



Disability employment

2015 Budget

The Australian Government will support and enhance the social and economic opportunities of people with disability. Everyone who has the capacity to participate in employment should have the opportunity to enjoy the dignity of work.

What was announced in the 2015 Budget?

People with disability contribute much to the workforce. They generally stay in jobs longer and take fewer sick days. The Government wants more people with disability to have to opportunity to work.

The 2015 Budget includes four measures to better support job seekers with disability and employers. These measures deliver a \$25 million package over four years to begin shaping disability employment toward a new model in 2018.

The Government is also investing \$17 million on business development to improve the viability of Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs). This is part of a \$189 million ADEs additional support package.

These initiatives will be delivered from 1 July 2015 until June 2019 to assist ADEs to be ready for the full roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in 2019.

The funding will enable ADEs to use professional services to help them improve their sustainability and prepare for likely higher wage costs over time.

JobAccess Gateway

A new central information entry point will streamline employment services for job seekers with disability and potential employers.

It will provide a new online and telephone service with information about Government employment programmes and direct access to Disability Employment Services (DES).

The Gateway will streamline services and programmes and create a virtual disability employment marketplace through a new online and client relationship service centre.

Extensive support already exists to help potential employers hire people with disability, including funding for workplace modifications and wage subsidies. A lack of awareness about these supports in the broader job market, however, is a barrier to getting more people with disability into jobs.

The Gateway measure will cost \$9 million over three years.

Better pathways

The Government will also provide better opportunities for young people with significant disability at a critical point in their lives, when they leave school.

Through a \$2.2 million investment, up to six month's DES support will be provided while a young person's participation in a state or territory funded post-school employment or Transition to Work programme is finalised.

Empowering people with disability

Through a \$14 million investment (from 1 January 2016), eligible employees of Australian Disability Enterprises will have access to DES provider support for up to two years while maintaining their ADE jobs.

Currently, people with disability must resign from their ADE to receive assistance from a DES provider.

This means an additional 300 people per year in ADEs will benefit from DES assistance to find a new job, doubling the numbers who already take up this opportunity under the existing arrangements.

This measure will remove barriers for people with disability in supported employment to move to open employment.

Employment benchmark

A new 23-hour employment benchmark for DES will be introduced.

This will remove an unintended consequence in the DES programme that allowed service providers to claim participants were working for 23-29 hours per week while placing them in a job of only 15 hours per week.

This will address jobseekers concerns of not getting a job with sufficient work hours and will lift expectations of DES service providers, helping people with disability reach their full employment potential and reduce their reliance on income support.

Key facts

- The Government is providing \$17 million to help improve the viability of Australian Disability Enterprises, securing future employment opportunities for people with disability.
- The four disability employment measures will cost an estimated \$25 million over four years.
- The Job Access Gateway will be operational from 1 July 2016.

More information

For more information about this measure and other Department of Social Services Budget measures, visit the [Department of Social Services website](http://www.dss.gov.au) (www.dss.gov.au).

For information about the 2015 Budget, visit the [Australian Government budget website](http://www.budget.gov.au) (www.budget.gov.au).