

Work for the Dole

Work for the Dole is an activity that offers participants the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities, contribute to their local community and equips them with skills to help find secure work.

What is a Work for the Dole activity?

A Work for the Dole activity provides participants with work-like experiences and is run by a host organisation. Activities are designed to help participants improve their skills, increase their confidence, meet new people and make contacts, while also meeting their mutual obligation requirements.

There are two types of Work for the Dole activities:

| Work for the Dole Placements | Work for the Dole Projects |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single participant or multiple participants doing individual tasks of the same related type, in one or more locations. Placed in the existing operations of the host organisation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific community projects developed for the purpose of providing a work-like experience for a group of participants, working as a team to meet a common goal or deliverable. |
| <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> retail work in the day-to-day operation of an op-shop creating website/media material and graphic designs for a community social enterprise maintaining gardens and lawns at a community facility. | <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> construction of BBQ facilities and development/restoration of a community garden area helping a social enterprise to design and prepare for a cultural festival a kitchen upgrade at a local community facility. |

Where possible, Work for the Dole activities should allow participants the opportunity to develop some or all of the core competencies identified by the Jobs and Skills Australia as critical to the workplace. These are teamwork, initiative and innovation, planning and organising, oral communication, digital engagement, reading, writing, problem solving, learning and numeracy.

Participants may also have the opportunity to attain a licence, qualification, micro-credential or other recognised skill through engaging in the activity.

Work for the Dole activities can be established for up to 12 months, with a possible extension for Work for the Dole Placements up to a maximum of 24 months. More than one participant may be placed into a Work for the Dole activity over this period, with each individual participating for at least 8 weeks.

Work for the Dole activities must not displace paid workers. Participants cannot do tasks that would normally be done by a paid worker where it impacts casual or part-time work, reduces the hours of a paid worker or reduces available overtime for an existing employee.



What are Indigenous specific Work for the Dole activities?

Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers (providers) look for opportunities to establish Indigenous specific Work for the Dole activities. These can be either placements or projects and must:

- have an Indigenous host organisation and/or benefit an Indigenous community
- have links to community goals
- support achievable and meaningful career pathways for Indigenous participants.

Non-Indigenous participants can participate in an Indigenous specific activity.

What are Community Support Projects?

Community Support Projects are activities that contribute to recovery efforts following a disaster event or assist with nationally significant projects at a local level that have been identified as providing a social, economic, environmental, cultural and/or heritage benefit to the Australian community.

Community Support Projects require the prior written approval of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to proceed. Where a Community Support Project is assisting with a natural disaster, it should not compete with the work of, or replace the roles of, specialised emergency services (such as the State Emergency Service).

Who can participate in Work for the Dole?

Only participants aged 18 years and over, in receipt of income support and referred to Workforce Australia Services are eligible to participate in Work for the Dole. Participants who are in receipt of Disability Support Pension (with compulsory requirements) and referred to Workforce Australia Services may also be placed into a Work for the Dole activity.

Do all people on income support have to do Work for the Dole?

No. It depends on a participant's eligibility, individual circumstances, and whether they have met their activation requirement through engaging in other activities. Work for the Dole is one of several approved activities that participants can undertake to meet their activation requirements.

Do participants get paid for doing Work for the Dole?

No. Participants don't get paid to participate in Work for the Dole. However, eligible participants will receive an Approved Program of Work Supplement of \$20.80 per fortnight while they are undertaking Work for the Dole activities to assist with the cost of participating in the activity, such as travel.

Who can host a Work for the Dole activity?

Work for the Dole activities can only be hosted by not-for-profit organisations and charities; local, state, territory and Australian Government agencies; or a not-for-profit arm of for-profit organisations.

Providers work with host organisations to source and run suitable, safe Work for the Dole activities for participants. Being a Work for the Dole host allows organisations to undertake activities which they might not otherwise have the capacity to do. Activities must meet all relevant work health and safety requirements.

Organisations interested in hosting a Work for the Dole activity should contact their local provider for more information.

Do you need help with this fact sheet?

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450*.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment you can use the National Relay Service. For more information, visit the National Relay Service website at www.relayservice.gov.au.

* Note that call charges apply for calls to '13' numbers from mobile phones.