must be conducted in the engagement method and location agreed to by the Participant. The Follow-up

Discussion must be scheduled for at least 90 minutes but can be longer at the discretion of the Provider.

The Mentor must complete the subsequent steps at the Follow-up Discussion:

1. Discuss the goals the Participant would like to set, and the type of assistance required to achieve these goals, reflecting the Participant's strengths, experience, skills and barriers. If the Participant is uncertain about their goals, Providers may suggest possible options to assist them. This discussion should include an explanation of the costs associated with the goal(s) and expenditure available under the Individual Fund and Pooled Fund.
 1. Work with the Participant to create a Goal Plan (see Goal Plan Chapter).
 2. Acknowledge the Participant's engagement and offer the Participant an Engagement Support voucher (only if the engagement method is face-to-face).
 3. Seek agreement from the Participant on a date and time to book the Check-In Appointment. Request the Participant's preference for how the meeting should be held, either; face-to-face (also agree to location), via phone or online.
 4. Advise the Participant that their Goal Plan needs to be agreed before they can access their Individual Fund and move into the Engagement Phase.

Note: If the Participant has any questions or concerns about their Goal Plan, the Mentor must be open to discuss and work through these with the Participant so that they are satisfied that the Goal Plan reflects their decisions. Participants may agree their Goal Plan as soon as it is ready or, if they prefer, they may review and agree it later. They have up to 6 months to agree their Goal Plan but will not be able to access the Individual Fund or the Pooled Fund (excluding Engagement Support) until it has been agreed.



The Mentor must submit the Goal Plan in the Department's IT System, for the Participant's agreement. The Goal Plan then awaits agreement by the Participant via their Workforce Australia Digital Platform online account.



The Provider will be able to check on the Department's IT System whether the Participant has agreed to their Goal Plan in their online account.



If the Participant is unable to agree to the Goal Plan via their Workforce Australia Digital Platform online account, the Mentor can agree to the Goal Plan in the Department's IT Systems on the Participant's behalf. Prior to this the Provider must give the Participant a hardcopy of the Goal Plan for them to sign. The Provider must keep a copy of the signed Goal Plan.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 93.3(c), 98.1(a)(vi) 99, Attachment 1)

3.4.9. Check-In Appointments

Providers must conduct Check-In Appointments (at least once a month) during the Engagement Phase until the 12 Month Review, unless the Participant requests a different timing or frequency for Appointments. Appointments in the Engagement Phase of Parent Pathways can be undertaken by a method chosen by the Participant, either face-to-face, by phone or online.

At each Check-In Appointment, Mentors must review the Goal Plan and discuss:

- the Participant's progress towards their identified goals

- whether the goals they have set need adjusting to reflect any changes in their circumstances
- any changes to their personal circumstances, including family responsibilities
- the need for additional assistance to achieve their identified goals
- how the Participant can use the Individual Fund to meet their identified goals, their current expenditure, the remaining balance and their time left to access the Fund
- the types of support that can be provided to the Participant using the Pooled Fund
- progress towards addressing any Vocational and Non-Vocational Barriers.

Example: A Participant presents to their Check-In and advises their Mentor that they are no longer caring for their child(ren) under the age of 6. The Mentor must record the Participant's change of circumstances in the Department's IT Systems, advise the Participant they are no longer eligible for Parent Pathways, and Exit them from the Department's IT Systems.

Any changes to the Goal Plan or additional support must be based on Participants' own choices.

Following review and consideration of responses to the above, Mentors must:

- update the Goal Plan with new/revised goals and Activities
- where Participants identify challenges they are facing, provide information about suitable community organisations or local support services. If the Participant would like to attend these services, the Provider must support their referral. This may involve providing contact details to the Participant, or calling the Service and initiating a meeting where the Participant requests this, or where the Participant is facing complex issues and requests their Mentor to attend an initial meeting with them, then the Mentor must seek to facilitate this
- conduct a new Parent Snapshot assessment if a Participant's circumstances have significantly changed.



At each Check-In, Mentors must seek agreement on a suitable location, date and time, and book the next Appointment for the monthly Check-In. The Mentor must also request the Participant's preferred Engagement Method, either; face-to-face, via phone, or online.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 99.1(f), 105, Attachment 1)

3.4.10. 12 Month Review

After 12 months of active servicing, Participants will enter the Review Phase. The Mentor must complete the following steps within 28 days of entering the Review Phase:

- review participation in Activities including completion or non-completion, identify any barriers the Participant has faced and discuss support to address those barriers
- examine the Goal Plan, any updates made and discuss any changes or additions that may be appropriate based on the Participant's progress and current circumstances
- celebrate Goal Plan achievements with the Participant
- review and update the Parent Snapshot

- inform the Participant that their Individual Fund resets to \$1,250
- confirm whether the Participant is happy with their progress and the service they are receiving
- seek the Participant's verbal consent to continue in the Service and reaffirm consent to continue to use and the disclosure of their information.



If the Participant verbally consents to continuing in the Service, the Mentor must seek agreement on a date and time, and book the next Appointment for the Monthly Check-In. The Mentor must also request the Participant's preferred Engagement Method, either; face-to-face (also agree to location), via phone, or online.



If the Participant does not want to continue in Parent Pathways, the Mentor must Exit the Participant.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 108, Attachment 1)

Chapter 4. Goal Plans

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Goal Plan Supporting document](#)
- [Creating and Updating a Goal Plan task card](#)

4.1. Overview

This chapter outlines Goal Plans. These are the foundations for creating a successful experience for the Participant.

4.2. Goal Plans

A Goal Plan is a tailored agreement between a Provider and Participant that sets out the Participant's short, medium and potentially longer term aims for themselves and where participation in Parent Pathways can help them. This may include personal, family, health and wellbeing, Education and/or Employment goals and includes the steps to be undertaken that will help the Participant reach their goals.

Goal Plans must be personalised, strengths-based, high quality and clearly set out:

- a Participant's identified goals and aspirations (including any steps to address barriers to education and employment)
- the steps the Participant agrees to undertake which will allow them to progress towards their goals including participation in Activities
- proposed goods or services to be purchased from the Individual Fund or Pooled Fund.



Mentors must complete the Parent Pathways required mandatory training on the Department's Learning Centre before negotiating and assisting with the creation of Goal Plans. Refer to the [Mandatory Training](#) section.

If a Participant does not agree their Goal Plan within the Planning Phase, the Provider must make several contact attempts with the Participant to discuss the impacts of the Participant not agreeing the Goal Plan. For example, the Participant will be unable to access the Individual Fund (with the exception of Engagement Support) and the Pooled Fund before they agree to their Goal Plan. If a Goal Plan is still not agreed by the 6 month mark following Commencement, the Department's IT Systems will auto-Exit the Participant. The Participant will receive a notification to inform them of the Exit.

The [Goal Plan supporting document](#) provides further detail on steps and processes for Providers to create, review and seek agreement of Goal Plans.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 80.4(m) ,96.2(d), 102, 103, Attachment 1)

4.2.1. Goal Plan Status

Goal Plans will have a status on the Department's IT System. These are outlined in the table below.

Table 4-A: Goal Plan Statuses

Status	Description
Draft	A newly created Goal Plan (blank) without any Goals or steps
	A Goal Plan with at least one goal and step and that has not been sent for agreement
	A Goal Plan that has changes/updates from a previously agreed version that has not been sent for agreement
	A Goal Plan that has been withdrawn by Mentor when it was awaiting agreement
Pending	A Goal Plan that has changes/updates from a previously agreed version that have not submitted yet and do not require re-agreement
Awaiting Agreement	A Goal Plan that has been submitted by the Mentor and is waiting on agreement by the Participant
Agreed	A Goal Plan that has been agreed by the Participant
Change Requested	A Goal Plan where the Participant has requested changes to their Goal Plan
Retired	A Goal Plan that has been retired by the Mentor when status is Draft or Pending (with no previous Agreed version) or Agreed

4.2.2. Developing Goal Plans

During the Follow-Up Discussion, the Mentor is required to work with the Participant to create a personalised Goal Plan, taking into account their aspirations, strengths and barriers. The Mentor will help the Participant identify their strengths (skills, experience, qualifications) and any barriers to achieving their identified goals through discussions and completion of the Parent Snapshot. Mentors should also discuss the types of assistance under the Individual Fund that may help the Participant to reach their identified goals.

Mentors must discuss the Participant's identified goals and suggest steps, including Activities, which will help achieve these goals. Once a Participant decides on the most appropriate goals and steps to be included in the Goal Plan, the Participant has time to consider these to ensure they are satisfied with them before they agree the Goal Plan.



Once drafted, the Mentor must submit the Goal Plan to the Participant for agreement.



The Mentor will be able to check on the Department's IT Systems whether the Participant has agreed to their Goal Plan in their online account.



If the Participant is unable to agree to the Goal Plan via their Workforce Australia Digital Platform online account, the Mentor can agree to the Goal Plan in the Department's IT Systems on the Participant's behalf. Prior to this the Provider must give the Participant a hardcopy of the Goal Plan for them to sign. The Provider must keep a copy of the signed Goal Plan.

Participant agreement of the Goal Plan is preferred within the four-week Planning Phase. The Mentor should encourage the Participant to agree their Goal Plan within this timeframe, however, the Participant may take up to 6 months to agree to their Goal Plan. If the Participant does not agree to the Goal Plan within the 6 month period they will be Exited.

Mentors must ensure that once a Participant has agreed to their Goal Plan, the Goal Plan is regularly reviewed. If the Participant has a change in circumstances, the Goal Plan must be updated.

[Attachment A](#) outlines Goal Plan Categories along with examples, this is not an exhaustive list, there are other activities and pursuits that can be undertaken by the Participant.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses: 102, 103 Attachment 1)

4.2.3. Explaining Goal Plans to Participants

Before a Participant agrees to a Goal Plan, the Mentor must explain and discuss with each Participant:

- the purpose of their Goal Plan, which is to set out their identified goals and the steps they will take to work towards these goals
- how they will support the Participant in relation to their Goal Plan
- how to change Appointments and/or Activities listed in their Goal Plan
- that they will not have access to the Individual Fund (except Engagement Support) and the Pooled Fund until they agree to their Goal Plan.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 102.4)

4.2.4. Participant goals

Goal Plans must stay relevant to a Participant's personal, family, health and wellbeing, and Education and/or Employment aspirations. Refer to [Attachment A: Goal Plan Categories](#) for examples.

The Mentor must ensure the Goal Plan accurately encompasses the Participant's individual goals and is written in the Participant's words.

Example: A Participant's goal is to finish their Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) which they started two years ago. However, another goal is to find a place at a child care centre suitable to meet the needs of their Child, and enrol them to be able to attend Appointments and continue their course. The Mentor will assist the Participant to find a suitable Early Childhood Education and Care centre that meets their needs and their child's needs. If the Participant needs assistance with a wait list fee for the child's place, the Mentor can use the Pooled Fund.

(Deed References Clauses, 106, 117, Attachment 1)

4.2.5. Setting up a Goal Plan

Goal Plans are intended to be a living document and must be created to support the Participant's progress towards their identified goals. A new Goal Plan should only be created in the following circumstances:

- where a current Goal Plan does not exist
- at a 12 Month Review, if the Participant decides they would prefer a new Goal Plan for the next 12 month period
- at the request of the Participant.

The Goal Plan should be updated as the Participant progresses during their time in the service. Please see the [Creating and Updating Goal Plan Task card](#).

Example: The Participant's current Goal Plan has an extensive list of achieved goals. Instead of adding additional goals to the plan, they request to create a new Goal Plan for ease of readability and use.

4.3. Goal Plan Reviews

Goal Plans must stay relevant to a Participant's personal, family, health and wellbeing, and Education and/or Employment aspirations. Mentors should discuss Goal Plans at each Appointment and review and update if required. Mentors must also conduct an in-depth 12 Month Review. The discussion with the Participant must include:

- Goal Plan progress and achievements
- strengths and abilities
- Education and/or Employment aspirations
- other factors that would assist in making progress and accessing support.

If required, the Mentor should update the Goal Plan to:

- reflect any changes in the Participant's circumstances
- reflect attained goals as achieved
- add any new goals or steps
- modify existing steps
- delete any obsolete goals.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 108, Attachment 1)

4.3.1. Goal Plan change request - Updating a Goal Plan that is awaiting agreement

A Participant can request a change to their Goal Plan upon reviewing it for agreement. The Participant can make a change request via their Workforce Australia Digital Platform online or verbally when discussing with their Mentor. The Provider must action the request within 7 calendar days.

When the change is requested, the status of the Goal Plan will change to 'Change requested'. Once updated, the Mentor must then submit the Goal Plan to the Participant to be agreed. The Goal Plan change request will appear in the Mentor's My Goal Plan Management Tile.



Mentor updates the Goal Plan as per the request.



Mentor submits Goal Plan for agreement by the Participant (within 7 calendar days of the request).

4.3.2. Goal Plan change request - Updating an agreed Goal Plan

Participants can request for their Mentor to make an update to their Goal Plan at an Appointment, the 12 Month Review or upon review at any time. The Mentor must discuss with the Participant to confirm

the change and check if any details in the request are not clear. The Mentor has 7 calendar days to action the Participant's request to change their Goal Plan.

Updates can be made to an agreed Goal Plan at any time. Updates must be sent to the Participant to view and agree to the amended Goal Plan.

Edit Goal Description or Step Text

The Mentor can make minor updates to goal descriptions and steps in an agreed Goal Plan without the need for the Participant to view and agree to the amended Goal Plan. Updates should be limited to corrections to spelling and typographical errors.

Adding a Goal

Goals must be added to an agreed Goal Plan by a Mentor at any time if requested by a Participant. A notification is sent to the Participant to advise the Goal Plan has been updated and the Participant needs to review and agree to the amended Goal Plan.

Deleting a Goal

Goals must be deleted from the Goal Plan by a Mentor at any time if requested by a Participant or where a Mentor determines the goal is not recorded correctly. Mentors do not need to record a reason for deleting the goal. Deleting a goal requires the Participant to agree to the revised Goal Plan.

Adding or Removing a Step

If a Participant wishes to edit, change, remove or add a step they will need to contact their Mentor to action the request. Steps can be added or removed from the Goal Plan by a Mentor at any time. Once a step is removed, the removed step cannot be retrieved, however a Mentor can create a new step. Mentors do not need to record a reason for removing the step.

Completing a Step

When a Participant has completed a step, it must be marked as completed. Steps can only be marked as completed by a Mentor. A Mentor can unmark the step from completed for any reason with agreement from the Participant. Completed steps will be viewable on the Participant's Goal Plan in their Workforce Australia Online account or app.

Achieving a Goal

Mentors should review and celebrate achieved goals on each occasion with the Participant, acknowledging the time and effort a Participant has invested to achieve their goals.

A goal is completed whenever a Participant indicates they have achieved a goal and communicates this to their Mentor. Not all steps need to be set to completed for a goal to be considered achieved. Only a Mentor can set a goal to achieved and an achieved goal can be changed back for any reason.

Participants can view their achieved goals within the Achieved Goal section in their Workforce Australia Online account or app. The Workforce Australia Online account homepage also celebrates the achievement of a goal in the Goal counter.

Changing the Intention to use the Individual Fund

A Mentor can update the intention to use the Individual Fund to cover costs associated with a goal in an agreed Goal Plan. When a Mentor changes the intention to 'Yes', a notification is sent to the Participant to advise the Goal Plan has been updated and they need to review and agree to the amended Goal Plan.

Chapter 5. Activities

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

CTA Supporting Documents (Information for Providers and Participants, Task Card and Referral Cap Support)

- [CTA - Information for Parent Pathways Providers](#)
- [CTA - Information for Participants](#)
- [Referrals to CTA and EST Task Card](#)
- [CTA- Referral Cap Support Document](#)

EST Supporting Documents (Criteria)

- [EST - Information for Parent Pathways Providers](#)
- [EST – Information for Participants](#)
- [Referrals to CTA and EST Task Card](#)

S-EA Supporting Documents (Factsheets)

- [S-EA Program Factsheet](#)

Voluntary Work Supporting Documents

- [Voluntary Work Host Organisation Agreement template](#)

OWE Supporting Documents (Agreement Template, Contact Card, Factsheet)

- [OWE Host Organisation Agreement Template](#)
- [OWE - Contact Card](#)
- [OWE- Factsheets](#)

SEE Supporting Documents (Criteria, Capability Guide, Task Cards)

- [SEE-Factsheet](#)
- [Referrals to SEE Task Card](#)

TtW Supporting Documents (Task Card)

- [Referrals to TtW Task Card](#)

Risk Assessment

- [Activity Participant Risk Assessment Template](#)
- [Competent Person\(s\) Register template](#)

5.1. Overview

Providers are encouraged to identify and facilitate suitable Activities that will help Participants to achieve their identified goals in their Goal Plan. Mentors must work with each Participant to identify Activities which are appropriate to their personal circumstances and align with their goals and strengths. Mentors must also consider whether the Activity is appropriate for the Participant, including whether the Participant has sufficient time to complete the Activity.

Activities can include other government or non-government employment services or programs that Participants may be eligible for. Participants can choose to participate in these services or programs as an Activity whilst participating in Parent Pathways.


Providers should develop and maintain effective relationships with other organisations in the Employment Region to ensure the successful delivery of programs and Activities.

5.1.1. Arranging Activities

Providers must arrange Activities for Participants to meet their individual needs, in accordance with what was discussed while developing the Participant's Goal Plan. The Parent Pathways service allows for a wide range of Activities including:

- Accredited Education and Training (such as secondary school, certificates through TAFE, diplomas, or degrees)

- Non-Accredited Training (such as pre-employment training, work-related training or work-related licences)
- Non-Vocational Assistance (such as careers counselling, parenting courses, financial counselling, driving lessons, digital literacy or language literacy and numeracy courses)
- Child Playgroups
- Interventions and Support Services (such as referrals to counselling, medical services, homelessness services, DV services or addiction treatment)
- Research and Preparation activities (such as exploring work, study or childcare options)
- Paid Employment
- Observational Work Experience
- Voluntary work in the Community or the Non-Profit Sector
- Other Government Programs or Employment Services that Participants may be eligible for (including but not limited to Workforce Australia Services, Transition to Work, and the Skills for Education and Employment program)
- Any other activity that helps Participants work towards their goals, that is not listed in the 'Inappropriate and Excluded Activities' section of the Guidelines.

 Providers must comply with its obligations relating to work health and safety set out in Chapter B3.2 of the Deed and must ensure that Activities do not proceed where work health and safety issues cannot be addressed.

Providers must record activities in the Department's IT Systems. For guidance on establishing and managing Activities in the Department's IT Systems please refer to the [Activities - Adding and Editing Activity Placements Task Card](#) on the [Digital Solutions Support Forum](#). Parent Pathways Activity types and sub-type codes can be found in the Activity and Activity Sub-type Supporting Document on the [Provider Portal](#).



Link each Activity placement to a Goal ID in the Department's IT Systems.



Indicate attendance frequency in the Department's IT Systems.

5.1.2. Inappropriate and excluded Activities

Mentors must ensure that Goal Plans do not include Activities that are unsuitable for the Participant. This includes Activities which will place unreasonable demands on a Participant, including their caring responsibilities. Mentors must ensure the following are not included in Goal Plans:

- Activities that the Participant does not wish to engage in
- Activities that are not linked to a Participant's identified goals
- Activities that may aggravate a Participant's illness, disability or injury
- Activities where the appropriate support or facilities (that take account of a person's illness, disability, injury, culture, gender or language requirements) are unavailable
- involuntary medical, psychiatric, or psychological treatment

- an Activity involved in the sex or adult entertainment industry
- an Activity outside Australia
- an Activity that is unlawful or criminal, including an Activity that would contravene Commonwealth, state or territory laws relating to discrimination or workplace health and safety
- Activities which a Participant is restricted from participating in due to a court order or criminal conviction. For example, where a court order/ruling restricts a person from working with children, being within a certain distance of institutions such as schools, day care centres or churches, driving certain classes of vehicles, or being involved in certain types of industries, such as the finance industry.

5.2. Managing work health and safety for Activities

5.2.1. Managing work health and safety

The Provider must at all times ensure that the Services are carried out in a safe manner, including ensuring that all Participants are in a safe environment when participating in Activities (including Specified Activities and any other activities that the Provider has arranged or referred a Participant to). In addition, the Provider must comply with, and ensure that its Personnel, Subcontractors and agents comply with, all relevant laws and requirements of any Commonwealth, state, territory or local authority, including the WHS Laws when carrying out obligations or activities under the Deed.

The Provider is required to ensure that each Participant is aware of the process to lodge a complaint to, or voice safety concerns about an Activity with, the Provider. Where the Provider becomes aware of safety concerns, including those raised by a Participant, that cannot be addressed, the Provider must ensure that the Participant immediately ceases participation in the Activity.

5.2.2. Ensuring Work Health and Safety measures are in place

Before arranging or referring any Participant to an Activity, the Provider must confirm:

- that the Activity is not prohibited under relevant state and territory laws;
- its delivery is permitted under the Deed and any Guidelines;
- the Host Organisation, where relevant, is complying with all work health and safety requirements in the relevant state and territory; and
- its delivery is in line with any advice provided by local authorities.

Example: Host Organisations must have COVID-Safe plans (or similar) in place in accordance with the requirements specified by the relevant state or territory. The Provider must take all reasonable steps to minimise the likelihood of injury to Participants and any other people at any location at which an Activity is being conducted. Depending on the Activity, support may be available to assist Participants with costs related to engaging in an approved Activity through the Parent Fund, such as personal protective equipment. The Provider must consult, coordinate and cooperate as appropriate with relevant parties

including but not limited to the Department and Host Organisations to ensure that any work health and safety issues in relation to an Activity are appropriately managed.

5.2.3. Managing work health and safety on Specified Activities

The Provider must, in accordance with the Deed and these Guidelines, meet their obligations to ensure work health and safety measures are in place for Specified Activities.

Specified Activities include:

- Observational Work Experience Placements
- Provider Sourced Voluntary Work

The Provider must ensure that there is a safe system of work in place for each Specified Activity, both prior to the commencement of and throughout the Specified Activity. This includes, where a Host Organisation is engaged by the Provider, that the relevant Host Organisation is complying with all work health and safety requirements in the jurisdiction in which the Specified Activity occurs.

The Provider must take all reasonable steps to minimise the likelihood of injury to Participants and any other people at any location at which a Specified Activity is being conducted.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 119.2)

5.3. Risk Assessments

The Provider must meet their Deed and Guideline obligations with regards to Risk Assessments.

The Provider must ensure that Activity Risk Assessments and Participant Risk Assessments are undertaken by Competent Persons, updated as necessary, and meet relevant laws and departmental policies and procedures on work health and safety. If the Provider does not itself have a Competent Person, it must engage a Competent Person for this purpose.

There are 2 types of Risk Assessment that must be conducted in relation to Specified Activities:

1. Activity Risk Assessment - a risk assessment in relation to a potential or actual Specified Activity, which is undertaken and/or updated in accordance with any Guidelines (including these Guidelines).
2. Participant Risk Assessment - a risk assessment in relation to each Participant's involvement in a Specified Activity, which is undertaken and/or updated in accordance with any Guidelines (including these Guidelines).

Note: Where the term Risk Assessment is used, it refers to the Activity Risk Assessment and a Participant Risk Assessment. The Competent Person arranged by the Provider to undertake the Risk Assessments may document an Activity Risk Assessment and a Participant Risk Assessment in a single document, so long as all requirements specified in these Guidelines in relation to the documentation of both Risk Assessments are met.

The purpose of the Risk Assessment process is to:

- determine whether an Activity is suitable to proceed, before the Provider refers any Participants to the Activity;

- identify potential risks associated with the tasks that will be undertaken by Participants while they are participating in the Activity; and
- identify if the Activity is suitable for relevant Participants who are referred to the Activity, including identifying any risks that may arise from a Participant's personal circumstances.

The Provider must ensure a Competent Person conducts and documents the Risk Assessment before a Specified Activity commences.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 119)

Activity Risk Assessment

The Provider must, in accordance with any Guidelines (including these Guidelines) ensure an Activity Risk Assessment is undertaken of every Specified Activity it has arranged before the start of the Specified Activity.

Participant Risk Assessment

The Provider must, in accordance with any Guidelines (including these Guidelines), ensure a Competent Person conducts a Participant Risk Assessment before referring Participants to Specified Activities.

5.3.1. Risk Assessment Considerations

The Provider must ensure that each Risk Assessment undertaken or arranged by the Provider takes into account, where applicable:

- relevant Participant(s)
- the role of the Host Organisation
- the relevant working or education environment
- the role of the relevant training or education provider

Each Risk Assessment should have regard to the following factors:

- the nature and location of the tasks to be undertaken by a Participant, such as whether the Activity is:
 - in a non-public area (for example a private residence worksite with a tradesperson)
 - with a sole trader (for example a butcher or hairdresser who operates from a small shop or private residence)
 - working alone with another person
 - with alternative hours of work (for example, early starts, night work)
 - working in a labour hire environment in one or more different workplaces.
- the Participant's personal circumstances (that is, working capabilities, any health or other personal issues and level of experience)
- the level of Supervision required

- the nature, cause, and likelihood of any risk(s)
- the consequences of an incident
- effective controls, including training and Personal Protective Equipment.

Example: The Provider would need to consider the risks of placing a Participant with medical needs in an Activity in an isolated location to ensure this is a suitable placement for the Participant and there is no risk to their health.

5.3.2. Reviewing, Maintaining and Updating Risk Assessments

The Provider must review risks regularly and take appropriate action to address those risks where required.

As part of its obligation to ensure that there is a safe system in place for each Activity, the Provider must determine and ensure that appropriate actions are implemented to mitigate the identified risks after conducting or updating any Risk Assessment.

Where the Provider becomes aware (including based on an Activity Risk Assessment) that it cannot ensure that there is a safe system in place at an Activity, the Provider must:

- not refer any Participants to the Activity
- if the Provider has already referred any Participant to the Activity, immediately ensure that the Participant ceases participation in the Activity.

Where the Provider becomes aware (including based on a Participant Risk Assessment) that it cannot ensure that there is a safe system in place for any Participant participating in any Activity, the Provider must:

- not refer the Participant to the Activity
- if the Provider has already referred the Participant to the Activity, immediately ensure that the Participant ceases participation in the Activity.

The Department may, at any time, and at its absolute discretion, give a direction to the Provider in relation to an Activity, proposed Activity or type of Activity, including a direction that an Activity must be ceased or varied.



The Provider has the discretion to determine how it documents its Risk Assessments. A verbal Risk Assessment does not meet the Department's requirements.



The Provider must retain Records of each Risk Assessment and any action taken in accordance with each Risk Assessment. The Provider must provide these Records to the Department if requested.



The Provider must retain Records identifying any competent person(s) that it engages to conduct any Risk Assessment. These Records must include the name and a description of the training, qualification or experience of the competent person. The Provider must provide these Records to the Department upon request.

The Provider must create and maintain a Record identifying any Competent Person(s) that it engages to conduct any Risk Assessment. Providers must maintain a structured register of Competent Person(s) engaged.

This record must contain:

- the full name of the Competent Person,
- a description of the qualification, training or experience (and its relevance, if this is not clear from the qualification, training title, or experience) held by the Competent Person, including:
 - the qualification they hold, including course ID (if formal qualification undertaken),
 - internal or informal training name, and/ or
 - the number of years of relevant experience
 - date of qualification/training completion (if applicable)
 - refresher due date (if relevant)
 - the Employment Region/s the under which the Competent Person can undertake Risk Assessments

Providers must provide a Record of this format to the Department upon request. A [Competent Person\(s\) Register Template](#) is available on the Provider Portal, however, use of this template is not mandatory. If the template is not used, Providers must use their own structured register which includes at a minimum all the same headings as in the template.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 119)

5.4. Managing Activity-related Incidents

The Provider must Notify the Department as soon as possible of any incident involving an Activity where a Participant is in attendance (including travel to, from or during an activity), including:

- any Critical WHS Incidents (including in relation to a Participant or member of the public), which must be reported within one hour
- any Non-critical WHS Incidents, which must be reported on the same day.


Example: A 'Critical WHS Incident' has the same definition as a Notifiable Incident under the WHS Act and means an incident that results in the death of a person, a serious injury or illness of a person, or a dangerous incident.

A dangerous incident is an incident that exposes a person to a serious risk to health or safety due to an immediate or imminent exposure to electric shock, spillage/leakage of a substance, uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire.

Examples of Critical WHS Incidents include: injuries requiring immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, a serious head or eye injury, a serious burn, spinal injury, or amputation of any part of the body. Please refer to the relevant clauses in the WHS Act.

A 'Non-critical WHS Incident' is any incident that relates to a work, health and safety issue or near miss, but is not a Critical WHS Incident. Non-critical WHS Incidents include incidents such as those involving: non-serious injury requiring first aid and/or assistance from a medical practitioner, minor property damage, or near misses that could have resulted in serious or non-serious injury, and any other WHS incidents that are non-critical that may impact a Participant or the Department or bring the Provider or the Services into disrepute.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 120.1)

-  The Provider is required to Notify the Department of all Activity-related accidents or near misses that happen to Participants or other people in accordance with these Guidelines. Refer to the [WHS Incidents and Insurance Readers Guide - Providers](#) available on the Incidents and Insurance page on the Provider Portal).

When an incident occurs:

- appropriate medical attention, including contacting emergency services depending on the nature of the incident, should immediately be provided by the Supervisor
- the Supervisor must try and protect any other Participants and other people at the Activity from unnecessary trauma, where possible
- the relevant WHS Regulator must be notified of the incident if it results in the death or serious injury, in accordance with laws of the relevant state or territory
- the relevant WHS Regulator must be notified of any dangerous incident that exposes someone to a serious risk, even if no one is injured, in accordance with laws of the relevant state or territory
- any directions by a WHS Regulator must be followed
- a [WHS Employment Assistance Program Incident Report](#) available on the Incidents and Insurance page (on the Provider Portal), must be completed by the Host Organisation when the incident involves a Participant's accident, injury, death or near miss
- the Provider must complete a [Public and Products Liability Incident Report](#), available on the Incidents and Insurance page (under 'Provider Operations' tab of the Provider Portal), when a third party alleges a Participant has been negligent and caused accident, injury or death, or property damage. The [Public and Products Liability Incident Report](#) must be completed by the Provider and signed by the Participant when a third party is making an insurance claim as a result of a reported incident. The signed [Public and Products Liability Incident Report](#) should be sent to the Department, who will submit the form as a claim to the insurer.

Following submission of any incident reports, the Provider will receive confirmation of successful submission, and a copy of the information will be sent to the relevant areas of the Department.

An incident may result in the Department issuing safety recommendations to the Provider and/or Host Organisation to ensure the risk of the same incident being repeated is reduced or eliminated, if possible. The Provider has an obligation to comply with the Department's directions relating to any Activity (see Deed clause 117.5).

It is imperative that Participants have access to reporting mechanisms in the event they wish to report an incident, lodge a complaint or provide positive/constructive feedback confidentially. The Provider must ensure that there is an internal, impartial and easily accessible complaints mechanism that can be used by Participants regardless of the nature of the complaint.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 30.1, 71.6, 71.7 and 120.1)



The Provider is required to submit the WHS Incident Report form on the Department's IT Systems on the same day the Provider becomes aware of any incident referred to in this section. In the event the WHS Incident form is unavailable, the Provider must complete and submit the WHS Employment Assistance Program Incident Report form.

5.4.1. Work health and safety incidents

Where an incident includes any accident, injury or death occurring during the Activity, or direct travel to or from an Activity, including in relation to a Participant or a member of the public, the Provider must also, as soon as possible, and on the same day, give full details of the accident, injury or death to the Department in the form specified in these Guidelines.



Detailed information on notifying the Department with regard to WHS Incidents is included in the [WHS Incidents and Insurance Readers Guide - Providers](#) on the Incidents and Insurance page under the 'Provider Operations' tab of the Provider Portal.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 120.2)

The Provider must notify the Department of Critical WHS Incidents within one hour via telephone, followed by formal written notification to the Provider Lead that give full details of the accident, injury or death to the Department.

The Department must be notified of Non-critical WHS Incidents by the Provider as soon as possible and on the same day by completing the WHS Incident Report Form.



The Provider is required to submit the WHS Incident Report form on the Department's IT Systems on the same day the Provider becomes aware of any incident referred to in this section. In the event the WHS Incident form is unavailable in the Department's IT Systems, or the Provider is having difficulty reporting the incident through the Department's IT Systems, the Provider must complete and submit the WHS Employment Assistance Program Incident Report form instead. The WHS Employment Assistance Program Incident Report form and other relevant forms to support Supervisors and Host Organisations are available on the [Incidents and Insurance page on the Provider Portal](#).



The Provider must maintain records of WHS incidents.

Other Incidents

Any other incidents that are non-serious that may impact upon a Participant or the Department or bring the Provider or the Services into disrepute must be reported to the Department within 24 hours. A WHS incident may also be considered a challenging behaviour incident. In these cases, the Provider may need to submit a WHS Incident form and Incident Report in accordance with Deed requirements.

The Provider must report any instances of misconduct or threatening behaviour via the 'Incident Report'. See [Part A Guidelines: Servicing Participants with Challenging Behaviours Chapter](#).

All Incidents – both Personal Accident and Public and Products Liability

Providers must Notify the Department of any incident that may result in a liability claim (irrespective of whether a claim is being made at the time).

The Provider must also comply with any instructions issued by the Department or the Department's insurance broker. Detailed information in relation to the process for reporting incidents that may result in liability is available in the [WHS Incidents and Insurance Readers Guide - Providers](#).

The Department's personal accident liability insurance provides coverage when a Participant is injured while participating in an approved Activity, including direct travel to, from or during such Activities.

The Department's public and products liability insurance provides coverage when a third party alleges a Participant has been negligent and caused an accident, injury or death, or property damage, while participating in an Activity.

The Provider must, when requested by the Department's insurance broker, provide full details to the insurance broker of any incident that may or does result in a liability claim. The insurer is responsible for determining liability. The Providers must not admit fault or accept responsibility for any alleged negligence that may or does result in a third party claim.



Forms for the Provider to complete to Notify the Department of any personal accident or public and products liability incidents are available on the [Incidents and Insurance page on the Provider Portal](#).



The Provider must maintain a copy of all incident notifications and records for supporting evidence in any insurance claims.

5.4.2. Insurance coverage for Participants

The Provider must, in accordance with the Deed, comply with any instructions issued by the Department or the Department's insurance broker, and these Guidelines, in relation to insurance purchased by the Department for Participants involved in Activities.

The Department purchases the following insurance policies to cover Activities:

- Personal Accident insurance - covers the Participant in respect of personal injury or death that occurs while undertaking Activities, including direct travel to, from or during such Activities
- Public and Products Liability insurance for Participants - covers the legal liability of the Participant arising out of their negligence that causes personal injury to a third party, or damage to a third party's property, while participating in approved activities
- Public and Products Liability insurance for Work for the Dole Activities - covers the legal liability of Host Organisations who are receiving assistance from Participants undertaking Community Support Projects which would otherwise be denied under the Host Organisation's own insurance policies.

Further information on the insurance purchased by the Department to cover Participants undertaking Activities is in the [WHS Incidents and Insurance Readers Guide – Providers](#), with copies of the insurance policies also on the [Incidents and Insurance page of the Provider Portal](#).

Information for Participants about insurance is included in the [WHS Incidents and Insurance Readers Guide – Participants](#) which is available on the Provider Portal for Providers to give to the Participants

and is published on the Department's website under 'Insurance arrangements for Employment Services activities'.

The Provider should note the Department's policies have standard exclusions. The Department's purchased insurance policies:

- do not cover illness or sickness contracted by a Participant during an Activity, including COVID-19
- do not cover any Activities that would have been prohibited under these Guidelines
- may have time limits that apply for claims
- do not cover any other exclusions listed within the terms and conditions of each insurance policy.

If alternative insurance is in place, Providers can still deliver Activities where tasks are excluded under the Department's policies.

In addition, Providers are contractually obligated to maintain various insurances as outlined in the Deed and understand the coverage available to them under their own insurance policies as outlined in the Deed.

Providers are also required to confirm that the Host Organisation has appropriate insurance coverage, and where coverage is insufficient the Provider can decide to purchase or fund additional insurance for the Activity.

(Deed Reference(s): Clauses 44, 119.5(f) and 120.3)

Sourcing additional insurance coverage

The Provider must purchase additional insurance as required to ensure adequate coverage of the Participant. Where this insurance is being purchased with the Pooled Fund, Providers must comply with all requirements in the [Parent Funds chapter](#) and [Attachment B. Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements](#).



The Provider must retain a full copy of any insurance policies relied upon by the Provider to be compliant with the requirements for additional insurance.

As an alternative to purchasing insurance, the Provider may consider modifying the tasks in the proposed Activity so that no part of the Activity would be excluded under the Department's insurance coverage.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 44.13)

5.5. Complementary Activities

Participants can participate in other employment programs/activities/services offered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations whilst they are participating in Parents Pathways including:

- Career Transition Assistance (CTA)
- Employability Skills Training (EST)

- Skills for Education and Employment (SEE)
- Voluntary Work
- Observational Work Experience (OWE)
- Transition to Work (TtW)
- Self-Employment Assistance (S-EA)

Prior to referring a Participant to another program or service, Providers must check the Participant is eligible, confirm the program is suitable, that the Participant has capacity to complete the program/course and that consent has been received to disclose required personal information. The Provider must ensure Risk Assessments are completed where required. If the Participant has been participating in a program or service that requires personal handovers, the Provider should make sure they are available.

Providers must continue to service the Participants as per the Parent Pathways Guidelines when they are participating concurrently in another program.

If the Participant is not eligible, the Provider must assist the Participant to look for another appropriate program or training.

Individual or Pooled Fund credits must not be utilised for payment of CTA or EST course fees. For each Participant that is referred, the service fees will be covered by that program.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 93.3, 96.2(d), 107, 117, Attachment 1)

5.5.1. Self-Employment Assistance Program (S-EA)

Background

The Self-Employment Assistance (S-EA) program supports people in starting, developing, or growing their small business through individual mentoring and group workshops.

S-EA offers 6 flexible services to both new and existing business owners:

- Exploring Self-Employment Workshops
- Business Advice Sessions
- 12 Months of Small Business Coaching
- Business Plan Development Coaching
- Business Health Checks
- Accredited Training

S-EA also offer regular, free masterclasses and networking events to help Participants to learn and expand their networks.

Referral

To be eligible for the Self-Employment Assistance Program, the Participant must:

- Be at least 15 years of age (or 18 years of age to enrol in Small Business Coaching)

- Be allowed to legally work in Australia
- Be available to participate in the program and work the required hours in your proposed business
- Have not participated in the Self-Employment Assistance Program in the previous year
- Not be an overseas visitor on a working holiday or an overseas student studying in Australia
- Not be an undischarged bankrupt.

Payments

The S-EA program will pay the course fees for Participants who take part in the program.

Refer to the Task Card – Activity Types and Codes for a full list of Goal Plan and Activity Codes

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 126, Attachment 1)

5.5.2. Career Transition Assistance (CTA)

Background

Career Transition Assistance (CTA) is a fully funded, voluntary pre-employment program supporting people 45 years and over to build their skills and confidence to re-enter the workforce or change career.

Courses run for at least 75 hours in total, with a minimum of 50 hours of face-to-face contact. They are delivered in small group settings and run for 3 – 8 weeks.

CTA provides practical assistance to Participants in a small group setting to:

- identify existing skills and how they transfer to a new job or industry.
- explore goals and motivations
- improve digital literacy skills, including:
 - using technology found in different workplaces
 - setting up and using an email account
 - setting up and using a myGov or Workforce Australia account
- better understand job opportunities in the local area and the different strategies needed to search for these jobs
- prepare job applications and resumes that are tailored to a specific role or range of jobs
- practice interview techniques, both face-to-face and online
- develop an individual plan that includes steps on how to market themselves to employers and boost their chances of getting a job.

Referral

- CTA Providers will make CTA available as an Activity in the Department's IT System.

- Parent Pathways Providers will determine the suitability of the Parent participating in the course by considering the benefits of the course.
- Parent Pathways Providers, via the Activity Management screen, will establish a CTA Activity for the Parent (the referral) and select the appropriate schedule.
- Once the CTA Provider receives the referral, the CTA provider will contact the Parent.
- Parent Pathways Providers should not mark placement as confirmed.
- CTA Providers will record Participants' commencement and attendance.
- Once the Parent has completed the course, the Parent Pathway Provider will participate in a Personal Hand Over with the CTA Provider where they will discuss the Parent's next steps and be given an updated resume and career pathway plan.

Referral Cap

Parent Pathways Providers who are also CTA Providers are subject to a Referral Cap. This means no more than 50 per cent of total referrals to CTA Courses resulting in a commencement within an Employment Region may be made by a Provider to its Own Organisation, Related Entity or Subcontractor.

The Referral Cap will not apply where the only CTA Providers in an Employment Region are also the Provider's Own Organisation, Related Entity, or Subcontractor. A temporary exemption to the Referral cap can be requested using the Referral Cap Temporary Exemption Request Form.

The Provider must not refer a Participant to a CTA Course if to do so would exceed the Referral Cap.

The Referral Cap is measured on a cumulative basis over the length of the Deed. Provider compliance will be reviewed every 6 months, or at any other time as determined by the Department.

Any Provider that has exceeded the Referral Cap in accordance with these Guidelines may be directed by the Department to cease referrals to those entities. This direction will remain in place until the Provider is below the Referral Cap, or unless otherwise advised by the Department.

Refer to the Referral Cap Supporting Document for further information regarding the application and review of the Referral Cap.



The Provider can use Qlik report cREF01 to monitor adherence to the Referral Cap.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 125, Attachment 1)

Payments

The Department will cover the cost of the course fees for Parent Pathways Participants which will be paid to the CTA Provider.

5.5.3. Employability Skills Training (EST)

Background

Employability Skills Training (EST) is a pre-employment program to support people to become more competitive in their local labour market by developing the skills employers are looking for, build job search, workplace and industry-specific skills, and explore career options.

Courses run for 75 hours across 3 or 5 weeks.

Participants can undertake EST in a face-to-face, online or hybrid format. There are two training blocks, with Participants able to undertake one or both blocks, in any order:

- Training block one courses can cover topics such as:
 - communication skills and teamwork
 - identifying and solving problems
 - managing career and work life
 - using digital technology
 - managing how businesses perceive you online
 - tailored resumes and job applications, and prepare for specific job interviews
- Training block two courses build industry-specific knowledge and skills for the local job market such as:
 - exploring career options in different industries
 - learning industry-specific skills, including obtaining micro-qualifications
 - improving their job seeking skills to target a specific industry exposure to employers within particular industries.

Participation in EST is voluntary for Parents Pathway Participants, however, other attendees of the course may be undertaking EST to fulfil an activation and/or mutual obligation requirement.

Referral

- EST providers will make EST available as an Activity in the Department's IT System.
- Parent Pathways Providers will establish an EST Activity for the Parent (the referral) via Activity Management.
- Once the EST provider receives the referral, the EST provider will contact the Parent.
- Parent Pathways Providers should not mark placement as confirmed.
- EST Providers will record Participants' commencement and attendance.

Referral Cap

Parent Pathways Providers who are also EST Providers are subject to a Referral Cap. This means no more than 50 per cent of total referrals to EST Courses resulting in a commencement within an Employment Region may be made by a Provider to its Own Organisation, Related Entity or Subcontractor.

The Referral Cap will not apply where the only EST Providers in an Employment Region are also the Provider's Own Organisation, Related Entity, or Subcontractor. A temporary exemption to the Referral cap can be requested using the Referral Cap Temporary Exemption Request Form.

The Provider must not refer a Participant to an EST Course if doing so would exceed the Referral Cap.

The Referral Cap is measured on a cumulative basis over the length of the Deed. Provider compliance will be reviewed every 6 months, or at any other time as determined by the Department.

Any Provider that has exceeded the Referral Cap in accordance with these Guidelines may be directed by the Department to cease referrals to those entities. This direction will remain in place until the Provider is below the Referral Cap, or unless otherwise advised by the Department.

Refer to the Referral Cap Supporting Document for further information regarding the application and review of the Referral Cap.



Providers can use Qlik report wEREF03 to monitor adherence to the Referral Cap.

Payments

The Department will cover the cost of the course fees for Parent Pathways Participants which will be paid to the EST Provider.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 125, Attachment 1)

5.5.4. Voluntary Work

Background

Voluntary Work is a work experience placement which gives Participants the opportunity to gain skills to improve their employment prospects, while also benefiting the community.

In these Guidelines, Voluntary Work refers to Provider Sourced Voluntary Work (arranged by the Provider).

Some of the potential benefits of Voluntary Work for eligible Participants include:

- developing practical employability skills such as attendance and communication
- increasing networks, updating referees and building confidence
- demonstrating their skills, knowledge, experience and attitude, and gaining valuable exposure to workplaces to help them understand workplace expectations
- providing service to a Participant's community, such as State Emergency Service and volunteer firefighting.

Voluntary Work Placements can be hosted by a:

- not-for-profit organisation/charity, or
- not-for-profit arm of a for-profit organisation, or
- community service (examples include firefighter reserves, State Emergency Service, school canteen, etc.)

Voluntary Work can be conducted in an eligible Host Organisation's place of business where all other requirements specified in the Deed and Guidelines have been met.

Referral

Parent Pathways Participants are eligible to undertake Voluntary Work, if they are aged 15 years or over and registered in the Service.

For each Voluntary Work Placement, an Activity record must be created in the Department's IT Systems.

The Voluntary Work Placement should not be changed to 'Placement Confirmed' until the Host Organisation has confirmed the Participant attended their first day of the Activity.

Note: Participant Sourced Voluntary Work does not need to be recorded in the Department's IT Systems.

Role of Providers

When arranging a Voluntary Work Placement, the Provider must:

- ensure the Participant is eligible and suitable for Voluntary Work
- ensure the Host Organisation is eligible to host a Voluntary Work Placement
- ensure the Voluntary Work Placement meets the requirements set out in these Guidelines
- ensure an Activity Risk Assessment and Participant Risk Assessment have been completed by a Competent Person
- negotiate and enter into a Voluntary Work Host Organisation Agreement
- monitor the Voluntary Work Placement for its duration and respond to any issues that arise.

The Provider must ensure Voluntary Work Placements:

- are of benefit to the Participant and the local community and offer no financial gain to the volunteer organisation
- provide the Participant with the opportunity to gain vocational and nonvocational skills that will directly improve their Employment prospects, such as the ability to work as part of a team, take directions from a Supervisor, work independently, communicate effectively, and become more motivated and dependable
- do not primarily promote a particular religious or political view
- do not involve more than 50 hours of attendance per fortnight, and not more than 25 hours per week
- do not include participation outside core business hours, including on a public holiday, unless a Participant chooses to do so and has agreed in advance.
- should not exceed 26 weeks unless the Provider determines this is the best participation option under the circumstances.

Note: Unpaid work performed under a Community Service Order (CSO) is not considered to be Voluntary Work

Funding

Providers may use the [Individual Fund](#) or [Pooled Fund](#) to help meet eligible costs of a Participant's Activity such as appropriate clothing or uniforms and travel costs.

Risk Assessments can be funded under the Activity costs category which should come from the Pooled Fund.

Completion

When a Voluntary Work Placement ends, the Provider must end the placement in the Department's IT Systems and provide an Exit reason. When a Voluntary Work activity ends, the Provider must end the activity in the Department's IT Systems.

5.5.5. Observational Work Experience (OWE)

Background

Observational Work Experience (OWE) offers short-term, unpaid placements which allow Participants to build soft skills and gain a better understanding of the workplace or potential career opportunities. Observational Work Experience is targeted to Participants who are not yet job-ready and have limited, or no experience in the workplace.

Some of the potential benefits of OWE include it being:

- an opportunity for the Participant to gain valuable exposure to workplaces and learn what Employers expect of their workers
- an opportunity to enhance Participants' awareness of different careers
- an effective tool to assist Participants to build employability skills, such as attendance and communication.

Observational Work Experience placements can be hosted by:

- for-profit organisations
- not-for-profit organisations
- the Provider's own organisation, related entities, or subcontractors.

Referral

Parent Pathways Participants are eligible to undertake OWE, if they are aged 15 years or over and registered in the Service.

For each OWE Placement, an Activity record must be created in the Department's IT Systems.

The OWE Placement should not be changed to 'Placement Confirmed' until the Host Organisation has confirmed the Participant attended their first day of the Activity.

Role of Providers

When arranging an OWE Placement, the Provider must:

- ensure the Participant is eligible and suitable for OWE
- ensure the Host Organisation is eligible to host an OWE Placement
- ensure the OWE Placement meets the requirements set out in these Guidelines
- ensure an Activity Risk Assessment and Participant Risk Assessment have been completed by a Competent Person
- negotiate and enter into an OWE Host Organisation Agreement with the Participant and the Host Organisation
- monitor the OWE Placement for its duration and respond to any issues that arise.

The Provider must ensure OWE Placements:

- only involve observation (allowing for participation in meetings and discussions where relevant), with no tasks to be undertaken by the Participant
- are no more than 4 weeks in duration
- do not involve more than 50 hours of attendance per fortnight, and generally not more than 25 hours per week
- do not involve more than 8 hours of attendance per day (excluding breaks)
- include at least one 30-minute break every 5 hours
- do not include participation on a public holiday

Participants may participate in OWE placements outside of core business hours. However, the Participant needs to agree to this before being referred.

Funding

Providers may use the [Individual Fund](#) or [Pooled Fund](#) to help meet eligible costs of a Participant's Activity. Participants are not required to cover the costs of Activities.

Risk Assessments can be funded under the Activity costs category which should come from the Pooled Fund.

5.5.6. Skills for Education and Employment (SEE)

Background

The Skills for Education and Employment program (SEE) helps Participants gain the skills they need for the job they want through stronger reading, writing, maths, and computer skills.

SEE training is tailored to Participant's abilities and goals and is delivered flexibly across Australia, on both a part-time and full-time basis, from metropolitan and regional areas, through to remote communities.

Referral

Parent Pathways Participants are eligible to undertake the SEE program when they meet all the following criteria:

- aged 15 years and over and have left school
- deemed suitable for training without any barriers that would prevent successful participation
- either an Australian citizen or permanent resident or on eligible¹ provisional or temporary visas

Funding

Providers may fund Activities, refer to existing funded Activities, or use the [Individual Fund](#) to help meet eligible costs of a Participant's Activity. Participants are not required to cover the costs of Activities, such as enrolling in an education course.

Risk Assessments can be funded under the Activity costs category which should come from the Pooled Fund.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 123, Attachment 1)

5.5.7. Transition to Work (TtW)

Background

Transition to Work helps young people aged 15-24 into work (including apprenticeships and training) or education. Transition to Work Participants receive intensive, pre-employment support to develop practical skills to get a job, connect with education or training, find local job opportunities, and connect with relevant local community services.

Parent Pathways Providers must continue to provide services to Participants who have been referred to Transition to Work to ensure they remain connected and supported.

Referral

Parent Pathways Participants are eligible to undertake TtW when they meet the following criteria:

- aged between 15 and 24 years old and
- either:
 - an Australian citizen, or
 - an appropriate Visa holder.



Providers must only refer a Participant to TtW if the Participant's goal is to gain employment or the Participant wants to be with a youth cohort.



Parent Pathways Providers must add a TtW special placement flag and concurrently refer Participant to TtW.

¹ provisional or temporary visa with working rights and eligible for the Adult Migrant English Program

Payments

This is a free service.

(Deed Reference(s): Attachment 1)

5.5.8. Workforce Australia Digital Platform Online Individuals

Background

The Workforce Australia website has job search resources and tools which are free to access.

The Workforce Australia Digital Platform is the online IT system used by the Department's programs. At the Initial Discussion, Providers should encourage Participants to Register for a free account. This account will provide the Participant with access to:

- Parent Pathways information including details about their Goal Plan.
- free tools and features.

If the Participant is interested in employment the Participant can create a profile that can be used for receiving:

- job alerts
- job advertisements
- recommended jobs.

Referrals

Referrals are not required to use this service, however, it is recommended that Participants create an account to access Parent Pathways information and tools. To register, Participants will need a myGov account to link to Workforce Australia.

Payments

This is a free service.

(Deed Reference(s): Attachment 1)

Chapter 6. Pauses, Transfers, Exits and Post Placement Support

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Pause Reasons](#)
- [Exit Reasons](#)
- [Transfer Reasons](#)

6.1. Overview

This section provides guidance for Providers and Mentors to manage Pauses in the service, Transfers between Providers and Exits from the service. Participants can choose when they want to participate and do not wish to participate in the service. Participants can Pause their participation in the service at any time for a temporary period. This flexibility is intended to support Participants to prioritise their parenting and caring responsibilities, and to balance their participation in the service with these responsibilities.

6.2. Pauses

A Participant may need to Pause their participation in the service for a period of time. At any time during the period of service, a Participant may request a Pause from the Service which must be actioned by the Provider by recording the reason and the start and end dates of the Pause in the Department's IT Systems.

An initial Pause Period can be granted for between 1 and 3 months based on the Participant's advice and preference. The Pause may be extended for additional periods of up to 3 months if required by the Participant. The total Pause Period must not exceed 12 months.

Where a Participant is Paused, the Provider must contact the Participant at least one week prior to the Pause expected end date recorded in the Department's IT Systems to confirm whether the Participant intends to re-Commence participating in Parent Pathways or requires the Pause to be extended. The Department's IT Systems will provide a reminder for the Mentor.



The Provider must record in the Department's IT Systems any reason and/or changes in the Participant's circumstances that may result in a Participant being Paused, no longer being Paused, or Exited. Please refer to the Task Card outlining Pauses.

The Department's IT Systems will identify if a Participant has Paused or Exited.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 110,111,113, Attachment 1)

6.2.1. Effect of Pauses

Where a Participant is Paused, the Participant's current Period of Service and current Period of Registration are halted and re-commence when the Pause ends. A Participant can Pause for any reason, but the reasons below are captured in the Department's IT Systems.



Reasons to Pause that are specified in the Department's IT Systems include:

- the Participant wants a break to focus on caring for their child or other family members; or

- the Participant's caring arrangements have changed
- the Participant is experiencing family or domestic violence
- due to temporary medical condition or illness of the Participant or child or a family member
- due to pregnancy
- due to a bereavement
- due to a relationship breakdown
- due to Jury duty
- due to a natural disaster
- due to disruption to the Participant's home
- due to a personal crisis
- due to the Participant undertaking cultural business
- other (to be specified by the Mentor).

Where appropriate, Mentors may offer support to a Participant at the time that the Participant indicates the need for a Pause in their engagement.

Example: The Participant requests a Pause due to experiencing family and domestic violence. The Mentor records the reason for the Pause in the Department's IT System but is also required to ask whether the Participant would like a referral to a family and domestic violence service.

There is no requirement for the Participant to provide documentary evidence to substantiate the reason for their Pause in Parent Pathways.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 111, Attachment 1)

6.2.2. Management during a Pause

The Department and the Provider acknowledge and agree that, where a Participant is Paused:

- the Participant's current Period of Registration and Period of Service are halted and recommence when the Pause ends in accordance with these Guidelines; and
- the Participant will remain Paused until the Participant decides to recommence their participation in the Parent Pathways, or the Participant is Exited.

If the Provider identifies, or the Provider is notified by Services Australia, that a Participant has experienced a situation which means they are unable to continue participating in the service for a period of time, the Provider must immediately record in the Department's IT System that the Participant is no longer participating in the Service and a further Pause is recorded.

The Provider should check the cumulative period of Pauses to ensure it does not exceed 12 months. If the Pause Period is longer than 12 months, the Provider must contact the Participant to inform them of this and advise the Participant that they will be Exited from Parent Pathways, if they are not going to

recommence immediately. The Provider should then Exit the Participant and the reason for Exit should be Participant chose to Exit.

Providers should advise Participants that if they are participating in CTA or EST, a Pause in Parent Pathways will result in an Exit from CTA or EST. If a Pause occurs, the Parent Pathways Provider will contact the CTA or EST provider to request that the Participant is Exited from the course.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 113, Attachment 1)

6.2.3. Delivery of Service following cessation of a Pause

After a Pause, the Provider must immediately resume providing services to the Participant, review and discuss with the Participant their servicing needs and whether their Parent Snapshot and/or Goal Plan need updating.

Update the Parent Snapshot and/or Goal Plan if required.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 114, Attachment 1)

6.3. Transfers

Transfers may occur under certain circumstances; however, all changes and transfers must better assist the applicant to achieve their aspirations (See task card for a list of transfer reasons).

6.3.1. Transfers to and from Providers

The Provider must agree to a Participant being transferred to another Parent Pathways Provider if:

- the Participant changes address
- it is more convenient for the Participant (for example; public transport, proximity)
- the relationship between Provider and Participant has broken down
- any other reason, at the discretion of the Department.

If a transfer is initiated by the Participant, the previous Provider must provide assistance and cooperate with the new Provider to ensure they meet all the Participant's needs.

After the Participant transfers to a new Provider, the new Mentor must review the Participant's servicing needs, conduct a new Parent Snapshot and review and update the Goal Plan (refer to Goal Plan section) regardless of whether the Participant had an agreed Goal Plan with their previous Provider.

Providers should advise Participants that if they are participating in CTA or EST, that transferring between Parent Pathways Providers will Exit the Participant from CTA or EST.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 92)

6.3.2. Transfers between Provider Sites

A Participant can transfer between Sites while remaining with the same Provider for reasons such as a change in address. There must not be any change to the Services they receive. Any fees or additional costs associated with this transfer are an internal matter for the Provider. The Participant's Individual Fund will be transferred to the new Site.

The new Mentor at the new Site must review the Participant's servicing needs, conduct a new Parent Snapshot and review and update the Goal Plan (see Goal Plan section) regardless of whether the Participant had an agreed Goal Plan at the previous Site.

(Deed Reference: Clause 92.4)

6.4. Exits

Participants will be Automatically 'Exited' from the Service for a number of reasons, including:

- Participant no longer meets the core Eligibility criteria such as their youngest child turns 6 years old
- Participant has relocated to a remote region
- Participant has not engaged with the Provider for 6 months
- Participant has been Paused but does not re-engage within 3 months after the expected Pause End Date
- Participant completes 6 months of Post-Placement Support
- Participant's Pause period exceeds 12 months

Income Support Participants will automatically Exited if:

- they are deceased
- they are incarcerated or imprisoned
- they move overseas permanently
- their Income Support Payment is cancelled, unless they are under the age of 22 or a First Nations Australian

The Provider must manually Exit Participants from the Service for a number of reasons, including:

- Provider has attempted to contact the Participant 3 times via phone and sent a letter, but no contact has been made with the Participant in an 8 week period.
- Participant has transferred to another Provider and not contactable
- Participant no longer wishes to engage in Parent Pathways
- Participant commences employment and does not want to participate in Post-Placement Support
- Participant commences study and does not want to participate in the Service
- Participant withdraws consent

Non-Income Support Participants will be manually Exited if they:

- are deceased
- are incarcerated or imprisoned
- move overseas permanently

See [Exit Reasons Task card](#) for more information.

Where a Participant chooses to Exit, the Mentor must inform the Participant that Exiting the service may impact their eligibility for Child Care Subsidy and refer the Participant to Services Australia for more information.

If the Participant is intending to meet the Disability Support Pension Program of Support requirements, the Mentor must inform them that, by Exiting the Service, they will no longer be meeting the Program of Support requirements. The Mentor must also inform the Participant to contact Services Australia to seek advice.

Where a Participant is Exited, the Provider must cease providing Services to the Participant.

Providers should advise Participants that if they are participating in a CTA or EST course and Exit from Parent Pathways they will also be Exited from CTA or EST.

If a Participant Exits and then subsequently advises the Provider of their wish to return to the Services at 13 Consecutive Weeks or more after the date of the Exit, the Provider must:

- check the Participant's Eligibility again
- follow steps as a new Participant (refer to Connection section).

The Parent Snapshot and Goal Plan previously created cannot be updated, however, they may be viewed by the Provider and discussed when creating a new Parent Snapshot and Goal Plan.



Participants who are due to Exit for a known reason will receive a notification at least 7 Calendar days prior to their Exit being completed.



Manual Exits and reason for Exit must be entered in the Department's IT System.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 97.1 (c))

6.4.1. Parent or Carer not yet Registered

Where a Parent or Carer who has self-presented to a Provider decides before registration that they do not wish to participate in the Service, the Provider accepts this and is not required to do anything further.

Any personal information provided by a Parent or Carer to the Provider as part of their self-presentation should be appropriately disposed of or returned to the Parent or Carer (not retained by the Provider).

6.5. Recommencements

In some circumstances, a Participant who Exits Parent Pathways may wish to resume Participation in the Service later. This is allowed if they meet the Eligibility criteria. Refer to the Eligibility, Connections to Parent Pathways and Registration sections of this guideline.

Where an Exited Participant returns to the Services less than 13 Consecutive Weeks after the date of the Exit, the Participant's Period of Registration and Period of Service continues from the date of the Participant's return. The Participant's Snapshot and Goal Plan can be reinstated, and they Recommence.

The Provider must immediately resume providing Services to the Participant, unless the Participant was Exited for the following reasons:

- ceased to participate appropriately in the Services
- completed their Period of Service.

6.6. Vacancy Management

Participants are not required to look for, or accept, Employment, however, Providers should help Participants find suitable Employment opportunities if they are ready and want to work.

Where a Participant gains Employment, Providers must record Employment as a Vacancy and create a placement in the Department's IT System, expected hours must be recorded.

Providers may assist Participants to identify and apply for suitable Vacancies. Providers must not refer or place Participants in Unsuitable Employment. When sourcing or referring to Vacancies, Providers should:

- engage local Employers to understand their needs and identify job opportunities, including those with flexible working arrangements or within school hours
- consider a Participants' family and personal circumstances, including child care and transport arrangements.

Providers should remind Participants to contact Services Australia if they get a job to advise they are working and earning an income.



Where a Participant is successful in gaining Employment, Providers must create an Employment Vacancy and placement. Refer to Task Card on Creating Vacancy.



When entering the Vacancy in the Department's IT Systems, Providers must enter a range of information including a job description, Employer details, hours, salary and whether the job was sourced by the Participant.

6.6.1. Checking Minimum Wage

Where a Provider has sourced a Vacancy, they must, at the time they lodge the Vacancy in the Department's IT Systems, make sure the relevant minimum wage is satisfied. The minimum wage may be set out in the Modern Award that relates to the Vacancy. If a Modern Award is not in place, then the National Minimum Wage will apply.

Providers must give Participants information relating to the National Minimum Wage and the Fair Work Ombudsman when they Commence. The information must include the following, which is contained in the Minimum wages fact sheet available on the Fair Work Ombudsman website:

- details of the latest National Minimum Wage rates
- where to access information about the Pay and Conditions Tool and any changes to the National Minimum Wage rates, and
- the contact details of the Fair Work Ombudsman.

(Deed Reference(s): 106.4 (a), Attachment 1)

6.6.2. Placing a Participant in a Vacancy

Where a Participant is successful in gaining Employment, the Provider must place the Participant into the relevant Vacancy and record the Job Placement Start Date.

For a job with a Paid Induction Period or employer-funded work trial the Provider can decide whether to use the date on which the Participant commences the induction/work trial or the first day of continuous Employment following the induction as the Job Placement Start Date.

For volunteer work/work experience/unpaid work that leads to ongoing Employment the Job Placement Start Date is the first day of the ongoing Employment.



The Job Placement Start Date must be recorded within 56 calendar days of the Participant commencing in the job. The Department's IT Systems will not allow Providers to backdate a Job Placement Start Date by more than 56 days. The Department expects Providers to remain in regular contact with their Participants, including awareness of gaining Employment.



Providers need to have Documentary Evidence to support the entering of a Job Placement Start Date in the Department's IT Systems. This Documentary Evidence can take a range of forms, including a file note that records how the Provider became aware of the Employment or written communication about the Employment from the Participant.

6.7. Post Placement Support

6.7.1. Post Placement Support Overview

Providers must offer Participants a 6 month period of Post Placement Support once they commence in paid employment of more than 15 hours per week. During this period, a Provider must assist the Participant to settle into the job.

6.7.2. Offering a Period of Post Placement Support

When a Participant commences in paid employment, the Participant should advise the Mentor as soon as possible. This information may also be transacted from Services Australia (for Services Australia connected Participants) and made available in the Department's IT Systems.

At this time, the Mentor must confirm with the Participant to find out how many hours a week they expect to work.

- If the number of working hours is unknown, or expected to be less than 15 hours per week then:
 - the Provider must update the Goal Plan, add an Activity referral and place the Participant in an Employment Vacancy in the Department's IT Systems
 - normal servicing continues. Participants will remain connected to the service unless they choose to Exit or are no longer eligible.
- If the number of working hours is expected to be more than 15 hours per week on average, the Provider must offer the Participant the choice between:
 - Exiting the service due to employment, or
 - receiving a period of Post Placement Support.

Post Placement Support can be provided for a period of 6 calendar months after the Participant commences in work. During the Post Placement Support period, the Providers must support Participants to maintain their employment.



Where a Participant chooses to receive Post Placement Support, the Provider must:

- ensure the Goal Plan is updated with the Participant to include employment and any work-related support the Participant may need to settle into their job
- create an Activity referral for Paid Employment
- create an employment vacancy and placement in the Department's IT Systems including expected hours
- create a Post Placement Support period.



If the Participant is expected to work more than 15 hours and does not wish to receive Post Placement Support, the Provider must:

- update the Goal Plan, to record achievements, if required
- create an employment vacancy and placement in the system including expected hours
- exit the Participant from the service.

6.7.3. Post Placement Support Period

During Post Placement Support, Mentors must:

- assist the Participant to settle into their new job, help to address any issues or barriers they may face, and discuss support needs with the employer where necessary
- check in with the Participant (via phone calls/Appointments) to support them to resolve any issues or questions
- update the Goal Plan with the Participant, to reflect any new circumstances, and any additional support provided as per the Participant's request
- update the Goal Plan to record the Participant's employment as an achievement so that the Participant can see that they have achieved a goal and that their success is acknowledged
- discuss that support through the Individual Fund, Pooled Fund, Wage Subsidy and Relocation Assistance is still available. For example, if financial assistance is required to pay for Child Care bond costs, work/protective clothing, or transport to attend work.
- help Participants and their employer identify whether any training is needed and potentially pay for the training with the Individual Fund or Pooled Fund
- make referrals to Activities and support services and request additional assistance if the Participant needs it.

Participants will remain 'Commenced' on the Caseload and Providers will continue to receive Service Fees during the Post Placement Support period.

Participants still have the option to Pause their participation in the program during a period of Post Placement Support. The Pause will not affect the duration of the Post Placement Support period which is for 6 calendar months.

Participants also retain the option to Exit the service at any stage during a Period of Post Placement Support. Providers should record an exit due to employment (that is, Provider initiated manual employment Exit) should a Participant choose to Exit during Post Placement Support.

6.7.4. Ending a Post Placement Support Period - resume normal servicing

If the Participant advises the Mentor that their employment has ended or their working hours are expected to be less than 15 hours per week moving forward, the Provider must end the period of Post Placement Support and resume normal servicing.



In this situation a Provider must:

- update the Goal Plan to reflect the Participant's current situation
- end the employment Activity referral (if required)
- update the job placement and end the period of Post Placement Support.

Ending a Post Placement Support period does not preclude the Participant from receiving Post Placement Support in the future should their employment status change. The Provider can add a period of Post Placement Support any time the Participant is in Employment and is expecting to work more than 15 hours per week. This will create a new 6 month period of Post Placement Support (rather than continuing the previous period).

6.7.5. Automatic Exits following Post Placement Support

Participants will automatically be Exited by the Department's IT system after 6 months of Post Placement Support has passed (Department automatic Exit). See [Exits](#) section for more information.

Two weeks before the automatic Exit occurs, Providers will receive a Provider Task and Participants will receive a notification advising that the period of Post Placement Support is coming to an end.

Mentors should contact Participants during the 2-week period to confirm employment details are correct. The Job Placement must be updated if needed. If the Participant is still in Employment that is expected to be more than 15 hours a week moving forward the Provider must discuss if there is a need for any final assistance before the Participant Exits.

Note that if a Participant's employment ends after they have been Exited from Parent Pathways, the Participant will need to check with a Provider to see if they are still eligible and then re-Register if they want further assistance from the service.



Record any details from Contact with Participant in the Department's IT System.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 94)

6.8. Transition Support and Warm Handovers for Participants moving to employment services

The Mentor should identify and provide Transition Support and offer Warm Handovers to Participants Exiting Parent Pathways and transitioning to mainstream employment services when their youngest

child turns 6. Mainstream employment services include Workforce Australia Services, Disability Employment Service and Community Development Program.

These arrangements will mostly apply to Participants who receive an income support payment such as, Parenting Payment and Special Benefit, as these are the cohorts who will become subject to mutual obligations requirements when their youngest child turns 6. However, some employment services also support non-income support recipients who generally commence in the service by direct registration.

6.8.1. Transition Support

The purpose of providing Transition Support is to help Participants to prepare for the move to mainstream employment services and to make the transition smoother.

Mentors must provide transitional support from when a Participant's youngest child turns 5 years and 6 months. The Mentor must provide the following advice and assistance to Participants:

- Participants may have to meet mutual obligation requirements to continue receiving their income support payment, which are aimed at increasing their chances of finding work. Services Australia will notify Participants when their youngest child turns 5 years and 9 months, if they will be subject to mutual obligation requirements when their youngest child turns 6 years.
- Services Australia will require Parents or Carers in receipt of a Parenting Payment Single or Special Benefit to attend a compulsory Participation Interview when the youngest child turns 6 years (See: [SA Op Blueprint notification to PP recipients when youngest child is 5 years and 9 months](#)).
- Services Australia will check whether Participants are already meeting mutual obligation requirements (for example, through 15 hours per week of work, or study, or a combination) in which case, they may not need to participate in an employment service and will be managed by Services Australia.
- Services Australia may require Parents or Carers to attend a Compulsory Participation Interview once their youngest child turns 6 years, to assess the Parent or Carer's circumstances, discuss their mutual obligation requirements and refer them to the relevant employment service or, if appropriate, to an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt).
- Provide a brief overview of the services offered by Workforce Australia, Disability Employment Services and the Community Development Program, and about mutual obligation requirements.
- Discuss with the Participant whether there is any additional support they would like in the 6 months before they move to employment services.
- Offer Participants the option of having a Warm Handover at their first Appointment with their new employment services provider. For Participants who accept, advise they must contact their Parent Pathway Mentor as soon as they know the details of their first Appointment with the new provider (time, date and location).

6.8.2. Warm Handovers

Warm Handovers are a 3-way meeting between the Parent or Carer, the Parent Pathway Mentor and the employment services provider (either Workforce Australia Services Provider or Disability

Employment Services Provider, or Community Development Program Provider) and are intended to improve the Participant's experience with their new provider.

The purpose of a Warm Handover is to improve the Parent or Carer's experience with their new Provider by sharing appropriate information about their support and progress in Parent Pathways and to inform the continuity of support in the employment service. Where the Participant accepts the offer of a Warm Handover, the Mentor is required to attend a Warm Handover meeting with the Parent or Carer and their new employment services provider at their first Appointment (Initial Interview).

The Parent Pathways Mentor will not be acting as an advocate for the Parent or Carer and will not have any role in making decisions on the Parent or Carer's behalf. Rather, the Parent Pathways Mentor will discuss the support provided to the Parent or Carer in Parent Pathways.

6.8.3. Initiating a Warm Handover

As part of Transition Support, Mentors must offer the Participant the option of having a Warm Handover as part of their first Appointment with their new employment services Provider. The Mentor is required to:

- offer Participants the option of a Warm Handover, explain what it is, the benefits and advise that it will be part of the Initial Appointment/Interview with the new employment services provider
- discuss with the Participant the type of information they may consider sharing at the Warm Handover to support their continuity of service. For example, this might include their goals and achievements and progress in Parent Pathways, their career goals and future aspirations. Inform Participants that they may provide a copy of their Goal Plan if they wish to do so
- ask the Participant whether there is any information that the Participant does not wish to share at the Warm Handover
- advise Participants that they will need to contact their Mentor as soon as they are advised of the details of the Initial Appointment/Interview (time, date, new Provider name and location), and advise their Mentor if this Appointment is rescheduled
- attend the Initial Appointment with the Participant and employment service provider to deliver a Warm Handover even though the Participant will be Exited from Parent Pathways at the time of the Appointment.



The Mentor must record the details of the Warm Handover Appointment off-Calendar as the Participant will be Exited from Parent Pathways when the Appointment details are set.

6.8.4. The Warm Handover Appointment

Parent or Carers will generally be required to attend the Initial Interview with their employment services provider face-to-face, except in exceptional circumstances. Mentors are required to attend the Warm Handover in person where possible.

As the Community Development Program operates in remote locations, it may not be practical for the Mentor to attend in person, due to distance and cost of travel. As such, the Mentor may provide the Warm Handover by phone or online where feasible depending on phone or internet connection, or as a last resort, the Mentor may provide advice by email for the Participant to provide to their new Provider.

At the Warm Handover, the Mentor may only share information that the Participant has agreed to share about their goals, progress and achievements in Parent Pathways, as well as their career goals and future aspirations.

The employment services provider will:

- facilitate the attendance of the Parent Pathways Mentor with the Parent at the Initial Interview and consider the advice and information provided about the Parent or Carer's achievements and goals in Parent Pathways.
- take account of, and build on, the Parent or Carer's achievements in the Parent Pathways when tailoring support, developing the Job Plan, and determining/advising on appropriate Activities or interventions.

The Participant may consider taking a copy of their Parent Pathways Goal Plan with them as it lists their goals, Activities, and achievements from participating in Parent Pathways.



The Mentor must enter a system note that "the Warm Handover was completed", along with any other appropriate information, on the Participant's record generally within 28 days of the Participant Exiting Parent Pathways, where the Warm Handover has occurred within this timeframe. If the Warm Handover occurs after more than 28 days of the Participant Exiting Parent Pathways, the Mentor must enter this information in the Department's IT System as soon after the meeting as possible.

Chapter 7. Provider Payments

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Community and Parent Engagement Fund Supporting Document](#)

7.1. Overview

This chapter outlines payments available to Providers. The Department will make payments to Providers in accordance with the Deed. An overview of each Payment type is detailed below:

Table 7-A: Payment Types

Payment type	Fee (GST Inclusive)
Service Fees	\$1,500 at the beginning of the Participant's Period of Service, and then once every 6 months during the Participant's Period of Service.
Community and Parent Engagement Fund	\$25,000 per Full-time and Part-time site per year \$10,000 per Outreach Site (Payments for Outreach Sites capped at \$200,000 per contract per financial year).

7.2. Service Fee Entitlements

Providers are entitled to Service Fees for each Participant they service:

- In full after:
 - an initial commencement in the service
 - when a Participant reaches their 6 month servicing anniversary. This anniversary is calculated based on the days a Participant is commenced in the service (that is, days spent Paused, pending or exited are excluded from this calculation).
- Pro-rata after:
 - a post-transfer commencement, for the remainder of a Participant's 6 month servicing period.

7.2.1. Service Fees Overview

The following principles apply to Service Fees:

- Service Fees are paid at contract level (that is, Service Fees are calculated and paid separately for each Employment Region a Provider is contracted to service).
- Each contract is paid an Advance Payment (that is, a partial upfront payment) at the start of the Payment Period, as per the Deed.
- A Provider's entitlement is offset against their Advance Payment until it has been fully offset. Once the Advance Payment has been fully offset, subsequent entitlements are paid to Providers as they are earned for the remainder of the Payment Period.
- The Department will not recover any Advance Payments that have not been offset by the end of the Payment Period, should there be any. The Department may recover Advance Payments

that have not been offset, in the instance that a Deed is terminated before the end of a Payment Period.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 134)

7.2.2. Payment Periods

The first Payment Period will run from 1 November 2024 to 30 June 2025. Subsequent Payment Periods will run from 1 July to 31 December and 1 January to 30 June.

7.2.3. Advance Payment Calculations

The Advance Payment in the first Payment Period will be based on the Provider's expected Caseload, based on contracted Service Areas and indicative Caseloads from the Request for Tender.

Example: If a Provider had an expected Caseload of 160 Participants, their Advance Payment for the first Payment Period would be calculated as:

$$160 \times \$1,500 \times 90\% = \$216,000$$

The Advance Payment in subsequent Payment Periods will be based on the Provider's actual commenced Caseload, at the start of the Payment Period.

Example: If a Provider had 200 commenced Participants on their Caseload on the first day of the Payment Period, their Advance payment would be calculated as:

$$200 \times \$1,500 \times 90\% = \$270,000$$

7.2.4. Offsetting the Advance Payment

The Advance Payment will be offset by service fees the Provider earns over the course of the Payment Period. The Advance Payment needs to be fully offset by the Provider's entitlement before they can receive subsequent payments in the Payment Period.

Example: A Provider has 200 commenced Participants on their Caseload on the first day of the Payment Period and is paid an Advance Payment of \$270,000.

Over the Payment Period:

25 Participants reach their service fee anniversary each month

10 new Participants commence in the service each month

2 Participants commence each month after transferring from another Provider

20 Participants (in total) have a Pause in servicing and do not reach an anniversary payment

30 Participants (in total) Exit the service and do not reach an anniversary payment

Table 7-B: Entitlement vs Subsequent Payments

Payment Period Month	Servicing Anniversary Entitlements	Initial Commencement Entitlements	Pro-Rata Entitlements^ (Post-Transfer Commencements)	Total Monthly Entitlements	Payment-Period-to-date Entitlements	Subsequent Payments*
1	25 x \$1,500 = \$37,500	10 x \$1,500 = \$15,000	2 x \$750 = \$1,500	\$54,000	\$54,000	\$0
2	25 x \$1,500 = \$37,500	10 x \$1,500 = \$15,000	2 x \$750 = \$1,500	\$54,000	\$108,000	\$0
3	25 x \$1,500 = \$37,500	10 x \$1,500 = \$15,000	2 x \$750 = \$1,500	\$54,000	\$162,000	\$0
4	25 x \$1,500 = \$37,500	10 x \$1,500 = \$15,000	2 x \$750 = \$1,500	\$54,000	\$216,000	\$0
5	25 x \$1,500 = \$37,500	10 x \$1,500 = \$15,000	2 x \$750 = \$1,500	\$54,000	\$270,000	\$0
6	25 x \$1,500 = \$37,500	10 x \$1,500 = \$15,000	2 x \$750 = \$1,500	\$54,000	\$324,000	\$54,000

^In this example, it is assumed that all Participants have half of their 6 month servicing period remaining when they commence with the new Provider. In practice pro-rata payments will vary from participant to participant, depending on how long remaining until their next anniversary payment is due.

*Excludes Advance Payments

In the above example, the Advance Payment has been fully offset by the end of the fifth month of the Payment Period. All service fees entitlements in the sixth month of the Payment Period are paid to the Provider's bank account as they are earned.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 134)

7.3. Community and Parent Engagement Fund

7.3.1. Community and Parent Engagement Fund Overview

The Community and Parent Engagement Fund is a resource that Providers can utilise to promote the Parent Pathways service to Parents or Carers in the Provider's contracted Service Areas.

Community and Parent Engagement Fund payments will be made annually. Providers will receive:

- \$25,000 per permanent Full-time Site
- \$25,000 per permanent Part-time Site
- \$10,000 per Outreach Site

While funding for permanent Sites is uncapped, funding for Outreach Sites is capped at \$200,000 per contract, per financial year.

7.3.2. Timing of Payments

Payments will be made, at the contract level. This means payments will be calculated and paid separately for each Employment Region a Provider is contracted to service.

The first Community and Parent Engagement Fund payment will be made as soon as practical after the Deed is executed by the Department. Subsequent payments will be made at the start of each financial year.

7.3.3. Site changes

If a new Site is opened between the initial execution of the Deed and 30 June 2025, an additional Community and Parent Engagement Fund payment will be made, in full, for that Site. From 1 July 2025, if a new Site opens part way through the year, an additional pro-rata payment will be made for the Site, for the days remaining in the Financial Year.

If an Outreach Site changes to a Full-time or Part-time Site, the Department will make an additional pro-rata payment to the Provider for the outstanding amount. Payments will be made by the Department as soon as practical.

If a Site ceases operating during the financial year, the Department will recover any Community and Parent Engagement Fund payments relating to the Site that were not acquitted before the Site closure. Funds already acquitted in line with Guideline requirements will not be recovered.

If a Full-time or Part-time Site changes to an Outreach Site during the Financial Year, the Site can only acquit a maximum of \$10,000 over the course of the Financial Year. The exception to this is in the instance where more than \$10,000 has been acquitted before the Site change. If this occurs, the expenditure will be considered permissible, where it meets all other Guideline requirements. However, no further funds will be able to be acquitted against this Site for the remainder of the Financial Year.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 135, Attachment 1)

7.3.4. Eligible purchases

The Community and Parent Engagement Fund can be used for the following:

- advertising (for example local radio, TV, print, billboards, social media, other internet, local notice boards)
- branding of organisational assets (for example vehicle signage/wraps) and branding of promotional materials (for example brochures, packs of coloured pencils). Where funding is used for this purpose, the official Australian Government's Parent Pathways Logo must also be displayed and be given equal prominence to the Provider's logo
- costs for employing a staff member to conduct promotional activities. This includes recruitment and onboarding costs but does NOT cover the Reimbursement of the worker's wages while conducting promotional activities - up to \$5,000 per Site
- materials for local face-to-face promotion, such as brochures, magnets, pencils, pens, activities for children to attract parents and carers to the stall (for example painting, or colouring activities)
- promotional activities and engagement (including venue hire costs) in local community locations where parents or carers are likely to be present. This may include pop-up stalls, stands, tents, or picnics in Child and Family Centres, Community Hubs, local service Providers (such as family and domestic violence services, or First Nations services), Early Childhood Education and Care services, health and allied health services, shopping centres or parks
- transport costs for promotional events (for example car hire, petrol, parking, public transport costs) - up to \$5,000 per Site

- other activities, which includes website development. Where funding is used for this purpose, the official Australian Government's Parent Pathways Logo must also be displayed and funding from the Australian Government recognised. Note that more examples may be permissible following commencement of the service.

All purchases must provide value for money, uphold the integrity of the service and comply with any work, health and safety laws that may apply.

7.3.5. Ineligible Purchases

The Community and Parent Engagement Fund cannot be used for the following:

- purchases related to the promotion of Provider services outside the Provider's Service Area
- purchases that do not relate to promoting the service to the target cohort of parents or carers in the local community
- costs that are for the infrastructure/capital works or administration related to establishment or operation of an Outreach Site
- to purchase items that can predominantly be used for non-promotional activities (for example laptops)
- costs that represent employee remuneration (for example wages, salary bonuses)
- costs that form part of participant servicing, which should be paid for with Services Fees, the Individual Fund or the Pooled Fund
- purchases that may bring the service or the Government into disrepute
- items that are funded through other Government programs or grants
- purchases that were made prior to the Deed being executed by the Department
- purchases that were made prior to the Department approving the opening of a new Site
- purchases that were made after a Site is shut down
- promotional activities in a Parent's or Carer's home.

Providers must spread their expenditure over a variety of different promotional activities and should not exhaust the Fund on a single or limited number of purchases.

7.3.6. Separate Bank Account

The Provider must deposit and hold relevant monies in a separate account that has been established solely for the purposes of the receipt, custody and payment of the Community and Parent Engagement Fund. This is to ensure that the monies and any interest earned can be properly accounted for.

The monies must be paid into and held in the Provider's Community and Parent Engagement Fund bank account until such time that it is necessary to pay relevant vendors.

If the Provider transfers Community and Parent Engagement Fund monies through another bank account before paying a vendor, the Provider will need to ensure that it keeps accurate records of:

- any monies transferred from the separate Community and Parent Engagement Fund bank account to the other bank account; and

- payments to vendors using Community and Parent Engagement Fund monies,

so that the Community and Parent Engagement Fund monies can be traced and accounted for in accordance with the Deed.

Providers must keep financial accounts and Records of its transactions and affairs regarding Payments received from the Department in a way that such Payments are ‘clearly and separately identified’ from each other and from other money of the Provider.

(Deed references 37.3 and 135).

7.3.7. Acquittal Process

The Provider is required to submit one acquittal report per Employment Region, per acquittal period. Acquittal periods run in line with Financial Years. Acquittal reports must be created and submitted in the Department’s IT System. The Provider must submit this acquittal report within 56 calendar days of the end of an acquittal period. The acquittal report must include all expenditure incurred during the acquittal period. Only eligible purchases can be acquitted.

Expenditure must be acquitted at a Site level.

Providers cannot acquit more than:

- \$25,000 per permanent Full-time Site
- \$25,000 per permanent Part-time Site
- \$10,000 per Outreach Site, and \$200,000 for the sum of all Outreach Sites a Provider operates in an Employment Region.

If goods or services purchased are being used to promote multiple Sites (for example, advertising that promotes multiple Provider Sites), Providers can apportion expenditure across multiple Sites when recording the acquittal in the Department’s IT System.

Providers are encouraged to acquit purchases throughout the year before submitting acquittal within 56 days of the end of the financial year.



For acquitting purchases regularly, Providers can add an acquittal purchase against a Community and Parent Engagement Fund payment:

- From the Payments Hub landing page, select Community and Parent Engagement Fund acquittal.
- Enter Contract ID and Financial Year
- Create Expense
- Upload Documentary Evidence.



When Providers are ready to submit an acquittal at the end of the financial year:

- From the Payments Hub landing page, select Community and Parent Engagement Fund acquittal.
- Enter Contract ID and Financial Year
- From Manage Acquittals menu, select Submit.

Note that departmental staff will be reviewing the submitted acquittals. Recovery action may be initiated for any unacquitted amounts.

7.3.8. Documentary Evidence



Prior to submitting their acquittal reports, Providers must upload evidence, for example receipts, in the Department's IT Systems, to demonstrate that acquittals have been made in accordance with Guidelines and the [Community and Parent Engagement Fund Supporting Document](#). Providers must consider the [Community and Parent Engagement Fund Supporting Document](#) an extension of the Parent Pathways Deed and Guidelines.



The Department may request Providers to provide further evidence related to acquittals at any time in accordance with the Deed.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 135.4)

7.3.9. Recovery of Funds

Community and Parent Engagement Fund payments will be recovered by the Department where:

- Funds have not been acquitted within 56 calendar days of the end of an acquittal period
- Funds have not been acquitted in accordance with the Deed and Guidelines
- a Site closes prior to the end of year and has an unacquitted Community and Parent Engagement Fund payment.

7.4. Capacity Building Fund

7.4.1. Overview

The Capacity Building Fund (CBF) has been established for Parent Pathways to help smaller Providers establish themselves and create greater diversity in the pre-employment service market. The CBF provides eligible organisations with up to \$60,000 (GST inclusive) over the funding period.

7.4.2. Organisational eligibility

To be eligible, Providers must be:

- a small to medium enterprise, i.e. an Australian or New Zealand firm with fewer than 200 full-time equivalent employees; or
- a First Nations-Owned Organisation; or
- partnering with a small to medium enterprise or First Nations-Owned Organisation delivering Parent Pathways.

7.4.3. Accessing the Fund

Eligible Providers will receive information on the CBF and a funding proposal template with the letter of offer, as well as instructions on applying for funding.

To access the CBF eligible Providers must submit a funding proposal to the Department for approval. CBF funding proposals must:

- Specify the goods or services the Provider intends to purchase (including costs).
- Explain how these purchases will enhance the Provider's capabilities.
- Include a budget, setting out anticipated expenditure.

Providers must have received an approval letter and short funding agreement from the Department before purchasing relevant goods or services. The Department will provide written advice of approval as well as instructions for agreeing to the funding agreement, the process for claiming the CBF payment as well as documentary evidence requirements.

The Department will work with Providers to resolve any issues that may arise throughout the CBF payment process. Providers will be informed of the CBF payment result (whether claim for CBF payment is valid, invalid, incomplete or partially valid). The Department will make payments to the Provider within 30 days.

Providers will be required to submit an acquittal report, within 3 months of the end of the capacity building activities. This acquittal report must show how the CBF funding was expended in accordance with the short funding agreement.

For Group Respondents, payment can be claimed for any of the Group members; however, the \$60,000 cap applies collectively to the Group.

7.4.4. Eligible expenses

Providers may *only* seek CBF funding for the following expenses:

- costs associated with attaining Information Security accreditation, for example:
 - expenses relating to the design and implementation of a system to meet relevant information security requirements
 - software upgrades, new hardware or other IT infrastructure to comply with information security requirements
 - purchase of ICT equipment required to meet cyber security accreditation requirements
 - hiring additional staff specifically to obtain certification/accreditation
 - engaging a third party/IT company to assist with the accreditation process
- goods or services directly related to improving the Provider's business performance including:
 - costs associated with building organisational leadership or optimising governance
 - business advisory and management consulting services
 - financial planning, risk management, tax strategies, and business operations
- costs associated with improving the capacity of Mentors to deliver personalised support to Participants, including:
 - professional development such as the attainment of relevant tertiary, Diploma or Certificate III or IV level qualification
 - staff training courses relating to Parent Pathways
 - any courses funded via the CBF for this purpose must not be delivered directly by the Provider or by a related entity of the Provider, as defined by the Deed.

- servicing innovation that will create new or improved services that deliver tailored servicing to meet current and emerging Participant needs.

7.4.5. Cyber security costs

Providers may not be eligible to funding under the Parent Pathways CBF where the Provider has:

- previously entered into a contract to deliver Australian Government employment services (included pre-employment services) in the last 5 years
- already met the Right Fit For Risk (RFFR) accreditation requirements

However, the Department will consider, on a case-by-case basis, requests for reimbursement under the Parent Pathways CBF where the Provider is a First Nations-Owned Organisation or can demonstrate costs associated with RFFR accreditation have increased due to the Provider delivering Parent Pathways.

7.4.6. Right Fit for Risk

Providers are required to meet the Department's External Systems Accreditation Framework (ESAF) to ensure confidential data stored outside of the Department's IT Systems, i.e. in a Provider's IT system, is secure.

Under ESAF, Providers are required to undertake a RFFR accreditation process that provides a tailored assurance approach to inform the Department's accreditation decision. To obtain RFFR accreditation the Department requires Providers to complete a set of milestones within a prescribed period that demonstrates the Provider's IT system meets the RFFR requirements. The accreditation and milestone process for each Provider will depend on their size and risk profile. For further information refer to External Systems Assurance Framework Chapter in Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines.

Providers are encouraged to contact the Department's Digital Information Assurance Section through the SecurityComplianceSupport@dewr.gov.au mailbox for additional support and guidance towards meeting the RFFR accreditation requirements.

(Deed Reference(s): Section B1.5, Attachment 1)

Chapter 8. Parent Funds

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Claiming a reimbursement Task Card](#)
- [Engagement Support Voucher Task Card](#)

8.1. Overview

Parent Funds refer to the Individual and Pooled Funds; two Funds that Providers can access to assist Participants work towards their goals.

The Individual and Pooled Funds both operate on a Reimbursement model. Providers are required to purchase the goods or services (or reimburse Participants if they have purchased these themselves) then claim Reimbursement for the purchases through the Department's IT System.

All purchases made through either Parent Fund must help a Participant work towards the goals outlined in the Participant's Goal Plan at the time of commitment. Exceptions to this include Engagement Support gift vouchers, certified interpreter services and crisis emergency support; these can be purchased without an agreed Goal Plan.

8.1.1. Parent Funds Eligibility

Participants are eligible for assistance through Parent Funds via their Provider. A Provider may claim Reimbursement for purchases if the Participant received the goods or services when they were:

- Commenced with the Provider
- Paused after Commencement with the Provider
- Pending after previous Commencement with the Provider
- Pending with Provider and require Certified Interpreter services
- within 183 calendar days after being transferred from the Provider to another provider (after previous Commencement with the Provider)
- within 183 calendar days after being Exited from the Provider (after previous Commencement with the Provider).



Providers can claim Reimbursement at the Site level for any of their Participants, regardless of the Participant's Site.

Participants concurrently serviced by other programs are also eligible for assistance, as well as Participants that have commenced Small Business Coaching in Self-Employment Assistance. The Determining what is a Prohibited Purchase section lists the exceptions.

8.1.2. Parent Funds Principles

Providers must ensure all Individual and Pooled Fund purchases meet the following principles:

- provide the Participant with the tools, skills, and experience to help them achieve their goals as outlined in their Goal Plan at the time of purchase

- provide value for money, this means the Provider must consider;
 - the comparative price of the good and services;
 - the availability of comparable good and services; and
 - the extent to which the relevant goods and services assist Participants.
- comply with any state or territory work, health and safety laws that may apply
- withstand public scrutiny
- will not bring Parent Pathways or the Government into disrepute.

Parent Fund purchases must be tailored to individual Participant needs. The Parent Funds are not intended to be used for regular and ongoing costs and Providers should seek to address, in a sustainable way, any underlying challenges as part of their servicing. Consistent with the Service Guarantee, a Provider should make each Participant aware of the supports available through the Parent Funds and consider every request for support by Participants. Providers are discouraged from requiring Participants to purchase items themselves ahead of reimbursing the Participant, as this may create additional challenges or unnecessary financial hardship for the Participant.

8.1.3. Eligible Purchases

An eligible purchase is any good or service that:

- meets the Parent Funds Principles
- the Provider does not already receive a payment from the Department for such as a Service Fee or Community and Parent Engagement Fund or any other payment
- is not prohibited
- satisfies any specific Parent Fund category requirements.
- the Provider does not already receive a payment, funding or subsidy from another entity, community organisation or charity for the same goods or service

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 130)

8.1.4. Privacy considerations when making purchases

When engaging with suppliers and purchasing goods, Providers must ensure that they only share the minimum amount of Participant information that the supplier needs. Providers can only supply personal details if consent has been given by the Participant and if the goods and services cannot be supplied or received without it.

8.1.5. Creating commitments

Providers must pay for eligible purchases and commit purchases in the Department's IT Systems before claiming Reimbursement from the Individual and Pooled Funds.



Providers must create a commitment in the Commitment Details section, in the Department's IT Systems. The commitment must include information such as category, supplier name, supplier ABN, purchase details, invoice details and Participant information.

Providers can create a commitment in the Department's IT Systems either before making the purchase or in anticipation of the purchase.

Providers must not make commitments in anticipation of future Parent Fund credits.

8.1.6. Claiming Reimbursement

All claims for Reimbursement on purchases made from the Individual and Pooled Funds must be made within 56 days from the date the Provider paid for the goods or services. For information on Wage Subsidy claim timeframes, see [Time requirements for claiming a Reimbursement](#).

If a supplier has charged a layby fee or credit card surcharge for a purchase, then the Provider may claim Reimbursement for the full amount (that is, the cost of the item or service and the fee or surcharge).

Prior to Claiming Reimbursement



Providers must record the following information in the Department's IT Systems prior to claiming Reimbursement:

- the supplier name and ABN or, if applicable, whether the payment was made to a Provider's Related Entity or Own Organisation
 - Note: If Documentary Evidence from a government organisation does not contain an ABN, and the Provider is unable to determine the government organisation's ABN, the Provider may use the generic ABN 99 999 999 999.
- the total invoice amount and whether the payment was GST-free
- the date the supplier was paid
- the Participant's Job Seeker Identification Number (JSID)
- the date the good/s or service was provided to the Participant. The date will be:
 - the date the goods or services were given to the Participant
 - the date the Participant attended an Appointment
 - the date the Participant started in the Activity.



Providers must record additional information in the Department's IT Systems for some Parent Fund categories. Additional requirements are listed in [Attachment B. Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements](#).

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 131, Attachment 1)

Determining the correct GST treatment

All Reimbursements constitute 'consideration for a taxable supply made by a Provider to the Department' in line with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Private Ruling 1011478547799.

The relevant 'taxable supply' is the supply of contracted services to Participants as described under the Deed. This means Providers need to remit 1/11th of all Reimbursements from the Individual Fund as GST to the ATO.

The explanations below are provided as examples only and do not constitute tax advice. Providers must obtain independent tax advice relevant to their own situation.

Examples:

Example 1) Reimbursing goods or services purchased from a third-party supplier

Providers claiming Reimbursement for a purchase on behalf of a Participant that includes GST can usually claim an input tax credit for the GST component of the purchase cost.

The Department reimburses the Provider the amount paid, less the input tax credit amount. However, the Department adds GST because the Reimbursement is 'consideration for a taxable supply made by the Provider to the Department' (Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Private Ruling 1011478547799) and therefore a Provider must remit GST to the ATO with respect to the Reimbursement. This means the original GST is taken off (via the input tax credit), but then GST is added on (that is, the GST on the service supplied to the Department). The final Reimbursement is equal to a Provider's original cost for the item.

If the Individual or Pooled Fund is used to pay for the purchase of an item that is GST-free, the Provider cannot claim an input tax credit, as there is no GST component of cost of the purchase.

In this case, the Department reimburses the Provider the amount paid and adds GST, as the Reimbursement is a separate taxable supply. The Provider then must remit GST to the ATO with respect to the Reimbursement. This means nothing is taken off, but 10 per cent GST is added. The final Reimbursement is equal to a Provider's original cost plus 10 per cent.

Example 2) Reimbursing goods or services purchased directly by a Participant

Providers cannot claim an input tax credit when seeking Reimbursement to cover reimbursement for a Participant who has paid for the cost of goods or services as the Provider has not made a purchase.

The Department reimburses the Provider the amount paid and adds GST because the Reimbursement is a separate taxable supply. The Provider then must remit GST to the ATO with respect to the Reimbursement. This means nothing is taken off, but 10 per cent GST is added. The final Reimbursement is equal to the Provider's original cost plus 10 per cent.

Purchasing Items for Multiple Participants

Providers are prohibited under the Parent Pathways Deed from reimbursing commitments in advance of assigning Participants to the commitment.

Providers can, however, assign multiple Participants against a single commitment. If this is the case. Providers should:

- Purchase multiple, identical goods from a supplier in the one transaction (for example, ten \$50 gift vouchers to be used for Engagement Support).
- Create a single commitment in the Department's IT System for that transaction.
- Assign Participants against that commitment one-by-one as they are provided with the goods.
 - note that the sum of the amounts assigned to each Participant must always equal the total commitment amount. If Providers are assigning Participants one-by-one, they will need to edit the commitment amount.

Providers should note they only have 56 days from the date they pay for the goods or services to submit all claims for Reimbursement purchases. If Providers are purchasing multiple goods with a view to hand them out to different Participants over time, they should ensure they do not buy more than they will be able to distribute and claim Reimbursement for within the 56 days limit.

Own Organisation and Related Entity purchases

Where a Provider is claiming Reimbursement from a Parent Fund for a good or service purchased from the Provider's Own Organisation or a Related Entity, the Participant must make an informed decision on whether they are comfortable with Funds being used in this way.

When Providers use the Individual and Pooled Funds to purchase goods or services from their Own Organisation or a Related Entity, they must:

- ensure all Parent Funds principles are being met
- declare to the Participant the goods or service being purchased are from the Provider's Own Organisation or an entity with which the Provider has a financial relationship
- advise the Participant of other options that are available to them to purchase the goods or service (where another supplier could deliver them)
- gain consent from the Participant to make the purchase using the [Own Org/Related Entity Parent Fund form](#)
- declare in the Department's IT System that the Participant has consented to being referred to a Provider's Own Organisation or Related Entity
- retain a signed copy of the [Own Org/Related Entity Parent Fund form](#).

If a Provider does not gain consent from the Participant for this purchase and does not declare such in the Department's IT System they cannot claim a Reimbursement.

8.1.7. Prohibited Purchases

Providers must not seek Reimbursement for prohibited purchases, prohibited purchases are:

- any goods and services purchased prior to the Deed Commencement Date
- goods and services for which a Provider is already entitled to a payment (including the Service Fee and a Community and Parent Engagement Fund payment) from the Department under the Deed

- goods or services directly funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy
- goods or services that are funded through other Government programs or grants
- assets, including any accumulation and servicing of assets and or maintenance that remain the property of the Provider
- assets for a Participant or Employer that are not primarily used to assist the Participant in accordance with the 'Parent Fund principles'
- any goods or services incurred before Participants were participating in Parent Pathways
- Youth Bonus Wage Subsidies
- child care gap fees
- gifts, cash and other incentives for Participants and Employers, including payout of loans, credit cards or other debts (except Engagement Support vouchers in lieu of expenses to attend Appointments as specified in the category table.)
- good or services which attract an incentive for a Provider or its staff (beyond the Engagement Support vouchers which are explicitly permissible in these Guidelines)
- goods or services which the Provider already receives funding, payments or subsidies from another entity for, such as community grants
- penalties, fines, and court fees (for example, penalties that include costs associated with participation in any Alcohol Interlock Program or Traffic Offender Intervention Program)
- any costs and overheads, such as travel time, travel costs and administration costs associated with:
 - providing the Parent Pathways services
 - covering the cost-of-service delivery on an outreach basis
 - administering the Pooled Fund or Individual Fund
- legal fees or security costs incurred by a Provider
- an Employer's workers compensation or insurance policy payments
- any interest incurred on a Provider's or Participant's credit cards, including account and credit card fees.

Where a Participant seeks Reimbursement for the purchase of prohibited goods or service the Provider should not claim a Reimbursement and should:

- notify the Participant that the purchase is prohibited and the reason why the purchase is not permitted
- discuss an alternative purchase and
- if the Participant disagrees with the decision, provide details for the Customer Feedback system.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 131)

8.1.8. Recovery of Payments

The Department may recover any Reimbursement made to the Provider where the Department determines, at its absolute discretion, that the Provider has not met the requirements of the Deed and or this Guidelines.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 131.11)

8.1.9. Summary of Documentary Evidence

Documentary Evidence

A Provider must have met all the Documentary Evidence requirements at the time of claiming Reimbursement.

All Claims

A Provider must retain items of evidence that in combination clearly identifies:

- the total invoice amount
- the details of the supplier (including ABN) (note: if the generic ABN is used, then the ABN is not required)
- the details of the items purchased and/or details of the service delivered,
- whether the purchase was GST inclusive or GST-free, and
- where a supplier charges a layby fee or credit card surcharge for the purchase, and the fee or surcharge does not appear on the Tax Invoice, the Provider must also retain Documentary Evidence which includes these additional costs.

External Suppliers

In addition to the above, if a Provider has paid an external supplier, the Provider must retain items of evidence that in combination clearly identifies:

- the Participant who received the goods or services (e.g. name, or address)
- prior payment from the Provider to the supplier which reflects payment in full or a zero-outstanding balance, and
- the date that the supplier was paid.

Internal Suppliers

In addition to the above, if the supplier is the Provider's Own Organisation or a Related Entity, the Provider must retain items of evidence that in combination clearly identifies:

- the Participant who received the goods or services (e.g. name, or JSID)
- the date the service was paid, and
- an [Own Org/Related Entity Parent Fund form](#) that has been completed by the Participant.

Suitable Evidence

Suitable items of evidence include a remittance advice, record of transaction or a Tax Invoice, receipt, layby docket, internal billing documentation or purchase order. One or more pieces of evidence may be required to demonstrate the Documentary Evidence requirements listed above.

A Provider should refer to the ATO website to determine what is considered a valid Tax Invoice. A Recipient Created Tax Invoice (RCTI) will be considered valid if it contains all the information required of a Tax Invoice (except for ABN if the recipient is not registered for GST). A written agreement between the Supplier and the Recipient does not need to be supplied to the Department.

Where a supplier uses another organisation to collect payments on their behalf (e.g. Australia Post) and the Tax Invoice does not clearly identify the supplier or detail the items to be reimbursed, the Provider must also retain Documentary Evidence which includes this information.

Additional Evidence



Providers must upload additional information in the Department's IT Systems for some Parent Fund categories. Additional requirements are listed in [Attachment B. Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements](#).

Providers must retain additional information for most Parent Fund categories. Additional requirements are listed in [Attachment B. Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements](#).

For additional Documentary Evidence requirements for Wage Subsidies, Providers must refer to the [Wage Subsidies Chapter](#).

Uploading Evidence

When uploading Documentary Evidence, Providers must ensure that they only share the minimum amount of personal information that the Department needs.

8.2. Individual Fund

8.2.1. Individual Fund Overview

The Individual Fund gives the Participant discretion, transparency and equity over up to \$1,250 per year of purchases related to building skills and capability and for assistance to attend Appointments or activities. This may include purchases from the following [categories](#):

- Accredited Training
- Communication and Technology
- Driver's Licence costs
- Engagement
- Non-Vocational Training
- Transport
- Work-Related Training and Licensing.

A Participant's Individual Fund is credited \$1,250 on their commencement in the service. The notional balance of a Parent's Individual Fund credits reduces each time a Reimbursement is made. If there are insufficient funds available in the Individual Fund to make a purchase the Provider can choose to use credits from the Pooled Fund to claim Reimbursement.

Every 12 months of active servicing:

- unused credits will be returned to the Department
- a new \$1,250 credit will be applied to the Participant's Individual Fund.

Active servicing is defined as days Commenced in the Service. Days spent Pending or Paused on the are excluded from Commenced days calculations.

8.2.2. Gaining consent through the Goal Plan

When developing a Goal Plan, Providers must seek consent from the Participant for the Individual Fund to be used to achieve specific goals in their Goal Plan. Regardless of a Participant's initial decision, consent, at a goal level, can be given or withdrawn at any time. When making an Individual Fund commitment, Providers need to ensure overarching consent has been given for the Fund to be used for purchases that help a Participant work towards a related Goal Plan goal. Providers do not need to obtain Participant consent for specific purchases, at time of commitment, unless the Reimbursement is for goods or service purchased from the Provider's Own Organisation or Related Entity.

When seeking consent to use the Individual Fund, the Mentor must explain the Individual Fund to Participants, including:

- the amount of funding available and how often the Fund is topped up
- the Individual Fund categories and examples of eligible purchases
- that the Individual Fund can only be used for purchases that relate to a Goal Plan goal (aside from Engagement Support vouchers)
- that the Participant may choose whether the Fund be used for purchases that relate to specific Goal Plan goals
- Participants can provide consent to use the Individual Fund for some, all, or none of the Goals in their Goal Plan. They are entitled to change their decision about consent at any time and just need to update their Goal Plan to do so
- Participants are entitled to make requests about how the Individual Fund is spent. If the requested purchase aligns with Goal Plan goals, is an eligible purchase and there are sufficient credits in the Participant's Individual Fund, the Provider will make every attempt to make the purchase for the Participant.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 128, Attachment 1)

8.2.3. Transfers and Exits and the impact on credits

Where a Participant transfers from the Provider's Caseload to another Provider, their Individual Fund balance will transfer with them.

Where a Participant has active Individual Fund commitment/s at the time of transfer, the Provider can still claim Reimbursement for this commitment.

Where commitments are inactivated or recovered after the Participant has transferred from the Provider's Caseload, those credits will be transferred to the new Provider servicing the Participant, unless a \$1,250 credit has subsequently been applied to the Participant's Individual Fund on reaching their 12 month servicing anniversary.

Where a Participant has transferred to a new Provider, and the previous Provider has purchased goods or services but has not created a commitment, the Provider can claim Reimbursement through the Pooled Fund in line with Guidelines.

Where a Participant Exits Parent Pathways, the Individual Fund credit balance remains available to access for 183 days (unless the Participant subsequently commences with another Provider). The Provider can claim Reimbursement for purchases, within Guidelines, up to 183 days of Exit.

Where a Participant Exits the service and recommences within the 91 days, their outstanding Individual Fund credit balance is reinstated, rather than a new \$1,250 credit being applied.

(Deed Reference(s): 131.9)

8.2.4. Engagement Support

Engagement Support is offered to Participants in the form of gift vouchers and should be promoted to Participants to encourage attending face-to-face Appointments with their Mentor and ongoing participation in the Service. Gift vouchers must be redeemable for essentials such as groceries or petrol or training (Providers should ask Participants which type of voucher they would prefer).

Table 8-A: Engagement Support Table

Engagement Support vouchers	Amount	Timing
Initial Engagement Support vouchers	\$100	The first voucher must be offered to Participants at the Initial Discussion where the Initial Discussion has been face-to-face, on initial Commencement in the service.
Ongoing Engagement Support vouchers	\$50	The first Ongoing Engagement Support voucher must be offered to Participants at face-to-face Follow-up Discussions. Subsequent Ongoing Engagement Support vouchers can be offered to Participants at all other face-to-face appointments.

An Engagement Support voucher can only be provided to Participants after attending a face-to-face Appointment. Providers can purchase and distribute these vouchers without the Participant having approved their Goal Plan.

Reimbursements for Engagement Support vouchers come out of the Individual Fund (or Pooled Fund if the Individual Fund is exhausted) and are capped at \$250 per 12 month servicing period (that is, Commenced days).

Providers must offer Participants an Engagement Support voucher at:

- face-to-face Initial Discussions
- face-to-face Follow-up Discussions

Providers will be able to provide Participants with an Initial Engagement Support voucher of \$100 and then the first Ongoing Engagement Support voucher of \$50 for face-to-face appointments within a 28-day servicing period. This is to align with the Planning Phase of four weeks.

The Department recommends that Providers evenly space out the distribution of subsequent Engagement Support vouchers, over the course of a 12 month servicing period, to maximise engagement over that time. Ultimately, however, Providers have discretion in terms of the frequency they distribute vouchers, as long they do not provide Participants more than one Ongoing Engagement Support voucher in the same 28 day servicing period.

Participants have the right to decline Engagement Support vouchers should they prefer for their Individual Fund to be spent on other purchases. Providers should note they can also access the Pooled Fund for any purchases from the Individual Fund, including Engagement Support vouchers, where a Participant's Individual Fund has been exhausted.



Providers must retain a completed [Engagement Support Participation Declaration form](#). See the [Attachment B. Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements](#) for more details.

Commencing Participants after a Transfer from another provider

Participants cannot receive more than one **Initial Engagement Support** voucher (\$100) in the same Period of Service. Where the Participant has previously Commenced with another provider in the same Period of Service, Providers must offer the Participant an **Ongoing Engagement Support Voucher**, if they attend a face-to-face Initial Discussion Appointment and have not reached their Engagement Support Cap.

8.3. Pooled Fund

8.3.1. Pooled Fund Overview

The Pooled Fund supports a broader range of purchases or higher cost purchases for Participants who are most in need of assistance. This may include purchases from the following [categories](#):

- Activity Costs
- Certified Interpreters
- Child Care Costs
- Non-Vocational Support
- Post Placement support
- Professional Services
- Wage Subsidies
- Work-Related Items.

The Pooled Fund supplements the Individual Fund and is managed in consultation with Participants. It allows Providers more discretion and flexibility on how purchases are made across their Caseload. Credits are managed at the contract level which means Providers can claim Reimbursement for any Participant on their Caseload, in the Employment Region they are contracted to service.

Providers are not required to seek Participant consent to make purchases from the Pooled Fund in the same way they are the Individual Fund, but Pooled Fund purchases must still take into account the Participant's views on the type of financial assistance they want in order to achieve the goals in their Goal Plan.

A \$600 Pooled Fund credit is allocated to the Provider's Pooled Fund balance at the Site level when a Participant commences a Period of Service. This means a Provider will not receive a credit if the Participant has previously Commenced with another Provider in their current Period of Service. Unlike the Individual Fund, Pooled Fund credits do not expire. That is, unused credits will carry over to the next financial and subsequent financial years, with no new credits being applied annually. The notional balance of Pooled Fund credits for the Provider reduces each time a Provider makes a commitment in the Department's IT System to purchase goods or services.

If a Participant has exhausted their Individual Fund credits, Providers can use the Pooled Fund to purchase goods or services from Individual Fund categories, including Engagement Support gift vouchers.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 131.4)

8.3.2. Transfers, Exits and the Impact on Credits

A Provider's Pooled Fund balance does not change when a Participant transfers from their Caseload to another one of their Sites, or to a different Provider. Nor does the Pooled Fund balance change when a Participant Exits the service.

Providers can transfer Pooled Fund credits between any of its Sites within or across Employment Regions. Providers can also transfer Pooled Fund credits to another Provider when a Participant transfers to another Provider. The transfer of any credits is to be negotiated between the current and gaining Provider.

The Department may, at any time, place limits on or restrict a Provider's ability to transfer amounts credited to the Pooled Fund between its Sites.

(Deed Reference(s): Chapter B4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT, Attachment 1)

Chapter 9. Wage Subsidy

Supporting Documents for this Chapter

- [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#)
- [Wage Subsidy Payment Template](#)
- [Wage Subsidy Calculator](#)

9.1. Overview

Wage Subsidies are a financial incentive Providers can offer to eligible Employers to encourage them to hire eligible Participants in ongoing jobs by contributing to the initial costs of hiring a new employee.

There are 2 Wage Subsidy types available:

- the Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy, funded from a demand-driven pool and managed via the Department's IT System, and
- the Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy, funded through the Pooled Fund and temporarily managed via a manual process detailed at Attachment D.

Unless otherwise specified, all processes in this Chapter apply to both Wage Subsidy types.

Providers are expected to work directly with Employers to understand their recruitment needs, the needs of the job placement, and to recommend Participants whose skills and experience make them a good fit for the role. As part of these interactions, Providers should develop productive relationships with Employers and offer Wage Subsidies as part of an ongoing program of support to assist disadvantaged Participants into eligible jobs that are decent, safe, appropriately secure, and provide workers with the flexibility to balance their work and personal lives.

Providers are best placed to assess the needs of Participants and Employers in their local labour market and based on this, Providers can decide whether to offer a Wage Subsidy to an Employer. This means a Provider may choose not to offer a Wage Subsidy to an Employer even if all eligibility requirements are met.

In determining whether to offer a Wage Subsidy, Providers must ensure that the following principles are met:

- providing value for money, by ensuring a wage subsidy is used as an intervention to secure a suitable and decent job for an eligible Participant
- compliance with any work, health and safety requirements under the relevant state or territory legislation
- withstanding public scrutiny
- not bringing employment services or the Australian Government into disrepute.

Providers must ensure Employers are aware they are not entitled to receive a Wage Subsidy until such time as the Provider has decided to offer a Wage Subsidy to the Employer and the Employer has entered into a Wage Subsidy Agreement with the Provider approved within 28 days of the Participant commencing Employment (see [Head Agreements and Schedules](#)).

9.2. Wage Subsidy Eligibility Requirements

9.2.1. Participant Eligibility

Participant eligibility criteria for the available Wage Subsidies is detailed in [Attachment C](#).

The Department's IT Systems will assess a Participant's eligibility for a Wage Subsidy, based on their time spent participating in relevant employment services. Eligibility is determined based on the Job Placement Start Date.

If a Provider determines the Department's IT Systems have incorrectly assessed Participant eligibility, the Provider must contact their Provider Lead to discuss the issue.

As part of confirming a Participant's eligibility, Providers must check if the Participant has an active Wage Subsidy Agreement in place with their organisation that overlaps with any potential new Agreement. Where an overlapping Agreement is identified, Providers must confirm the Employment has ended and then end the existing Agreement in the Department's IT Systems with the correct Employment end date before creating the new Agreement within the 28-day timeframe.

Providers must speak to their Provider Lead immediately if you identify an overlapping Wage Subsidy Agreement managed by another Provider.

9.2.2. Employer Eligibility

A Wage Subsidy Employer must be a legal entity with a valid ABN which complies with all eligibility requirements under the Wage Subsidy Head Agreement terms and conditions. A Wage Subsidy Employer must also have a verified and active Workforce Australia Online for Business account before they can be offered a Wage Subsidy.

A Wage Subsidy Employer must not be:

- the Provider's Own Organisation
- a Related Entity of the Provider
- a [government entity, unless specified below](#)
- a [prior employer](#) or host business of the Participant (within the last 2 years)
- a Family Member of the Participant, to ensure there is no real or perceived conflict of interest or unfair advantage
- suspended or excluded from receiving Wage Subsidies
- a labour hire company or group training organisation, except where the requirements below are met, or
- as otherwise advised by the Department.

Labour Hire Companies and Group Training Organisations

A Wage Subsidy Employer can be a labour hire company or a group training organisation, provided the company is paying the Participant's wages and the placement/s with the host business/es meet all eligibility criteria of the Wage Subsidy Placement and Employer.

If a labour hire company or a group training organisation is receiving a Wage Subsidy for an employee, they must disclose:

- to the host business/es that they are receiving a Wage Subsidy for an employee. The Wage Subsidy Employer must retain Documentary Evidence of the disclosure and supply it to the Provider.
- to the Provider, prior to being eligible for any Wage Subsidy payments, the ABN of the host business/es the Wage Subsidy Participant was placed with for the duration of the Wage Subsidy Agreement.

Host businesses that subsequently employs a Wage Subsidy Participant on an ongoing basis are not eligible to receive a Wage Subsidy for that Participant, where they hosted the same Participant within the previous 2 years. Likewise, a labour hire company is not eligible for a Wage Subsidy where they place a Participant with a host business that has previously employed the Participant within the past 2 years. See [Not eligible – Prior Employment](#) section for details.

Not eligible – Government Entities

A Wage Subsidy Employer or host business must not be an Australian Government or state or territory government entity.

Similarly, the Employment position cannot be funded by an Australian, state or territory government entity.

Example: A Wage Subsidy Agreement cannot be entered into for a labour hire company which places a Participant in an Australian Government-operated call centre, or a state government-operated manufacturer of ships.

A Wage Subsidy Employer can be a local government entity, provided the Employment position is not funded by an Australian, state or territory government entity.

Providers can use the Australian Government's website ABN Lookup (abr.business.gov.au) to determine if an Employer is a government entity, and/or request proof from the Employer.

Not eligible – Prior employment

An Employer will not be eligible to receive a Wage Subsidy where, prior to the Job Placement Start Date, the Participant has been employed by the Employer (including placements with host businesses via a labour hire company), or any other entities associated with the Employer, within the previous 2 years.

Paid Induction Periods (paid work trials) and periods of unpaid work (for example unpaid trials or voluntary work), whether recorded in the Department's IT System or agreed between an Employer and Participant, are not considered prior to Employment.

Wage Subsidy Placements cannot include periods of unpaid work trials. Providers can use Wage Subsidies for Employment that starts after an unpaid work trial ends, if all other eligibility requirements for the Participant, Employer and Placement are satisfied.

Where a Wage Subsidy Participant commenced Employment up to 14 days earlier than the Job Placement Start Date recorded in the Department's IT System, Providers can allow the wage subsidy

to proceed, where payroll evidence is provided, and the Participant was eligible on the actual start date of Employment.



Providers must retain payroll evidence of the Wage Subsidy Placement start date, where it differs from the Job Placement Start Date recorded in the Department's IT System. Refer to the [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#) for further details on how to apply this approach.

9.2.3. Placement Eligibility

A Wage Subsidy Placement is an Employment position with an eligible Employer that meets all eligibility requirements. The Employment position can be:

- full-time, part-time or casual
- an apprenticeship or traineeship
- found by the Provider or by the Participant.

A Wage Subsidy Placement must:

- be a sustainable and ongoing position expected to continue indefinitely. This means the Employment is not intended to end when the Wage Subsidy ceases.
- offer at least the required minimum average hours per week which can be averaged over the duration of the Wage Subsidy Agreement to flexibly support the Wage Subsidy Participant and Wage Subsidy Employer's needs.
- comply with all Employment standards for the Employment position under any Commonwealth, state and/or territory laws, including but not limited to:
 - complying with the [National Employment Standards – Fair Work Act 2009 \(Cth\)](#).
 - complying with the minimum terms and conditions of employment prescribed in any Modern Award that covers or applies to the Wage Subsidy Placement.
 - paying the relevant Wage Subsidy Participant at least the equivalent of the minimum rate prescribed in any Modern Award that covers or applies to the Employment position or, if no Modern Award covers or applies to the Employment position, at least the equivalent of the [National Minimum Wage](#)
- comply with all relevant laws and requirements of any Commonwealth, state, territory or local authority, including work, health and safety legislation
- provide a safe system of work for the Wage Subsidy Participant at all times during the Wage Subsidy Placement
- not displace an existing employee
- not be a commission-based, self-employment or subcontracted position (excluding Placements with labour hire companies or group training organisations)
- not otherwise be an Unsuitable position as defined in the Deed.

9.3. Offering and Negotiating Wage Subsidy Agreements

Providers are responsible for negotiating and managing all elements of a Wage Subsidy Agreement including making payments to Wage Subsidy Employers. Providers must not charge Wage Subsidy Employers to manage Wage Subsidy Agreements.

Providers must ensure that Employers are aware of the requirement to approve and manage their Wage Subsidy Agreements online via Workforce Australia Online for Businesses and ensure they have an active account before they commence negotiating a Wage Subsidy Agreement.

In negotiating a Wage Subsidy Agreement with an eligible Employer, Providers must first confirm which Wage Subsidy a Participant is eligible to attract in the Department's IT System and that there are no other active Agreements for that Participant.

See [Attachment C: Wage Subsidy Types and Participant Eligibility Requirements](#) for further details.

9.3.1. Head Agreements and Schedules

The Wage Subsidy Agreement consists of the general terms and conditions of the Head Agreement and the specific terms relating to the Wage Subsidy Placement, Wage Subsidy Participant, and the Wage Subsidy Period/s set out in the relevant Schedule.

The Wage Subsidy Period means the payment period for a Wage Subsidy, which are instalment payments of the agreed maximum amount.

For system-based Wage Subsidy Agreements, Providers must enter into a Head Agreement once with each Wage Subsidy Employer, via the Department's IT System and the Employer's Workforce Australia Online for Businesses account (refer to the [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#) for further information). A Sample Copy of the Head Agreement can be found on the Provider Portal.

Once a Head Agreement has been entered into, a separate Schedule for each new Wage Subsidy Participant is attached to the Head Agreement. Schedules contain the specific details of the Wage Subsidy Placement for each new Wage Subsidy Participant.

Each Schedule the Provider attaches to the Head Agreement will relate to a single Wage Subsidy Placement and will create a separate contract (Wage Subsidy Agreement) between the Provider and the Wage Subsidy Employer in relation to that Wage Subsidy Placement. Both the Head Agreement and the Schedule must be in the form specified by the Department, created in the Department's IT System.



Where the Department changes the terms and conditions of the template Head Agreement, the Provider must enter into a new Head Agreement with each Wage Subsidy Employer in accordance with the updated terms and conditions before attaching any new Schedules in respect of Wage Subsidy Placements. This includes having to enter into a new Head Agreement with those Employers with whom the Provider already has a Head Agreement.



Refer to [Attachment D](#) for details on how the Head Agreement and Schedule operate under the temporary manual process for Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreements.

9.3.2. Negotiating Terms of the Wage Subsidy

Providers must explain the terms and conditions of the Wage Subsidy Agreement to the Employer to ensure they fully understand their rights and obligations in accepting the Wage Subsidy. This includes

explaining the Documentary Evidence required from the Employer to confirm the Employer's compliance with the terms and conditions over the course of the Wage Subsidy Agreement, and that the Employer must advise immediately if the Placement terminates early.

The Provider must consider the Participant's ability to meet a weekly average hour requirement when determining the suitability of the Wage Subsidy Placement for the Participant. Participants are eligible to attract a Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy where they work the minimum average weekly hours (at least 15) over the duration of the Wage Subsidy Placement agreed between the Provider and Wage Subsidy Employer and meet all other eligibility requirements for the relevant Wage Subsidy. Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy Participants must work a minimum average of 20 hours per week.

The term of a Wage Subsidy Agreement begins (Wage Subsidy Placement start date) on the Job Placement Start Date. The Wage Subsidy Agreement ends on the date agreed by both the Provider and Employer (that is, between six and 26 weeks following the Wage Subsidy Placement start date, subject to the Wage Subsidy type; see [Attachment C: Wage Subsidy Types and Participant Eligibility Requirements](#) for details), or on the date Employment ceases where a Wage Subsidy Placement terminates earlier than the agreed date.

The Provider must negotiate with the Wage Subsidy Employer a Wage Subsidy Period that works best for the Wage Subsidy Employer's business, subject to the agreed duration of the Wage Subsidy Agreement. A Wage Subsidy Period can be weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, on completion, or any other timeframe as agreed by the Provider and Wage Subsidy Employer. Wage Subsidy Periods must be recorded on the Schedule. See [Payments to Wage Subsidy Employers](#) section for more information.

Providers should refer Wage Subsidy Employers to the 'Manage Wage Subsidies' help guide (located on the [Workforce Australia website](#)) for details on how to manage their Wage Subsidy Agreements, including submitting Documentary Evidence.



Wage Subsidy Agreements must be created in the Department's IT System by the Provider and approved online by the Wage Subsidy Employer via their Workforce Australia Online for Business account.

Refer to [Attachment D](#) for details on how to create and approve Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreements under the temporary manual process.

Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy Agreements will not be accepted in an offline format. Should the Provider or Wage Subsidy Employer experience difficulties using the Department's IT System and/or [Workforce Australia website](#) to approve the Wage Subsidy Agreement, they must contact the Employer Hotline on 13 17 15 prior to the 28-day timeframe expiring.



If amendments to the Vacancy or Job Placement details are required during the Wage Subsidy Agreement term (other than the start date), the Provider must agree on the changes with the Wage Subsidy Employer and update the details in the Department's IT System in accordance with the Wage Subsidy Operations Guide.

9.3.3. Time requirements for approving a Wage Subsidy

In line with the policy intent of Wage Subsidies, Providers are expected to commence negotiating a Wage Subsidy Agreement with an eligible Employer prior to the Job Placement Start Date. Providers must ensure that the Wage Subsidy Agreement has been approved by the Employer in the Department's IT System within 4 weeks (28 days) of the Wage Subsidy Placement commencing.

Wage Subsidy Agreements will not be approved outside of 28 days from the commencement of Employment, and Providers will not be Reimbursed for any payments made to Employers where there is not an approved Wage Subsidy Agreement in place. Providers must ensure Employers are aware of the 28-day timeframe and the consequences of not meeting it.

Providers are required to have appropriate administrative processes in place to meet the 28-day timeframe and must work with Wage Subsidy Employers to ensure that this timeframe is met. If the Department determines there is evidence (for example, correspondence and/or a draft Wage Subsidy Agreement in the Department's IT System) that the Provider delayed the Employer's approval the Department may take compliance action against a Provider. This includes but is not limited to delays caused by Providers:

- not confirming the Employer's eligibility prior to offering a Wage Subsidy
- offering a Wage Subsidy to an Employer well after Employment commenced
- failing to respond to Employer enquiries in a timely manner.

In these cases, compliance action may include Directing the Provider to make Wage Subsidy payments to the Wage Subsidy Employer without Reimbursement and/or blocking Outcome payments associated with the Employment position.

See [Head Agreements and Schedules](#) section for more information.

9.4. Payments to Wage Subsidy Employers

The Provider must have entered into a Wage Subsidy Agreement with the Wage Subsidy Employer and all terms and conditions of the Wage Subsidy Agreement must be satisfied before the Provider can make a payment to the Wage Subsidy Employer.

Wage Subsidy payments must not exceed 100 per cent of the Participant's wages at any point over the Wage Subsidy Placement period.



Wage Subsidy Employers must invoice the Provider to receive a Wage Subsidy payment and submit the required Documentary Evidence to support payment (see [Summary of Documentary Evidence](#) section).



Documentary Evidence from the Wage Subsidy Employer must confirm the Wage Subsidy Participant worked at least the minimum weekly hour requirement averaged over the Wage Subsidy Period being assessed. Where a Wage Subsidy Participant's hours worked are less than required for the Wage Subsidy Employer to be eligible for payment, Documentary Evidence must also include all periods of leave taken.

9.4.1. Assessing Periods of Leave

Where a Wage Subsidy Participant requests and has leave approved in accordance with entitlements under a relevant Modern Award or the National Employment Standards – Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth), and the leave is recorded in Documentary Evidence, it can count towards the minimum average hours per week requirement. However, a Wage Subsidy Employer cannot use approved leave to regularly supplement a Wage Subsidy Participant's work hours for the purpose of meeting the minimum average number of hours per week.

Refer to the [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#) for further details on considering approved leave when calculating payments to Wage Subsidy Employers.



Evidence of approved leave (paid or unpaid) must show that the Wage Subsidy Employer agreed to the leave at the time the Wage Subsidy Participant requested it, and either be:

- recorded on the Wage Subsidy Participant's pay slip; or
- on a written declaration from the Employer.

9.4.2. Change of Business Ownership

If a Wage Subsidy Employer changes ownership, the new owner is eligible to claim the remaining Wage Subsidy payment/s, provided all other eligibility requirements are met. The Wage Subsidy Agreement must be novated between the parties before the new owner can claim the remaining Wage Subsidy payment/s.

9.4.3. Calculating Payments for Early Terminations

If a Wage Subsidy Placement terminates early, Providers must calculate any outstanding payments based on the number of weeks the Wage Subsidy Participant worked for the required minimum average hours per week from the Wage Subsidy Placement start date.

If the Wage Subsidy Participant did not work the required minimum average hours per week throughout the Wage Subsidy Placement, the Wage Subsidy Employer will not be eligible to receive the full Wage Subsidy amount.

To work out the Wage Subsidy amount, the Wage Subsidy Employer is entitled to divide the total Wage Subsidy amount by the Wage Subsidy Agreement Term to calculate the weekly rate the Wage Subsidy Employer may be entitled to receive. Then multiply this amount by the number of weeks the Wage Subsidy Participant worked the minimum average number of hours per week.

Examples of how to calculate payments for early termination can be found in the [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#).

9.4.4. Wage Subsidy Calculator

The Wage Subsidy Calculator is a tool that assists Providers to calculate the Wage Subsidy amount an Employer is eligible to receive, and the value of the Reimbursement the Provider can claim from the Department. Relevant information recorded on the Wage Subsidy Agreement and in the Documentary Evidence, can be entered into the Calculator to confirm:

- whether the Wage Subsidy Placement meets the required minimum average hours per week over the duration of the Wage Subsidy Agreement
- that Wage Subsidy payments do not exceed 100 per cent of the Participant's wages at any point over the Wage Subsidy Placement period.

The [Wage Subsidy Calculator](#) can be found on the [Provider Portal](#). Information about how to use the Calculator is located in the [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#).

9.4.5. Concurrent Funding

Under the General Terms and Conditions of the Head Agreement, Wage Subsidy Employers are required to notify Providers of any Australian Government or State or Territory government funding they receive for the Wage Subsidy Participant or placement.

Wage Subsidy Employers cannot access Wage Subsidies if they receive funding from other Australian Government, state or territory wage subsidies or similar employment program funding for the same Participant in the same Wage Subsidy Placement.

The Provider should continue to check whether the Wage Subsidy Employer is following the above requirements throughout the Wage Subsidy Agreement term.

9.4.6. Wage Subsidy Employers Not Registered for GST

The total maximum amounts of a Wage Subsidy specified in this Guideline are GST inclusive. Where a non-GST registered Wage Subsidy Employer submits a tax invoice for the correct amount of a Wage Subsidy to a Provider, the Provider must pay the Wage Subsidy Employer the amount (GST Exclusive).

When the Provider submits a claim for Reimbursement, the Department will pay the full (GST inclusive) amount. The Provider is responsible for remitting the GST inclusive amount to the Australian Tax Office.

9.5. Claims for Reimbursement

The Provider can only claim a Reimbursement for a Wage Subsidy payment if:

- all terms and conditions of the relevant Deed, this Guideline, the Wage Subsidy Operations Guide (where applicable) and Wage Subsidy Agreement have been met
- they have first made the relevant Wage Subsidy payment out of their own funds to the Wage Subsidy Employer
- the Reimbursement claim is for the same dollar value they paid the Wage Subsidy Employer
- they have retained sufficient Documentary Evidence to demonstrate the above.

9.5.1. Time requirements for claiming a Reimbursement

The Department permits claims for Reimbursement to be rendered:

- after each Wage Subsidy payment is made in accordance with the Wage Subsidy Period/s recorded in the Schedule of the Wage Subsidy Agreement, or
- collectively at the end of the Wage Subsidy Placement.

Providers must submit all claims for Reimbursement no later than 56 days after the end of the Wage Subsidy Placement. This includes where a Wage Subsidy Placement terminates early.

The Wage Subsidy Head Agreement (clause 6) requires Wage Subsidy Employers to notify Providers immediately if the Wage Subsidy Participant's Employment ends prior to the Wage Subsidy Agreement end date. In accordance with this, Providers must ensure that, where a Wage Subsidy Placement has terminated early, the correct Placement end date is recorded in the Department's IT System, and that

claims for Reimbursement are submitted no later than 56 days from the end of the Wage Subsidy Placement.

Providers are required to have appropriate administrative processes in place to meet the 56-day timeframe. Providers must work with Wage Subsidy Employers to ensure that this timeframe is met. Providers who fail to meet the 56-day timeframe may not be Reimbursed.

Under the Head Agreement, Providers are required to make the final Wage Subsidy payment to the Wage Subsidy Employer where the Employer:

- requests the final Wage Subsidy payment, and
- supplies the required Documentary Evidence for that payment to the Provider within 28 days from the end of the Wage Subsidy Placement.

Providers may choose to make the final Wage Subsidy payment to the Wage Subsidy Employer where they submit the required Documentary Evidence after the 28-day timeframe, if all other eligibility requirements are met. However, the Provider must claim the Reimbursement from the Department no later than 56 days from the end of the Wage Subsidy Placement.

9.5.2. Recovery of Reimbursement Claims Paid

The Department may recover any Reimbursements made to the Provider, where the Department determines, at its absolute discretion that the Wage Subsidy Employer has:

- misused the Wage Subsidy, including, but not limited to, breaching clause 12 of the Head Agreement
- not met the terms and conditions of the Wage Subsidy Agreement
- been suspended and/or excluded by the Department from participating in Wage Subsidies, or
- otherwise engaged in activity that may bring, or could be perceived to bring, the use of Wage Subsidies or the Commonwealth of Australia into disrepute.

The Department may also recover any Reimbursement made to the Provider where the Department determines, at its absolute discretion, that the Provider has not met the requirements of the Deed, this Guideline and/or the Wage Subsidy Operations Guide.

9.6. Managing Wage Subsidy Agreements for Wage Subsidy Participants

9.6.1. Supporting Participants on Wage Subsidies

Providers are expected to provide Post-Placement Support to Wage Subsidy Participants and Wage Subsidy Employers to maximise the success of Wage Subsidy Placements, including after a Wage Subsidy Participant is Suspended or Exited from a Provider's Caseload.

Providers should immediately advise the Department if a Wage Subsidy Participant reports any incidents of inappropriate or unsafe workplace behaviour and follow the appropriate Departmental process and protocols.

9.6.2. Managing Wage Subsidy Agreements for Transferred Participants

When a Wage Subsidy Participant transfers to another Provider, the gaining and outgoing Providers must ensure both the Participant and Wage Subsidy Employer continue to be supported.

A Wage Subsidy Agreement must remain with the original Provider if the Participant transfers to another Provider, including if the Provider is Exiting the market completely, unless otherwise Directed by the Department.

9.7. Summary of Documentary Evidence

Providers must obtain and retain sufficient Documentary Evidence which demonstrates the Wage Subsidy Participant was Employed by the Wage Subsidy Employer in the Wage Subsidy Placement in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Deed, Guideline, and Wage Subsidy Agreement to process a Wage Subsidy payment to an Employer and to claim Reimbursement from the Department.

9.7.1. Wage Subsidy Agreements

For Youth Bonus Wage Subsidies, a Wage Subsidy Agreement, linking Vacancy, Employer and Placement details, must be entered into the Department's IT System and approved via the Wage Subsidy Employer's Workforce Australia Online for Business account.

[Attachment C](#) provides details on how to create and approve Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreements under the temporary manual process.

Additionally, for Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidies, the Wage Subsidy Agreement Schedule must also include the agreed:

- duration of the Wage Subsidy Placement
- required minimum average weekly hours, and
- maximum amount of the Wage Subsidy being offered.

The above terms are not negotiable for Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy Agreements and the Department's IT System will pre-populate this information.

See [Head Agreements and Schedules for more information](#).

9.7.2. Evidence from Wage Subsidy Employers – Participant Employment

Documentary Evidence must confirm the Wage Subsidy Employer's details (including name and ABN) and the Wage Subsidy Participant's name. Documentary Evidence must include:

- evidence to confirm the Wage Subsidy Participant's Employment which demonstrates the hours worked (including any periods of approved leave taken) and wages paid for the entire Wage Subsidy Period, which may be in the form of (but is not limited to):
 - a completed Wage Subsidy payment template (Refer to the [Wage Subsidy Operations Guide](#)), or
 - pay slips or a printout from the Wage Subsidy Employer's payroll software, or

- a statutory declaration, email or other correspondence from the Wage Subsidy Employer, and,
- if the Wage Subsidy Employer is a labour hire company or group training organisation:
 - the ABN of the host business/es the Wage Subsidy Participant was placed with throughout the Wage Subsidy Agreement Term. This can be recorded on the [Wage Subsidy payment template](#), provided via email or included in the statutory declaration, and
 - evidence they disclosed to all host businesses the Wage Subsidy Participant is placed with that they were receiving a Wage Subsidy, and
- where a Wage Subsidy Participant's Employment ends prior to the Wage Subsidy Placement end date, a written statement of the reason why Employment ended.

Providers may request the Employer provides additional Documentary Evidence relating to a Wage Subsidy Placement, Wage Subsidy Participant, and/or Wage Subsidy Agreement. In requesting additional Documentary Evidence, the Provider must ensure the Employer understands what evidence will be required, the purpose of the evidence, and the timeframe for providing the evidence, prior to approving the Wage Subsidy Agreement.

The Department can request additional Documentary Evidence from Providers relating to a Wage Subsidy Placement, Wage Subsidy Participant and/or Wage Subsidy Agreement from Providers, to support Program Assurance Activities. If Providers do not have this Documentary Evidence, they can request it from Wage Subsidy Employers, as per the Employer's obligations under the Wage Subsidy Agreement.

9.7.3. Evidence from Provider – Claims for Reimbursement

Providers must ensure Documentary Evidence demonstrates that payment was made to the Wage Subsidy Employer before claiming a Reimbursement. Providers can upload all Documentary Evidence via the Agreement Summary screen of the Department's IT System at the time of claiming Reimbursement. Refer to [Attachment D](#) for details on where to upload evidence for Agreements managed under the temporary manual process for Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreements.

As per Chapter 3.6.2 in Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines, Tax File Numbers must be redacted from any pay slips prior to being uploaded into the Department's IT System as Documentary Evidence to support Wage Subsidy payments.

Documentary Evidence may be in the form of a:

- record of transaction (bank statement or report from the Provider's financial system)
- tax invoice and corresponding receipt from the Wage Subsidy Employer
- tax invoice from the Wage Subsidy Employer and a remittance advice
- statutory declaration, email or other correspondence from the Provider.

The Documentary Evidence to support a claim for Reimbursement must confirm:

- the Wage Subsidy Participant's name and JSID
- the Wage Subsidy Employer's details (including name and ABN)

- the amount of the Wage Subsidy payment
- the date the Wage Subsidy payment was made.

While not mandatory, Providers are encouraged to include a copy of their results from the Wage Subsidy Calculator when uploading evidence. Refer to the Wage Subsidy Calculator User Guide for instructions on how to obtain these.

Providers are also encouraged to include other relevant evidence (correspondence or file notes) to support payment integrity activities, particularly if there were unusual or complex circumstances that require explanation.

(Deed Reference(s): Section B4.2- Financial Incentive for Employers)

Chapter 10. Relocation Assistance

10.1. Overview

Relocation Assistance provides financial assistance to Participants who relocate to participate in employment. Relocation Assistance is funded through a demand-driven pool for Parent Pathways Providers. This Chapter outlines the eligibility requirements and process for seeking reimbursement for Relocation Assistance.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 133.3)

10.2. Eligibility

10.2.1. Participant Eligibility

Participants will be eligible for Relocation Assistance immediately on commencement in Parent Pathways. In assessing a Participant's request for Relocation Assistance, Providers have discretion to consider the individual circumstances of the Participant and their suitability to relocate for work.

10.2.2. Placement Eligibility

Providers may assist a Participant taking up a job in another location with Relocation Assistance if the Participant has accepted an offer of employment more than 90 minutes away from their current residence. Before offering Relocation Assistance to a Participant, the Provider must verify the placement details with the Employer and enter a Vacancy in the Department's IT System. The Provider must also ensure the Placement is not a Non-Payable Outcome, self-employment or commission based.

10.3. Relocation Assistance Payments

Relocation Assistance can be used to pay a supplier directly or reimburse a Participant for costs incurred prior to and after relocating. Payments are flexible and can be used to help a Participant:

- prepare to move
- move
- settle into the new location.

Relocation Assistance can include, but is not limited to:

- removalist costs
- travel costs (including for verified dependents)
- disturbance costs (for example utility connections, licence and/or vehicle registration transfer costs where they are moving interstate)
- prepaid cards (excluding prepaid debit cards) to support Participants during their relocation, for example with fuel or food for the journey, and
- short-term (up to a maximum of two weeks) accommodation costs.

Before agreeing to provide Relocation Assistance, Providers must ensure that any support offered meets the following principles:

- provides value for money
- supports compliance with any work, health and safety requirements under the relevant state or territory legislation
- withstands public scrutiny
- will not bring the Services, the Provider or the Department into disrepute.

To ensure the above principles are met, Providers must exercise discretion and only agree to reasonable costs that are proportionate to the Participant's circumstances. This means that Providers can choose not to provide support or offer a lower amount of support in order to meet the principles.

Examples

Example 1) A Participant wants to move from Sydney to Newcastle to accept a casual job in a fast-food restaurant. The Provider confirms the position details with the Employer including that only limited shifts will be available for the Participant each week. The Provider agrees to pay for the Participant's bus fare to relocate to Newcastle.

Example 2) A Participant in Adelaide is offered ongoing employment at a new abattoir facility in Darwin. The Participant has two school aged children who will be moving with them. The Provider confirms the position details with the Employer who confirms the position is full time and ongoing. The Provider agrees to support their relocation with airfares for the Participant and their children, removalist costs and one weeks' accommodation until the Participant's new home is available.

In determining whether a Relocation cost is appropriate, Providers may request a Participant provide one or more quotes, prior to making payments.

Relocation Assistance must not be used for:

- assisting Participants to relocate overseas
- rental bonds
- Pre-paid debit cards
- ongoing costs (for example, utilities or school fees)
- purchasing assets (for example, whitegoods)
- a Participant who is a member of a couple as defined in 1.1.M.120 of the Guide to Social Security Law, and the other member has received relocation assistance for the same relocation.

10.3.1. Definition of a dependent

A dependent may include a member of the Participant's household who is a:

- dependent child/children under 24 years of age who is:
 - financially dependent on the relocating Participant
 - is the dependent child of the partner of the Participant where they are a member of a couple under social security law and the partner is receiving a government payment related to the child or children.
- spouse/partner of the Participant who is also receiving an Australian Government Income Support Payment or pension
- an elderly parent/s who:
 - has reached Australian Pension age
 - lives in the same residence as the Participant
 - is dependent on the Participant for day-to-day care
 - is relocating to reside with the Participant.

Where the dependent of the Participant does not meet these requirements, Providers can assess whether there is a genuine dependency relationship, for example if the Participant has legal caring responsibilities for an adult child with a disability.

10.4. Claims for Reimbursement

Prior to claiming Reimbursement, Providers must ensure they have paid the Supplier and/or reimbursed the Participant in full, from their own funds.

Providers must submit a claim for Reimbursement within 56 days of the purchase/payment date.

To claim reimbursement for Relocation Assistance, all relevant information and evidence must be entered into the Department's IT System. This includes items that, in combination, clearly identifies:

- prior payment from a Provider to the Participant or supplier which reflects payment in full or a zero outstanding balance the details of the supplier (including ABN)
- the details of the items purchased and/or details of the service delivered
- whether the purchase was GST inclusive or GST-free
- if quotes were requested, copies of the quotes
- the date the payment was made
- if a prepaid card was purchased for the Participant, evidence that the card was issued to the Participant (for example, the date issued, amount, card reference number).

Where a Participant receives assistance to relocate with a dependent, the Provider must retain a file note outlining the reason for their approval, based on their assessment of the genuine dependency of the relationship.



To claim Relocation Assistance:

- from the Payments Hub landing page, select Request payment
- select *Relocation Assistance Payment*

- enter the Contract ID
- add Payment Details (Jobseeker ID, Vacancy ID and Amount)
- upload Documentary Evidence
- review the Declaration and accept and submit. This will create an Unconfirmed Relocation Assistance Payment claim which needs to be reviewed and processed by your Provider Lead
- send an email to your Departmental Provider Lead advising that a Request Payment claim has been lodged and include the Payment ID to assist them to identify and process the claim.

(Deed Reference(s): Section B4.3 – Other Financial Support, Attachment 1)

Chapter 11. Sites

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Site Opening Checklist and Declaration](#)
- [Site Change factsheet and Request Form](#)
- [Site Closure Checklist and Declaration Form](#)

11.1. Overview

This Chapter outlines Provider Site types, definitions and Site requirements, including Site Manager presence.

11.2. Site types and definitions

A Site is categorised and defined in the following way:

Table 11-A: Site Definitions

Site Type	Definition
Full-Time Site	A permanent Site that operates from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Monday to Friday as a minimum, from a fixed location.
Part-Time Site	A permanent Site that has a regular weekly presence, with regular days and hours of operation less than that of a Full-Time Site, from a fixed location.
Outreach Site	A Site that does not have a regular weekly presence, operating on a monthly, seasonal or 'as needed' basis, from a fixed location (for example, a local library, town hall or community hub).

(Deed Reference(s): clauses 5.1(b), 80.5 and Attachment 1)

11.3. Site requirements

Parent Pathways Providers must adhere to Site Requirements outlined in the Deed. These requirements range from accessibility to Site hours to Work Health and Safety.

All Sites must display the Service Guarantee in an accessible area.

There must be a Site Manager located at Full-Time Sites. Where there are no Full-Time Sites within an Employment Region, a Site Manager must be located in at least one of the Part-Time Sites. Given services may be delivered away from Full-Time and Part-Time Sites, Site Managers must be easily contactable.

11.3.1. General requirements

All Provider Sites must:

- provide a welcoming, private, child friendly and safe environment for Participants and their children
- be presented in a manner that upholds and maintains the good reputation of the Services, as determined by the Department

- take all reasonable steps to avoid acts or omissions which the Provider could reasonably foresee would be likely to cause injury to Participants or any other individuals at the location

Example: All Sites must ensure there is space for prams, access to Parent's bathrooms with change tables and designated areas to feed children and infants.

11.3.2. Accessibility

Each Provider Site must maintain suitable accessibility requirements. Provider Sites must:

- be conveniently located close to and allow ease for accessing safe public transport and avoids transport mobility barriers
- be accessible to people with a disability
- have access to appropriate facilities for use by the Participant, including access to clean drinking water and toilets.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 6.1(a))

11.3.3. Parent Pathways Material

Each Site must display Parent Pathways material, including fact sheets and promotional flyers. If a Provider distributes or displays Parent Pathways materials, as part of their outreach activities, they are available to the Department's website and Provider Portal.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 61.1)

11.3.4. Co-located Sites

A co-located Site is a Full-Time, Part-Time or outreach Site, which is located with another service (for example but not limited to family and children support services, Workforce Australia).

Additional requirements may apply to co-located Sites.

- If a Site is co-located with an employment services provider, (for example but not limited to Workforce Australia and/or Disability Employment Services), a separate entrance, reception and waiting area is required.
- If a Site is co-located with a support service such as family and children support service, consideration should be given to the availability of a separate entrance, reception and waiting areas that supports the Participant.

Outreach Sites, unless co-located with an employment services provider, will not require a separate entrance.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 6.1(b)(ii),

11.4. Site details

All Provider Site locations must be provided to the Department by completing Schedule 1 - Deed and Business Details of the Deed.

Information that must be provided includes but is not limited to:

- Site location(s)
- Site type(s)
- Business days of operation for each Site provided
- Site opening hours for each business day
 - For Outreach Sites, include the hours of operation for the Parent Pathways service only, not the centre's broader operating hours.

For Providers delivering services in one Employment Region or Service Area, Providers must designate a Head Office in that Employment Region or Service Area and this must be a permanent physical Site.

For Providers delivering services in multiple Employment Regions, Providers must designate a Head Office in one Employment Region and this must be a permanent physical address.



List each Site for each Employment Region or Service Area in the Location Name field in the 360 Providers' Portal. Where a Provider has more than one Site, the Provider must note which Site is their head office for each Employment Region or Service Areas by putting 'Head Office' in brackets after the Location name.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 6, Clause 13.2, Clause 80.5, Attachment 1)

11.5. Site visits

The Department can request a Site inspection at any time.

In accordance with requests submitted by the Department, Providers must give or arrange unrestricted access for the Department to any of its Sites or premises, including any of those of any Subcontractor or Third-Party IT Vendor.

Providers must provide assistance to the Department to inspect its Sites or premises and those of any Subcontractor or Third-Party IT Vendor.

11.6. Site Changes

Providers must request to make changes to Site arrangements. Change requests include requests to:

- increase or reduce the days/hours or frequency of operation at a Site(s) (for example change from full-time to part-time, reduce the days a Part-Time Site is open)
- close a Site(s)
- open a new Site(s)
- transfer/relocate a Site(s).

Providers must not make changes to Site arrangements until they have been advised by their Provider Lead that it has been approved by the Department's delegate.



Requests to change a Site's operation must be discussed and emailed to the Provider Lead for consideration.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 57.1(a)(i), (ii), Attachment 1)

Chapter 12. Provider Performance

12.1. Overview

The Australian Government and the Department are committed to ensuring Participants receive a quality service that meets their needs. The Department's Performance and Quality Framework will involve the Department undertaking Performance Assessments and discussions with Providers to ensure they are delivering a quality service.

The Provider Performance Framework is intended to:

- ensure Participants are getting tailored and quality services
- ensure Providers are fulfilling their Deed obligations and meeting the required standards.

12.2. Performance Modules

Three modules will form the [Parent Pathways Performance and Quality Framework](#):

- **Operational efficiency** – this module measures how effectively the Provider meets key operational requirements relating to servicing, including commencing parents or carers in the Service, helping Participants develop Goal Plans, meeting Participants at regular Appointments, referring Participants to activities or community support services, and completing Parent Snapshots.
- **Service effectiveness** – this module measures how well the Provider is achieving the service objectives of helping Participants address barriers to education and employment and work towards their goals.
- **Service quality** – this module measures the quality of the Provider's service delivery based on departmental assessments of how well they are operating against the Deed, the Service Guidelines and their Key Service Commitments document.

12.3. Key Performance Indicators

Scores for each module will be calculated via smaller underpinning measures known as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Providers will have visibility over how their results for each KPI inform their scores for each module and their overall Performance Assessment. Performance Assessments will be undertaken at the contract level (that is, each Employment Region that a Provider operates in), however, Providers will receive underlying data at the Site level where available to assist in identifying areas of high and low performance. More information on KPIs can be seen in the [Parent Pathways Performance and Quality Framework document](#).

12.4. Frequency of Performance Assessments

Each Performance Period will run over a 12 month period (from 1 November to 31 October), with a mid-cycle check-in at the 6 month mark (30 April). Providers will receive a formal assessment against each KPI at the mid-cycle check-in and at the end of the Performance Period. The mid-cycle check-in provides an opportunity for Providers to review their performance before the annual assessment and make improvements to ensure KPIs are met. There will be ongoing dialogue between the Department

and Providers between formal performance assessments to help drive continuous improvement and Providers can contact their Provider Lead at any time should they want to discuss performance.

12.5. Underperformance

If underperformance is identified, the Department will work with the Provider to implement strategies to improve performance. If underperformance is significant or ongoing, the Department reserves the right to take remedial action in line with the Deed.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause: 85.3)

Chapter 13. Provider Requirements

Supporting Documents for this Chapter:

- [Key Service Commitments and Service Guarantee](#)

13.1. Provider Level Servicing

Providers will have access to up to date information about their Participant Caseloads. The Home Page will include information on:

- Caseloads Summary, including number of Participants Commenced, Paused, Pending, recently Transferred and Exited.
- Goal Plan Management
- Tasks that need to be completed.

13.1.1. Information Technology systems

For day-to-day operations, Providers must utilise and maintain accurate records in the Department's IT Systems, not an External IT System. The Department's IT Systems interfaces with Services Australia's IT System. The Provider must not allow Provider Personnel, Third Party IT Vendors or Subcontractors to have Access to the Department's IT Systems until they have successfully completed any onboarding processes and training. For more information see Provider staff training section and [Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines](#).

To ensure Participants are receiving trauma-informed servicing, and do not have to relive that trauma by retelling their story, External IT Systems must not be used under Parent Pathways for day-to-day operations. External IT Systems may be used if the Provider delivers a service under another Deed for that service. For more information see External Systems Assurance Framework in [Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines](#).

These guidelines outline situations where a Provider may be permitted to use an External IT System to record day-to-day operational information. For example, where there is no functionality to use the Department's IT Systems, including if a Parent or Carer directly presents (via phone or in person) at a Provider's Site without a Connection from Services Australia and is not currently on the Department's Systems, the Provider may book an Initial Discussion in an External IT System. Privacy Notification and Consent Forms, can also be stored in an External IT System. For more information on how to store these records, see the Records Management Instructions in [Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines](#).

(Deed Reference(s): Chapter A3 – Information Management)

13.1.2. Staff Requirements

Providers must ensure staff are qualified and/or experienced to deliver high-quality services to attract Parents or Carers to voluntarily participate.

Providers should ensure there are three levels of staff, junior Mentors, senior Mentors, and a Site Manager at Full-time Sites.

Providers must ensure that a Site Manager is located at Full-Time Sites. Where there are no Full-Time Sites within an Employment Region, a Site Manager must be located in at least one of the Part-Time Sites.

- ✚ A Site Manager's duty of care to the safety and welfare of staff delivering the services of Parent Pathways will extend to all Sites and include any services and activities that are delivered off-Site.

Providers should use best efforts to ensure a Mentor remains assigned to a Participant for 12 months or longer for continuity.

13.1.3. Ratios

To ensure Participants are able to receive a quality service tailored to their individual preferences, with assistance provided by one Mentor who familiarises themselves with the Participant's circumstances, Providers are required to maintain appropriate Mentor to Participant ratios.

All Pending and Commenced Participants must be assigned to a Mentor in the Department's IT Systems and individual Mentors must not have more Pending and Commenced Participants assigned to them than their Provider's allowed Mentor to Participant ratio.

A Provider's allowed Mentor to Participant ratio is:

- 1 Mentor to 50 Participants (1:50)
- The stated ratio in the Provider's Key Service Commitments, where this ratio is less than 1:50

There is some degree of flexibility for a short period of time in meeting the Mentor to Participant ratio, this allows for the movement of Mentor and Participant numbers without having to recruit unnecessarily.

Example: The caseload at a Full-time site increases. This results in the ratio also increasing to 1:55. However, as 5 parents are due to exit within the next month due to their youngest children turning 6, this ratio is acceptable as it is short-term.

Providers must also ensure appropriate supervision of junior staff, with ratios captured in the Key Services Commitments, and must not exceed 1 Senior staff member (for example, the Site Manager or Senior Mentor) to 3 Junior staff (includes junior mentors and administrative staff) in Full-time and Part-time Sites.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 92.4 and Clause 95.4 and Attachment 1)

13.1.4. Qualifications

Site Managers are required to possess relevant tertiary qualifications or equivalent experience. Equivalent experience may mean that the Site Manager has had previous experience working in a similar role with similar responsibilities for cohorts facing disadvantage and have transferrable skills to those they will have responsibility for in the new Service.

Senior Mentors must offer a more intensive level of support to assist Participants with more complex needs and barriers. Senior Mentors should possess at least a Diploma level or tertiary qualification at a minimum.

Junior Mentors should have or be working towards a Certificate III or IV level of accreditation. Qualifications may include but not be limited to:

- Certificate IV in Youth Work CHC40421 - this qualification provides requisite skills, techniques and theories in youth work.
- Diploma of Community Services CHC52015 - this qualification provides the skills, techniques and theories in community welfare.
- Certificate IV in Employment Services CHC41115 – this qualification reflects the role of individuals who provide employment services to both job seekers and employers.

The qualifications list is not an exhaustive list. The department suggests Providers undertake their own research into the following fields and decide as to what would work best for the Provider workforce and Participant cohort's needs.

The recommended education fields are:

- Society and Culture
- Health
- Education

Qualification fields include, but are not limited to:

- Social Work
- Children's Services
- Youth Work
- Community Services (mental health, drug, and alcohol)
- Employment Services
- Counselling
- Human Welfare Studies and Services
- Psychiatry
- Mental Health Nursing
- Community Nursing
- Indigenous Health
- Community Health
- Public Health.

The aim of these areas of education is to develop an understanding of the social, political, and economic climate in which social policy is developed, administered, and implemented. There is a focus on the social needs of individuals, groups and communities within society, the resources available to meet these needs, and the social influences that affect the behaviour and social functioning of people. These areas of education also involve developing an ability to plan and deliver welfare programmes and organise resources to meet individual and community needs.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 8.7)

13.1.5. Lived Experience

Providers should aim to employ staff with lived experience. Someone with lived experience has had direct experience. That is, they know what it feels like to be in a similar position to the Participant and/or has knowledge, has been a Participant in employment services and values that can be transferred into practice, values about another human being and belief in another human being.

Mentors with lived experience need to have the following qualities: empathy, resilience, emotionally robust, patient, self-reflective, self-aware, able to recognise their limits and does not make assumptions or judgement.

13.1.6. Provider Staff - Training

Mandatory Training

To assist Providers to deliver a high-quality Service, staff are required to undertake mandatory training that has been developed by the Department. Providers must ensure all staff complete the policy and Service training modules within the phased timeframes below.

Before being granted access to the Department's IT Systems and engaging with the Participants

The *Fraud and Corruption* and the *Information Exchange and Privacy* modules must be completed by each staff member. These can be found on the Learning Centre platform.

The following modules must be completed by Parent Pathways staff within 60 days of the date the Provider's contract is made effective in the Department's IT Systems:

- Parent Pathways - Activities, Post Placement Support and Transitional Support
- Parent Pathways - An Introduction to the Mandatory Training
- Parent Pathways - Connections, Registration and Commencement
- Parent Pathways - Eligibility
- Parent Pathways - Goal Plans
- Parent Pathways - Opt In, Pauses and Exits
- Parent Pathways - Payments for Participants (Individual Fund, Pooled Fund, and engagement supports)
- Parent Pathways - Provider Payments
- Parent Pathways - Transfers.

The following modules must be completed by Parent Pathways staff within 60 days of the date that the contract is made effective in the Department's IT Systems or from the date the training is first available:

- Trauma informed servicing

- Mental health
- Cultural Competency
- Domestic and Family Violence
- Career Development
- Parent Centred Servicing

From March 2025, any new staff must complete all mandatory training within 60 days of their start date with the Provider.

Fraud and Corruption and the Information Exchange and Privacy modules must be renewed annually. For more information see the Fraud and Corruption and Training and Privacy sections in Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines.

The Department will closely monitor the completion of mandatory training.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 73.13 (d) Attachment 1).

13.1.7. General Assistance to Participants

Providers must deliver services in line with their Key Service Commitments and the Service Guarantee. In addition to the qualifications, training and experience listed above Mentors should be trained and/or experienced to support Participants in various situations including those listed below.

Participants subject to family and domestic violence

If a Participant discloses family and domestic violence, or a Provider has concerns that a Participant is experiencing or at risk of family and domestic violence, Providers must discuss support options and services available to them and offer referrals. This includes support from a Services Australia social worker and national or state-based organisations that offer advice and information about family and domestic violence. Staff must also consider legislative framework that applies in their jurisdiction.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 98.2)

Participants seeking assistance with early childhood education and care

Mentors should provide practical assistance to Participants to help them progress towards achieving their goals, this may include early childhood education and care (ECEC) related assistance and support including:

- support to access Australian Government assistance under the Child Care Subsidy including the Additional Child Care Subsidy, where they may be eligible. See [Child Care Subsidy - Services Australia](#) for more information
- assistance to source options for ECEC so the Participant can attend Activities and Appointments. Visit [Find children's education and care | StartingBlocks.gov.au](#) for more information
- support and assistance to complete ECEC enrolment forms support and assistance with accessing the Pooled Fund and Individual Fund to pay for costs such as a child care centres bond fee. The Pooled Fund and Individual Fund must not be used to pay for (or reimburse) families' co-contributions to their ECEC session fees.

Mentors must comply with the applicable 'working with children' laws in the relevant jurisdiction when assisting a Participant with a child present. For more information see [Part A of the Parent Pathways Guidelines](#).

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 98.3)

Trauma-informed Servicing

Mentors must provide trauma-informed servicing to Participants who have experienced, or are experiencing, trauma and other Participants where they feel necessary. The Mentor must try and protect Participants from unnecessary trauma where possible.

Trauma is a response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event or experience which can be emotionally, mentally or physically overwhelming for a person. For example, bullying, neglect, abuse, assault, violence, or the death of a loved one. Trauma can sometimes lead to a person experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, and borderline personality disorder.

Trauma-informed servicing is a strengths-based approach which emphasises physical and psychological safety. It seeks to support those people with lived experience of trauma to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

Effective trauma-informed servicing includes:

- recognising the diverse impacts and symptoms of trauma
- understanding the scope of causes which can lead to trauma
- integrating an understanding of trauma into all policies, procedures and practices which affect those who are experiencing or have experienced trauma
- actively seeking to protect individuals from the risk of reinforcing their trauma.

To enable the delivery of effective trauma-informed servicing, Provider staff are required to undertake the trauma informed servicing mandatory training module within 60 days of commencement. This module can be found on the Learning Centre platform.

Additionally, Providers should seek to ensure that Participants are connected with a single, consistent Mentor throughout their participation in the Service. Continuity of support provides the opportunity to build trusting relationships which is central to delivering trauma-informed servicing.

Interpreter services

Providers must provide an interpreter to facilitate communication with Participants where necessary or where a Participant requests an interpreter.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 98.3)

Practical assistance

Providers should provide practical assistance to Participants to help them progress towards achieving their identified goals.

Practical assistance may include:

- support and assistance under the [Pooled and Individual Funds](#)
- arranging child minding, crèche or babysitting services for a Participant's child/ren so the Participant can attend Activities
- supporting a Participant to obtain Australian Government child care assistance under the Child Care Subsidy or Child Care Subsidy Safety Net including the Additional Child Care Subsidy, where they may be eligible. Refer to the [Services Australia website](#) for more information
- connecting a Participant to community networks and organisations.

Providers must comply with the applicable 'working with children' laws in the relevant jurisdiction when assisting a Participant with child minding, crèche or babysitting services.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 98.3)

Engagement with other services in the community

Providers must maintain close connections with community support services in their local area. Not only are these connections important as referral channels of new Participants but ensure that referrals to these services appropriately supports the Participant with to address non-vocational and vocations barriers. Providers must work cooperatively to establish appropriate referral pathways before referring Participants to local services and Activities. These local activities and support services can include; counselling, financial advice, domestic and family violence support, parenting courses, child care, transport, further education, secure housing, training and volunteering.

More information on Programs and Services can be found on the [Department of Social Services website](#).

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 95.2(a)(i), Attachment 1)

13.2. Feedback and Continuous Improvement

The Department encourages all types of feedback and encourages an open communication between Participants, Providers, the Department and any other external stakeholders to support capacity building and continuous improvement.

13.2.1. Community of Practice

Providers must engage in the Parent Pathways Community of Practice. The Community of Practice will be established and led by the Department from the commencement of the services.

The Community of Practice aims to facilitate collaboration between the Department and the Providers contracted to deliver Parent Pathways. It will allow Providers to share ideas, skills and strategies related to Closing the Gap, as well as proposing solutions to issues that have been identified in the delivery of the program. This exchange will enhance Service delivery from Providers and improve outcomes for Participants. As part of the Community of Practice, Providers will contribute to the development of the Joint Charter.

The Department will develop principles in consultation with the Community of Practice that will promote best practice Service delivery and collaboration to optimise Participant experience and Service outcomes.

13.2.2. Complaints and Participant Feedback Process

Providers must establish a Complaints handling process and Participant feedback register and:

- explain the process to each Participant at their Initial Discussion
- ensure all Complaints are investigated by an appropriately senior staff member who is not the subject of the Complaint
- promptly communicate the outcome of a Complaint investigation to the Participant, including any action the Provider will take in response
- if requested, advise the Department of the outcome of any Complaint investigations and the action the Provider is taking in response
- if requested, assist the Department in its investigation of any Complaint, including by:
 - responding to requests within required timeframes
 - assisting to negotiate a resolution
 - assisting any other authorities to negotiate a resolution to any Complaint, where the Participant uses legislative or other complaints mechanisms.

Providers must refer a Participant to the Department's National Customer Service Line (NCSL) if they are dissatisfied with the Participant feedback process, or their Provider's investigation of a Complaint.

Providers must establish feedback processes that encourage Participants to be actively involved in the delivery of Parent Pathways and the Provider's decision-making about the delivery of Service.

(Deed Reference(s): Clause 29 Attachment 1)

Chapter 14. Attachments

Attachment A. Goal Plan Categories

The table below outlines the Goal Plan categories with examples, these examples are not an exhaustive list and are stated to provide the Mentor with a list of some of the opportunities that the Participant can draw on.

Table 14-A: Goal Plan Categories

Goal Categories	Descriptions
Personal Health and Wellbeing	Goals associated with mental/physical health and wellbeing, weaknesses, fears, procrastination, motivation, isolation, self-esteem and confidence, drug/alcohol assistance, trauma and post-traumatic stress.
Parenting and Family	Goals associated with family/parenting skills for example- parenting courses, cooking classes, connecting with their children and family safety.
Education and Training (including schooling)	Goals aligned to study including finishing High school, completing Certificate I, II, III and IV, Diploma's, Advanced Diploma's, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and gaining qualifications and licences.
Employment	Goal associated with employment, work experience, preparing for employment (resume, interview preparation, researching positions)
Social and Networking	Goals associated with building social circles including joining playgroups, book clubs, mother's groups, sporting groups, parent groups.
Financial literacy	Goals aligned to strengthening financial literacy such as financial counselling, budgeting, expense management, debt management, managing your money and gambling.

Goal Categories	Descriptions
Language, literacy and numeracy skills	Goals associated with reading, writing, listening, speaking and numeracy skills.
Driver licencing and transportation	Goals associated with transport accessibility options for example- driving lessons, driver licence, purchasing a bike or car.
Housing	Goals aligned to secure housing or changing housing situation.
Child care	Goals associated with Children attending Early Childhood education and learning centres.
Post placement support	Goals associated to post placement support in education and or employment only, for example - employment support, navigating tax systems.
Digital Literacy	Goals associated with computer skills for example- digital essentials, building confidence in accessing and using technology.
Volunteering	Goals associated with volunteering to share skills, build confidence, contribute to community and develop new skills.
Career guidance	Goals that are associated with identifying parents' strengths, transferable skills, experience, interests and preferences.

Goal Categories	Descriptions
Accessing other support services	Goals associated with being supported by the Mentor to research, navigate, connect and claim government and non-government support services and programs, for example - NDIS, Services Australia

Attachment B. Parent Fund categories and additional Documentary Evidence requirements

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Documentary Evidence requirements set out in this Attachment are in addition to the minimum Documentary Evidence requirements for all Parent Funds purchases set out in the Documentary Evidence requirements [Parent Funds section](#).

Individual Fund

Table 14-B: Individual Fund - Documentary Evidence Requirements

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
Accredited Training	<p>This category is for nationally recognised education. Accredited training must be through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and the course or unit must be on the RTO's Vocational Education and Training (VET) scope of registration, as listed on training.gov.au, the national register for training in Australia.</p> <p>Accredited training must be training for which the Participant would receive a statement of attainment.</p> <p>This category can also be used for secondary education, even where the training organisation and/or course is not listed at training.gov.au.</p>	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer the Participant to an Activity in the Department's IT System in accordance with the Activity Management Chapter. Enter the name of the RTO, the RTO code, and the relevant course code or unit code as identified at training.gov.au (or the course name if secondary education and not listed on training.gov.au) in the Activity details in the Department's IT System. Enter the associated Activity ID against the commitment in the Department's IT System. Retain sufficient items of Documentary Evidence that in combination identifies the RTO and the course code or unit code as listed on training.gov.au (or the course name if secondary education and not listed on training.gov.au). Retain additional Documentary Evidence that demonstrates the auspice relationship between a training organisation who is not a registered RTO but is operating through a registered RTO, to substantiate the training is nationally recognised.
Communication and Technology	<p>This category is for the purchase of communication and technology products required by a Participant to work towards their Goals, including:</p>	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase.

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • phone or data cards or vouchers • mobile phones • laptops • hardware and software packages. <p>Whilst all requests for assistance should be considered, support through this category is not intended to be regular and ongoing- for example, Providers should not buy mobile phone credit on monthly, ongoing basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Phone credit and internet data cards/vouchers assistance type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Upload a signed Gift Card Terms of Use Declaration Form showing voucher has been received by the Participant (if the form has been sent to Participant by email and the Participant does not have the capacity to print, complete and return the form, the Participant must send a return email acknowledging they have received the voucher. The Provider must upload emails showing that the form was sent to the Participant and the return email acknowledging receipt). ○ Enter in the Additional Details field: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a brief description of why the voucher has been purchased, and what the Participant intends to use it for (ii) an assessment of how the purchase meets the Fund Principles (iii) an explanation of how the purchase links to the Participant's goals and/or participation in the program
Driver's Licence costs	<p>This category is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving lessons for driver's licence classification C (Car) and R (Motorcycle), which is capped at \$8,800 (GST inclusive) per Participant, per Provider, per Period of Service. • Driver's licence test and licence fee for classification C (Car) and R (Motorcycle). 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase. <p>Each state and territory imposes requirements on a person who provides pre-licence driver training for reward or payment. These requirements include (at a minimum) registration with the state authority and a police check. Many states and territories also require individuals to have</p>

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
	<p>Where a Provider is claiming for assistance given to a Participant to regain their driver's licence after loss due to driving offences, this assistance is limited to one claim per Participant, per Period of Service.</p> <p>Exceptions are listed in the Prohibited Purchases section of this guideline.</p>	<p>completed a Certificate IV or other training program, and to pass a working with children check.</p>
Engagement	<p>This category is to be used to assist Participants to engage with Parent Pathways. The Engagement Support voucher must be redeemable for essentials (such as groceries or petrol), education or training. Providers and Participants should discuss the type of voucher that would most benefit the Participant and the Provider should dispense vouchers according to the Participant's preference. There are two kinds of vouchers that can be issued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Engagement Support vouchers Ongoing Engagement Support vouchers <p>See Engagement Support Chapter for more details.</p> <p>Providers must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Participants with more than \$250 worth of Engagement Support vouchers in a 12 month servicing period (that is, Commenced days). This cap does not include voucher fees. Provide Participants with more than 1 Ongoing Engagement Support voucher in a 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase. <p>Provide proof that the voucher has been received by the Participant by uploading one of the following types of evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the Engagement Support Voucher is dispensed in person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Participant must sign an Engagement Support Participant Declaration form stating they have received the voucher. If the Engagement Support Voucher is dispensed electronically via email, the Provider must also email the Participant an Engagement Support Participant Declaration form and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Provider must upload a signed version of the form, OR if and the Participant does not have the capacity to print, complete and return the form, the Participant must send a return email acknowledging they have received the voucher. The Provider must upload emails showing that the form was sent to the Participant and the return email acknowledging receipt.

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
	<p>28-day servicing period (that is, Commenced days)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Participants with vouchers that have been purchased in bulk by a Provider for any other program or service. 	<p>Providers are not required to submit a Gift Card Terms of Use Declaration Form when dispensing an Engagement Support voucher</p>
Non-Vocational Training	<p>This category is for non-vocational training that will benefit the Participant.</p> <p>Examples of non-vocational training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal development courses parenting courses financial counselling cultural services. 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer Participant to an Activity in the Department's IT Systems in accordance with the Activity Management Chapter. Enter the associated Activity ID against the commitment in the Department's IT Systems. Retain sufficient items of Documentary Evidence that in combination identifies the course. <p>Include, in the Comments field, an assessment of how the course meets the Participants goals and the Parent Fund principles, <u>if</u> the course is delivered by the Provider's own organisation or related entity.</p>
Transport	<p>This category is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and private transport and travel assistance for Participants to attend activities, medical appointments and health interventions, training, programs, or Employment. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> public transport tickets or card top-ups petrol cards non-ongoing vehicle hire (for example, cars) transport purchase (for example, bicycles) 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase. For the Petrol and Public transport assistance types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upload a signed Gift Card Terms of Use Declaration Form showing voucher has been received by the Participant (if the form has been sent to Participant by email and the Participant does not have the capacity to print, complete and return the form, the Participant must send a return email acknowledging they have received the voucher. The Provider must upload emails showing that the form was sent to the Participant and the return email acknowledging receipt).

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ vehicle registrations and inspections ○ compulsory third-party vehicle inspections ○ ticket and overnight accommodation for a Participant to attend a job interview in another city. ● Costs associated with hiring a bus or other vehicle to transport multiple Participants to a program or Activity, Employment, or other employment-related activities (such as a job fair or interview). This does not include driving time or overhead costs. To claim Reimbursement for bus-hire costs, the Provider must hire a bus from an external organisation, community sector organisation or a Related Entity, (that is, not from the Provider's Own Organisation) and ensure the bus is registered. <p>Whilst all requests for assistance should be considered, support through this category is not intended to be regular and ongoing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enter in the Additional Details field: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) an assessment of how the purchase meets the Fund Principles (ii) an explanation of how the purchase links to the Participant's goals and/or participation in the service. (iii) provide a brief description of why the voucher, gift card or transport card has been purchased, and what the Participant intends to use it for.
Work-Related Training and Licensing	<p>This category is to assist Participants with nonaccredited training and work-related licences that focus on obtaining skills relevant for a particular job, employer, or industry. Examples of non-accredited training include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● software training, such as Excel or MYOB 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase. ● Record the industry relevant to the purchase. ● For Non-Accredited Training or Employer-Specific Training assistance types:

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • barista training • asbestos awareness • manual handling training • pre-employment food safety training • pre-employment training with fitness components. <p>This category is also for the cost of a work-related licence, the associated test fees, and the accredited training costs to obtain the licence under this category, if the accredited training is a prerequisite to applying for or obtaining the licence (noting these can often be packaged into the one price). Providers can also use this category for non-accredited 'refresher' training for a current valid licence. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • security licence • forklift licence • light/medium/heavy rigid licence, including 'refresher' training for a current licence • taxi licence/driver accreditation/limousine licence • white card (or State/Territory equivalent) • working at heights certificate • first aid certificate • responsible service of alcohol certificate • responsible conduct of gambling certificate. <p>The <i>Determining what is a Prohibited Purchase</i> section lists the exceptions to the use of this category.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Refer Participant to an Activity in the Department's IT Systems in accordance with the Activity Management Chapter. ○ Enter the name of the relevant course in the Activity details in the Department's IT Systems ○ Enter the associated Activity ID against the commitment in the Department's IT Systems ○ retain sufficient items of Documentary Evidence that in combination identifies the course.

Pooled Fund

Category	Category details	System and Documentary Evidence requirements
Activity Costs	This category is for purchase of Risk Assessments or additional insurance costs.	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer Participant to an Activity in the Department's IT Systems in accordance with the Activity Management Chapter. <p>Enter the associated Activity ID against the commitment in the Department's IT Systems.</p>
Certified Interpreters	<p>This category is for the purchase of certified interpreter services for Participants, including for pending Participants.</p> <p>The cost of interpreter services can be claimed under this category when an interpreter is arranged, but the Participant does not attend the scheduled Appointment.</p> <p>This category can also be used for the cost of translating important documents such as qualifications, training certificates and transcripts.</p>	No additional Documentary Evidence is required for this category.
Child Care Costs	<p>This category can be used to assist Participants with some costs relating to accessing child care including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Childhood Education and Care waitlist fees Early Childhood Education and Care bond fees 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enter in the Additional Details field: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the type of cost and the reasons for paying for the fees including the link to the Goal Plan. <p>For example:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other Early Childhood Education and Care fees which are not Child Care Subsidy gap fees • short-term child care costs until the Child Care Subsidy is approved. It is not intended for this assistance to be ongoing or an alternative to the Child Care Subsidy. <p>The Parent Fund cannot be used to pay Child Care Subsidy gap fees. Gap fees are the difference between the full ECEC provider fee and the Child Care Subsidy amount.</p>	<p>[Provider name] has agreed to pay for the child care waitlist fees for [Participant name] so they can commence work as soon as care is available for their child, as per their Goal Plan.</p>
Non-Vocational Support	<p>This category is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-pocket medical and health related expenses if health issues are inhibiting a Participant's capacity achieve their goals, such as medical consultations, prescribed tests, medicines, or aids directed by a medical professional. This may include medical and health related expenses for a Participant's child/ren if the health issue is inhibiting the Participant's capacity to attend activities, training, participate in programs or to find and keep a job. Medical costs can only be claimed if not covered by Medicare, private health insurance or other subsidies or programs (for example, NDIS). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a Participant has lodged a claim through the Department's Personal Accident Insurance policy, Providers must meet additional requirements for 	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase. • For the Food assistance type, enter in the Additional Details field: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a brief description of why the voucher has been purchased, and what the Participant intends to use it for ○ an assessment of how the purchase meets the Fund Principles ○ an explanation of how the purchase links to the Participant's goals and/or participation in the program. • For the Food assistance type, upload a signed Gift Card Terms of Use Declaration Form showing voucher has been received by the Participant (if the form has been sent to Participant by email and the Participant does not have the capacity to print, complete and return the form, the Participant must send a return email acknowledging they have received the voucher. The Provider must upload emails showing that the form was sent to the Participant and the return email acknowledging receipt). • For Rent and crisis accommodation assistance type, retain evidence that other avenues of assistance have been exhausted (for example,

	<p>claiming Reimbursement for medical and out-of-pocket expenses. Refer to the WHS Incidents and Insurance Readers Guide on the Provider Portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food vouchers and the reimbursement of food purchases where a Participant requires additional support in line with the Parent Funds principles. • Rent and crisis accommodation when a Provider and Participant have exhausted all other avenues of assistance. • Removalists costs where the move helps the Participant work towards a Goal (once per Period of Service). It cannot be used for any rental costs including bond fees. • Basic haircuts and hygiene packs. • Other non-prohibited costs to assist a Participant to work towards their goals, such as utility costs and legal expenses, which cannot be recorded against another category. <p>The Prohibited Purchase section lists the exceptions to the use of this category.</p> <p>Whilst all requests for assistance should be considered, support through this category is not intended to be regular and ongoing.</p>	<p>records showing local support services are unable to assist) and that the accommodation represents value for money (for example, price comparisons to other local accommodation at the time of purchase).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For removalists costs, Providers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ record in the comments field of the Department's IT Systems, an assessment of how the purchase helps the Participant work towards their goals ○ record in the comments field of the Department's IT Systems, an assessment of how the purchase meets the Fund Principles. ○ retain evidence of at least 3 quotes to show the value for money principle is being met.
Post Placement Support	<p>This category is for support to help sustain a Participant's Employment. Providers must only use this category for Participants who have commenced work.</p>	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter an employment Vacancy and Placement in the Department's IT Systems.

	<p>Post Placement Support can be delivered by an external supplier or by staff members of a Provider's Own Organisation or Related Entity. A maximum rate of \$60.00 per hour (\$1.00 per minute) (GST inclusive) applies to Post Placement Support delivered by staff members of a Provider's Own Organisation or Related Entity. There is no maximum rate for Post Placement Support delivered by an external organisation.</p> <p>Examples of Post Placement Support include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intensive mentoring and coaching to a Participant who is at risk of leaving Employment due to difficulties they are facing in the workplace • assisting Participants and staff at the Participant's workplace through workforce-based training such as cross-cultural awareness, diversity training, or bullying workshops • working one-on-one with Employers of at-risk Participants to identify and overcome barriers affecting the viability of the Participant's Employment. <p>Post Placement Support does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • normal support that should be provided through the course of monthly Appointments as part of service requirements • the time spent arranging goods or services for a Participant post placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the assistance type in the commitment to outline the type of purchase. • Enter the duration of the services (in minutes) into the commitment in the Department's IT Systems. • Retain sufficient items of Documentary Evidence that, in combination, includes a description of the service delivered and the duration of the service.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conducting a risk assessment or communicating with a Participant when there is no reason to believe their Employment is not sustainable. 	
Professional Services	<p>This category is for professional services such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prevention, detection, and management of mental and substance abuse disorders drug and alcohol counselling and rehabilitation anger management personal development for addressing self-esteem and confidence issues vocational rehabilitation for Participants re-entering Employment (does not include career counselling) mental health and family counselling. Note: if a person has a mental health care plan in place, this category may only be used to cover the Medicare gap and not the full cost of the service. <p>Where a Participant has been referred to mental health services, including counselling, delivered by a Provider's own organisation or a related entity on an ongoing basis (more than 2 sessions), the Participant must have a mental health treatment plan in place from the third session (refer to Mental health care and Medicare - Medicare - Services Australia). A new plan will need to be in place for each year of service. The</p>	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enter the following into the commitment in the Department's IT System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the specialist type (psychologist or other allied health professional) the session type (individual, group, or report preparation) the duration of the session (in minutes) confirmation whether the Participant attended the Appointment Ensure any services run over multiple days should not be claimed as a single session. Each session should be claimed separately with details recorded as above. <p>Providers must retain sufficient items of Documentary Evidence that in combination includes the following for externally delivered professional services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a description of the service delivered specify whether the Participant attended the Appointment. <p>Providers must retain sufficient items of Documentary Evidence that in combination includes the following for professional services delivered by a Provider's Own Organisation or a Related Entity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a description of the service delivered the specialist type (psychologist or other allied health professional) the session type (individual or group)

	<p>third session is counted as any third professional services appointment received by a Participant.</p> <p>If a Participant required more sessions than the mental health treatment plan prescribes, a letter from the GP will need to be provided that supports the Participant's ongoing treatment and number of sessions required.</p> <p>All professional services must be delivered by either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a qualified psychologist who is currently registered as a psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), or • a qualified allied health professional² who has a degree or graduate diploma relevant to the services they are delivering in either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ allied health services or behavioural sciences ○ social work ○ rehabilitation counselling ○ other allied health qualifications. ○ If the allied health qualification relates to a field that requires professional registration to practice, the allied health professional must be currently registered with the relevant authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the duration of the service (in minutes) • the Participant's attendance at the Appointment • the session number is to be included in the comments section of the commitments screen of the Department's IT System <p>Where an Own Organisation or a Related Entity claim has been made for a third professional services Appointment, in addition to the above evidence, Providers must also retain evidence a mental health treatment plan is in place. For clarity, the Department does not need to know details of the Participant's health condition, just evidence that the mental health treatment plan is in place e.g. a letter from a GP outlining the plan duration and frequency/number of sessions required.</p> <p>Providers must create and maintain in the Department's IT System a list of the staff members in a Provider's Own Organisation or a Related Entity who deliver professional services, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the staff member's name • specialist type • qualification details • the authority with whom the staff member is registered with (if the qualification of the staff member relates to a field that requires professional registration to practise) • registration number where applicable.
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¹Further information on the allied health professionals can be found at the [Allied Health Professionals Australia website](http://ahpa.com.au/) (at ahpa.com.au/)

	<p>Any services not recognised by Allied Health Professionals Australia, such as Life Coaching or Life Skills Coaching, are not allowable under this category.</p> <p>Professional services can be delivered either in person, or via video or teleconference.</p> <p>Providers can claim missed Appointments for externally supplied services only, but claims are limited to 3 instances per Participant per Provider per Financial Year, up to 180 minutes in total per Financial Year.</p> <p><u>Additional requirements for delivery by staff of Own Organisation and Related Entity.</u></p> <p>Standard rates apply for professional services delivered by an appropriately qualified staff member employed by a Provider's Own Organisation or Related Entity. The maximum amounts for that can be claimed are calculated according to the following rates:</p> <p>For individual sessions, preparation of psychological reports or group sessions attended by up to 5 Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$240.00 per hour (\$4.00 per minute) (GST inclusive) for services delivered by a qualified allied health professional. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$259.80 per hour (\$4.33 per minute) (GST inclusive) for services delivered by a qualified psychologist. <p>For group sessions attended by 6 or more Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$40.20 per Participant per hour (\$0.67 per Participant per minute) (GST inclusive) for services delivered by a qualified allied health professional. • \$43.20 per Participant per hour (\$0.72 per Participant per minute) (GST inclusive) for services delivered by a qualified psychologist. <p>If Participants from a Provider's Caseload make up a portion of the Participants in a group session, a Provider must only claim the pro-rata amount of the relevant group session standard rate. For example, if a Provider has 2 Participants out of 5 Participants in a one-hour group session delivered by a qualified psychologist of a Related Entity, a Provider should claim \$51.96 (GST inclusive) for each Participant (that is, \$259.80 divided by 5 Participants = \$51.96 per Participant per hour).</p> <p>The Department's IT System allows the total invoice amount to be reduced where required.</p>	
Wage Subsidies	Refer to the Wage Subsidies Chapter on how to reimburse wage subsidies from the Employment Fund.	Refer to the Wage Subsidies Chapter for further information on system and Documentary Evidence requirements.

<p>Work-Related Items</p>	<p>This category is for purchases that are directly related to training, participation in programs or Employment that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a prohibited purchase, and • Cannot be recorded against another category. <p>Examples of purchases under this category include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ work-related clothing, for example, business blouse/shirts, non-slip nurse shoes ○ personal protective clothing, such as hi-vis shirts and steel cap boots. • The purchase of tools, books and equipment required by a Participant to find and keep a job, or to participate in training, programs, and/or education. • Pre-employment medical checks. • Working with Children checks. • Working with Vulnerable People checks. • Police checks for Participants. <p>Professional resume writing or job preparedness assistance.</p>	<p>In addition, for this category Providers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter the purchase type in the Department's IT System, outlining the purchase how they link to the Participant's goals and/or participation in Parent Pathways. <p>For example:</p> <p>Work safety boots, pants and a high-vis vest have been purchased for the Participant in preparation for starting their apprenticeship on [date].</p>
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Attachment C. Wage Subsidy Types and Participant Eligibility Requirements

The list below reflects how the hierarchy of Wage Subsidies is applied (in descending order) in the Department's IT System. A Participant can attract one Wage Subsidy at a time.

Indigenous Australians are eligible immediately on commencement in Parent Pathways. They must be flagged in the Department's IT System as Indigenous on registration or in the Department's Parent Snapshot.

Table 14-C: Wage Subsidy Types and Participant Eligibility Requirements

Participant Cohort	Eligible	Time in service required	Amount eligible for	Wage Subsidy Placement requirements
Participants aged 24 years and under	Yes	<p>Eligible for the Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy** (YBWS) after:</p> <p>12 months in Online Services, on commencement in Provider-led employment services, OR</p> <p>after 6 months continuous Provider-led employment services*</p>	YBWS offers Employers up to a set amount of \$10,000 (GST inclusive) or 100 per cent of the wages paid to the employee, whichever is the lower amount.	<p>YBWS Wage Subsidy Placements must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer at least a minimum average of 20 hours per week, and run for 26 weeks from the employment placement start date.
Participants aged 25 years and older commenced with a Parent Pathways Provider	Yes	<p>Eligible for the Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy (WASWS) after</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 months in Workforce Australia Online Services, on commencement in Provider-led employment services, OR 	Under a WASWS Providers have the flexibility to offer an Employer up to a maximum of \$10,000 (GST inclusive) or 100 per cent of the wages paid to the employee, whichever is the lower amount.	<p>Providers will have the flexibility to determine the WASWS Placement requirements, but the placement must offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least a minimum average of 15 hours per week, and a minimum of 6 weeks and a maximum of 26 weeks

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> after 6 months of continuous Provider-led employment services* 		from the employment placement start date.
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Notes:

*The period of continuous Provider-based employment services can include participation in Workforce Australia Services, ParentsNext, Parent Pathways, Transition to Work, Disability Employment Services, and the Community Development Program. A Participant's eligibility will not be affected if they Exit and return to the service within an allowable break of 13 weeks.

**Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy – if the Participant loses the wage-subsidised job through no fault of their own within 6 months of starting, they may return to a Provider and immediately be eligible for another YBWS or a Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy should their eligibility change.

Attachment D. Manual Approach for Workforce Australia Wage Subsidy Agreements

Overview

From 1 November 2024 Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreements will not be available in the Department's IT System. A temporary manual approach to creating and managing this Agreement type will be in place until the System build has been completed.

This Attachment details where processes for creating and managing Workforce Australia Wage Subsidy Agreements differs from the Guideline due to the manual process.

This Attachment does not cover Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy Agreements. Submission of a Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy Agreement via this manual process will be rejected and Providers advised to complete the process via the Department's IT System.

Checking Site Credits Balance

As the funding for the Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy is through the Pooled Fund, Providers will need to be aware of the Pooled Fund balances for their Site/s to ensure sufficient funds are available for wage subsidy Reimbursements.

Providers cannot enter into a Wage Subsidy Agreement in anticipation of future credits to the Pooled Fund; though Pooled Fund credits can be transferred between Sites to support a Wage Subsidy.

Providers can check the balance of the Pooled Fund for your Site via the Parent Funds Hub. Balances are calculated in real time and populated to the page.

Creating a Vacancy

Before creating a Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreement, Providers must refer the Participant to a Vacancy.



When entering a Vacancy in the Department's IT System, Providers need to enter a range of information including a job description, Employer details, hours, salary and whether the job was sourced by the Participant. Providers will also need to select a Vacancy type.

- Employer type must be 'Other' only (Own Organisation and Related Entity are not eligible)
- Vacancy types eligible for a Wage Subsidy Agreement include Normal, Apprenticeship and Traineeship.
- Tenure (duration) of the Vacancy can be either Permanent (6 months +) or Contract.
- Seasonal and Temporary (less than 6 months) vacancies, and both Unpaid and Paid Work Trial placement types are ineligible for wage subsidies, in line with the requirement that a wage subsidy is for ongoing employment only.



Where a Participant is successful in gaining Employment, Providers must place the Participant into the relevant Vacancy and record the Job Placement Start Date. The Job Placement Start Date is the first day of ongoing Employment.

Setting up a Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreement

The following steps apply once Providers have agreed to offer a Wage Subsidy to an Employer for an eligible Participant and the Participant has been referred to the Vacancy in the IT System with a referral status of 'Placement Confirmed.'

4. The Manual VPS Wage Subsidy Agreement Form is located on the Provider Portal.
5. Providers must complete the Agreement form (consisting of both a Head Agreement and Schedule) for each job placement supported by a Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy.
6. All blank fields of the Agreement must be completed.
7. The Agreement start date is the first day of the job placement.
8. The Agreement end date must be between 42 and 183 calendar days (that is, between 6 and 26 weeks) after the start date.

Providers will need to ensure the end date is accurate on the Agreement. To help ensure the end dates of the Agreement are correctly calculated please use tools such as a date Calculator: Add to or subtract from a date (timeanddate.com)

9. Both the Provider and the employer must sign the completed Agreement (copies should be retained by both parties). Providers must email the signed and completed Agreement to the Wage Subsidies Team (wagesubsidies@dewr.gov.au) within 28 calendar days of the Placement Start Date and cc their Provider Lead. Agreements received later than 28 days from the Job Placement Start Date will be rejected, regardless of the signed date on the Agreement.
 - Where an approved third party has signed the Agreement on behalf of the Employer, you must submit a letter of authority with the signed Agreement.
10. The Wage Subsidies Team will review the Agreement to ensure it is complete and accurate, including:
 - a. ensuring Participants do not have another active wage subsidy
 - b. confirming the Employer is not suspended or excluded from accessing wage subsidies, and
 - c. confirming the Agreement start and end date is correct.
11. The Wage Subsidy Team will assign the Agreement with a Manual Agreement ID, which will be sent to Providers as confirmation the Agreement is valid within two business days. (Note: a Wage Subsidy Agreement is not valid until the Agreement ID has been assigned.)
12. On confirmation from the Wage Subsidy team, the Provider Lead will manually adjust the Site Pooled Fund Balance to reflect the commitment of the full amount of the Wage Subsidy Agreement.

Managing a Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Agreement

As the Agreement will be outside of the Department's IT System, the Employer will not receive system notifications. Providers will need to keep in contact with the employer, particularly to:

- monitor agreed payment dates and request evidence to progress payments

- be notified if a wage subsidised placement has ended early due to cessation of employment, and
- finalise end of agreement evidence payments.

Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Reimbursements

Providers can claim a Reimbursement for a Wage Subsidy after making eligible payments to the employer and meeting all documentary evidence requirements as per the Guideline. Providers must Claim all outstanding Reimbursements within 56 calendar days of the Agreement ending, as per the Guideline.

To claim Reimbursement, you will use the 'Request Payment' functionality in Workforce Australia Online to lodge a manual claim.



Providers will be required to select the 'VPS Workforce Australia Services Wage Subsidy Request Payment' from the drop-down list. The assigned Wage Subsidy Agreement ID must be included in the free text.



After creating the payment Providers must email their Provider Lead with:

- the allocated Manual Agreement ID, Participant's name and JSID
- all documentary evidence from the employer (payslips/declarations)
- evidence that they have made the payment.

The Provider Lead will review the evidence and approve the manual claim, where all requirements have been met. If after the final Wage Subsidy payment, the full Wage Subsidy amount was not expended, the Provider Lead will complete a second balance adjustment to the Pooled Fund (to increase the balance) as required.