

NDIS & Customised Employment

Using NDIS Funding to Pay for Customised Employment services (WA)

This document is for people with disabilities and families of people with disabilities that are eligible for the NDIS and want to use their NDIS plan to support a pathway to employment using a Customised Employment framework.

Customised Employment is a process that involves two stages: **Discovery and Job Creation**.

For people with disability who are of working age (**Year 10 and/or Aged 14 years and 9 months**) and onwards, who want to prepare for their transition to employment, a discovery process (including work experience, volunteering, career development and other work exploration pathways) can be appropriately funded through the NDIS.

The discovery process will identify what pathway to work best suits the skills, abilities and interests of the individual. This information can be used to complement the work being done at the individual's school, and guide their job creation.

To be eligible for NDIS funding, the activity must meet all the criteria for reasonable and necessary NDIS supports as outlined in Section 34 of the NDIS Act which is as follows:

1. The activity must **assist the participant to pursue the goals, objects and aspirations** related to a work goal in the participant's statement of goals and aspirations.

Customised Employment does this when:

- The work aspirations of the individual require exploration for suitable, sustainable and meaningful employment outcomes which could be due to the individuals complex needs.
- The activities undertaken through a Customised Employment approach are aligned to those expected to live an ordinary life.

2. The activity **assists the participant to undertake activities that facilitate the participant's social and economic participation**.

Customised Employment does this because:

- Essential to the approach is the formation of a sustainable work outcome for the participant.
- The participation in a recognised work role assists natural participation with the wider community and an improved valued social role.
- A paid work outcome provides additional resources for individuals in receipt of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) to participate economically.

3. The activity **represents value for money** in that the costs of the support are reasonable relative to both the benefits achieved and the cost of alternative support.

Customised Employment does this because:

- The program supports participants to ensure future supports are aligned to the most sustainable and suitable options to achieve work-related goals.
- The program supports participants who would otherwise still require support.
- Enabling a work related goal to be supported will provide a valued social role for the individual, leading to improved esteem, mental health, physical health and behaviour.
- If supported through a thorough planning process, the Customised Employment approach can value add to other Employment programs to ensure better job match, sustainable work and improved productivity for the individual and employer.
- The discovery component of Customised Employment ensures other services or supports, including natural supports, are clearly identified and engaged in the process.
- The Customised Employment process determines the best and most effective “fit” for an individual to participate in work, and provides evidence for ongoing support that may be required.

4. The support will be or **is likely to be effective and beneficial** for the participant having regard to current good practice.

Research shows that Customised Employment is:

- An effective means of supporting individuals in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Specifically able to support people with more complex or significant disabilities to create work opportunities that maximise their productivity, skill and economic participation and therefore long-term independence.
- An effective way of identifying people’s skills, abilities and interests and matching them to a work outcome that best suits their needs and capabilities.

5. The provision of the support takes account of what is **reasonable to expect families, carers, informal networks and the community to provide.**

Customised Employment can increase the level of support that families, carers, informal supports and networks can provide by:

- Providing a structured framework for allocating support and establishing the roles necessary to support the individual towards or into meaningful employment of their choice.
- Taking into account the strengths and availability of informal networks, community support and natural supports in a person's life.

6. The support is **appropriately funded or provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme** and is not more appropriately funded through other general systems of service delivery or support services offered by a person, agency or body or systems of service delivery or support services offered. In addition:

- The goals of the individual are unable to be achieved or supported through the Disability Employment Services (DES) system or an Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE) due to eligibility or availability.
- Mainstream and community opportunities for achieving work-related goals are not available, not suitable or not directly aligned to the individual's goals and aspirations.

Depending on your suitability and eligibility for DES services, the job creation stage may be more appropriately provided by a DES service. To understand how Customised Employment fits within the NDIS, it is also important to acknowledge the existing services offered by DES.

You can find a local DES provider to discuss your eligibility by visiting:

<https://jobsearch.gov.au/serviceproviders>.

For people who are not DES eligible, the NDIS can support you with your job creation. This will need to be evidenced by a through discovery process but could include starting up and being supported to run your own microenterprise, or being supported to participate in open meaningful employment.