Understand work and study supports

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This article provides guidance for a planner delegate, local area coordinator or participant support officer to:

- understand work and study

- understand the importance of work and study goals

- talk about work and study goals with the participant

- understand work and study support categories

- understand work and study core supports

- understand work and study capacity building supports

- understand what supports are provided by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Disability Employment Services (DES).

1 Recent updates

12 August 2024
Guidance updated to advise the Plan Conversation Support Tool (PCST) must be used for all new plans and plan reassessments.
29 July 2024

- Updated links to article Understand and update the plan conversation support tool.

- Removed references to school leaver employment supports, which is now included under employment assistance.

- Clarified Supports in employment is included in the Core budget of the participant's plan

- Clarified a participant may use social and community participation fund to help them prepare for employment when they're ready.

2 Before you start

You have read and understood:

- Our Guideline – Work and study (external)
- Our Guideline – Mainstream and Community supports (external)
- Our Guideline – Reasonable and necessary supports (external)
- article Support Categories
- the NDIS Participant Employment Strategy (external).

You have:

- completed the work and study eLearning modules available on LEAP. These include Economic participation for NDIS participants and Let's talk about work
- viewed the Employment intranet page to understand any recent changes.

3   Understand work and study

Work and study are an important part of life for most people. Every person living with a disability should have the opportunity to reach their full potential in a career of their choosing. If an NDIS participant wants to work or study, we want to support them. We can fund work and study supports that meet the NDIS funding criteria (external) to help a participant:

- study at school, university, TAFE or somewhere similar

- prepare for work

- find their first job or a new job

- do their job

- work towards a promotion or career change

- start an apprenticeship or traineeship

- try volunteering or work experience

- work in their own business.

Learn more in Our Guideline – Work and study (external).

Consider other NDIS funded supports to help the participant pursue their work and study goals, including:

- therapeutic services

- social, community and civic participation

- daily activity

- assistive technology

- support coordination or a recovery coach.

4 Understand the importance of work and study goals

Work and study supports can help raise the expectations of future employment goals for people living with disability. The opportunity to work and study can benefit a person living with disability to:

- develop their sense of identity and personal achievement

- learn new skills

- increase their financial independence, for example to support family and pursue hobbies and passions

- improve their long-term mental and physical health

- have a valued role in their community

- grow their relationships and networks

- increase their confidence and feeling of self-worth.

Talk with the participant (or their authorised representative) about what work and study supports we can fund. Help the participant understand supports they can access to find and keep a job or do other things like volunteering.

Some participants may benefit from a mix of NDIS funded supports and mainstream employment supports to help them achieve their employment goals. You may be able to give more information about other government services, programs and mainstream services. This could include Job Access (external), Disability Employment Services (external) or Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (external). Learn more about state and territory community and mainstream supports in article Community and mainstream supports contact list.

You can also support the participant to use the Provider finder (external). The provider finder helps the participant find registered providers within their state or territory. You can search by registration groups, as follows:

- assistance to access and/or maintain employment and/or education

- specialised supported employment

- assistance in coordinating or managing life stages/transitions and supports

- participation in community/social and civic activities

- development of daily living and life skills.

Work and study providers will support participants to explore their work and study options. Learn more about work and study providers available in the participant's area in article Connect with providers.

5 Talk about work and study goals with the participant

You can talk with the participant about their work and study goals. This can happen during a plan meeting, implementation meeting, at a check-in or during a plan change. It's important these conversations start when the participant reaches working age and continue to make sure they achieve employment, and their job suits them.

This is an opportunity to find out:

- about any changes to their current work or study situation

- if they'd like to pursue any new work or study goals

- if there are any big changes coming up in their life. For example, reaching working age, finishing school, changing jobs or starting to study

- what they like to do in their spare time

- the things they do well and enjoy

- if they want to explore work or study options, now or in the future

- where they would like to work or study

- if there's any new evidence, like a school report or workplace assessment. This gives us information on the type and level of employment assistance they need

- if they use any community or mainstream services to pursue their work or study goals.

Encourage the participant to think about and share ideas on how we can help them achieve their work and study goals. The information the participant shares helps us understand more about:

- what support they'll need to get a job

- the work the participant already does

- their interests and strengths

- their work or study goals

- what supports they may need to maintain or change their job.

The Let's talk about work booklet (external) will help the participant get ready to think and talk about work.

6 Understand work and study support categories

There are a number of work and study NDIS funded supports available. These help participants of all ages who want to explore work and study opportunities, or who already have a job. To access work and study funded supports, the participant will have a work or study goal in their plan.

The participant can have a mix of core and capacity building funded supports in their plan. These could be:

- Supports in employment (Core) – this is the ongoing support the participant needs at work to maintain their employment

- Capacity building employment supports – this includes Employment Assistance and Employment Related Assessment, Counselling and Advice. These can help the participant build skills for work, and find and keep a job.

To learn more about funded supports, go to article Support Categories.
You can find the pricing arrangements for these support categories in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements (external).

7   Understand work and study core supports

Work and study core supports help participants who:

- need regular and ongoing supports delivered in a workplace
- are already working
- plan to start working during the plan period.

For participants who need support to build skills for work, and to find and keep a job, go to the section **Understand work and study capacity building supports** of this article.

7.1   Assistance with Social, Economic and Community Participation (core funding)

7.1.1   Economic participation – Supports in employment

Supports in employment help the participant manage their disability and succeed at work. These day-to-day supports provide the participant with regular and ongoing help when they are at work. This can be in a range of workplace settings, like a supported employment service or disability enterprise, a job in open employment, a family-run business, or micro enterprise.

This support is included in the core Assistance with Social, Economic, and Community Participation category in the participant's plan.
To add or update supports in employment using the Plan Conversation Support Tool (PCST), go to article Understand and update the plan conversation support tool. You **must** use the PCST for all new plans and plan reassessments.

7.1.2   Social and Community Participation

The participant may not be ready to start building capacity specifically for work. But they can use social and community participation funding to learn to be more independent in daily living and accessing their community. This will help them prepare for employment when they are ready.

7.1.3   Transport (core funding)

This helps the participant travel to and from their place of work. This can also include activity-based transport or specialised transport to school, an educational facility, or within their community.
To add or update transport support using the PCST, go to article Understand and update the plan conversation support tool. You **must** use the PCST for all new plans and plan reassessments and attach to the participant record.

8 Understand work and study capacity building supports

Capacity building employment supports can help the participant develop employment skills to successfully find and keep a job. These supports are available to participants of all ages who have a work or study goal in their plan.

Capacity building employment supports are for participants at different stages of their working life. This can include:

- A young person of working age who has an employment goal and needs support to develop their skills for work. This may include support to participate in work experience, which complements supports available through the school curriculum. Or it might include help to find and keep a part-time job outside of school hours.

- A young person moving from school to work with functional impacts in areas of learning, social interaction and self-management. They may need support to develop skills for work and to find and keep a job.

- A participant of any age with minimal work experience. They have interrupted or no previous employment history and need intensive support to build their capacity to work. These supports can help participants who need support in areas of learning, social interaction and self-management.

- A young person of working age who needs support to connect with mainstream services when moving from school to work or further education. Or, to connect with work following tertiary study to get a job in line with their qualification.

- A participant who needs support to build their work skills to move from a supported employment service or disability enterprise to open employment. This may include where the participant wants to use a different provider to their current disability enterprise employer.

- A participant who needs support to progress their career or change jobs.

To understand the minimum hours of support you can include in the participant's plan for each scenario above, use the PCST. Go to article Understand and update the plan conversation support tool. You **must** use the PCST for all new plans and plan reassessments and attach to the participant record.

8.1 Finding and keeping a job (capacity building funding)

8.1.1 Employment assistance

Employment assistance is for participants of all ages who have an employment goal in their NDIS plan. It's to support the participant to build skills for work and find and keep a job. It means the participant can:

- explore what work means to them

- build essential foundation skills for work through experience in work settings

- manage complex barriers to get and keep a job

- customise a job to suit their skills and abilities

- connect with the right job and employer

- change jobs, including moving from a supported employment service to open employment, if the provider is not the supported employment service employer

- connect with higher education or training

- get a job after completing a course or training

- develop a career goal

- engage with a Disability Employment Service (DES) provider, or other employment service to secure employment, like Job Access (external).

8.1.2 Employment related assessment, counselling, and advice

Employment related assessment, counselling, and advice can help the participant successfully engage in work. It can support the participant to:

- identify their work goals and strengths

- explore any barriers to employment

- understand the different types of employment support they may need because of their disability.

These supports can include:

- a vocational assessment

- a functional assessment

- education and support for the participant, employer and others in the workplace

- counselling when the participant's disability prevents them returning to their previous job.

This support can benefit participants who:

- need significant support to develop a new work pathway. For example, a participant who has sustained a traumatic injury or acquired a disability

- have had limited to no work experience.

To use the PCST to add or update capacity building employment supports, go to article Understand and update the plan conversation support tool. You **must** use the PCST for all new plans and plan reassessments and attach to the participant record.

9   Understand what supports are provided by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Disability Employment Services (DES)

The NDIS provides more frequent and intensive support to help participants build skills for work and to find and keep a job. Disability Employment Services (DES) can support a participant who:

- is independent accessing the community

- understands their capabilities, interests and the skills required for work

- is able to follow instructions

- is not currently employed in open employment and has a future work capacity of at least 8 hours per week

- has a history of successful work experience or employment.

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10 Next steps

To use the PCST to add or update employment supports to the participant's plan, go to article [Understand and update the plan conversation support tool](#). You **must** use the PCST for all new plans and plan reassessments.

Understand transport supports

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This article provides guidance for a planner delegate to:

- calculate transport supports

- find the right support category

- understand what to consider if transport supports are part of community participation.

1   Recent updates

29 July 2024

- Next steps section updated to reflect process change.
- Link updates.

2 Before you start

You have read and understood:

- [Our Guideline – Reasonable and necessary supports (external)](#)
- [Operational Guideline - Including specific types of supports in plans – transport (external)](#)
- article [Support Categories](#).

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3 Calculate transport supports

To help you decide how much funding to include in the participant's plan, use the Operational Guideline - Including specific types of supports in plans – transport (external).
Use the levels of transport assistance below to help you decide how much funding to include the plan:

Level 1 s47E(d) - certain operations of agency : For participants who are not working, studying, or attending day programs but want to improve their community access.

Level 2 s47E(d) - certain operations of agency : For participants who are currently working or studying part-time (up to 15 hours a week) or participating in day programs. This also includes goal based social, recreational or leisure activities.

Level 3 s47E(d) - certain operations of agency : For participants who are currently working, looking for work, or studying (15 hours or more a week), and can't use public transport because of their disability.

If the transport funding is significantly above Transport Assistance Level 3, or isn't related to activity-based transport, you'll need to seek advice from the Technical Advice and Practice Improvement Branch (TAPIB). For more information, go to article Create a technical advice case.

4 Find the right support category

Transport can be funded in **Core** or **Recurring** support categories.
Go to article Support Categories to determine the correct support category.

5 What to consider if transport support is part of community participation

A participant might request transport support as part of community participation. Participants can use their transport budget funding for a support worker to help them:

- participate in community activities

- transport from their home to the community.

Providers claim these labour costs at the relevant community participation hourly rate. For example: individual or group rates.

You must also consider non-labour costs when deciding how much funding to include. Providers can claim non-labour transport costs to help the participant:

- access community participation supports

- access or maintain employment

- access or maintain higher education.

Non-labour costs associated with participant transport can include:

- public transport fares

- road tolls

- parking fees

- reasonable vehicle running costs

- taxi or ride-share fares.

For more information about provider travel – labour and non-labour costs, go to the NDIS Pricing Arrangement and Price Limits (external).

6 Next steps

1. For a:

   - o **Plan Approval** case, you'll need to use the plan conversation support tool to calculate the funded supports. To add or update this support in a draft budget go to article Change the draft budget

   - o **Plan Change** or **Participant Budget Update** case, go to article Action a budget update.