



Australian Government



Activity Test and Participation Requirements Advice V 2.0

Disclaimer

This document is not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of Job Services Australia providers' obligations. It should be read in conjunction with the Employment Services Deed 2012-2015 and any relevant guidelines or reference material issued by DEEWR under or in connection with Employment Services Deed 2012-2015.

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Document Change History

Version	Start Date	Effective Date	End Date	Change & Location
2.0	13 Aug 2013	13 Aug 2013		Narrative: Update with minor changes.
1.0	06 May 2009	06 May 2009	12 Aug 2013	Original version

Background

This document describes what activity test and participation requirements are and how job seekers can meet these requirements. It should be read in conjunction with other reference material on the Participation and Engagement page of the Provider Portal.

The Activity Test

The activity test is applicable to job seekers who are receiving:

- Newstart Allowance (NSA);
- Parenting Payment Single (PPS) once the youngest child in care turns 6 years old;
- Youth Allowance (YA); or
- some types of Special Benefit (SpB).

In general terms, activity testing means that job seekers have an obligation to seek and undertake suitable paid work. Job seekers with activity test requirements are also required to enter into and comply with an Employment Pathway Plan (EPP) and participate in suitable activities designed to assist them to gain employment.

Participation Requirements

Participation requirements are similar to activity test requirements, as job seekers with participation requirements must look for suitable work, enter into an EPP and participate in activities designed to help prepare them for employment. Because of these similarities, the terms 'activity test' and 'participation requirements' are generally used interchangeably.

A job seeker's activity test or participation requirements are determined by the following factors:

- income support type;
- age;
- work capacity (either temporary or permanent); and
- whether they have the primary responsibility for the care of a child under 6 years of age.

Job Search

Most job seekers with activity test or participation requirements are required to undertake compulsory job search contacts and report these to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Specifically, the term 'job search contacts' means to apply for a job, enquire about a job, or any other activities relating to finding a job. For more information on job search contacts please refer to the *Setting Job Search Contacts Advice* on the Participation and Engagement screen of the Provider Portal.

Participation with an employment services provider

Job seekers with activity test or participation requirements who are not fully satisfying their requirements are generally required to participate in employment services by working with an employment services provider to find suitable work.

Once the job seeker is referred to a provider, the job seeker will need to enter into an EPP or update their EPP if they already have one. Providers should consider the job seeker's personal circumstances when setting appropriate activities for inclusion in the job seeker's EPP. Information on a job seeker's activity test or participation requirements, as well as factors which may impact upon their requirements such as their work capacity, is available on their *Participation Profile* in the DEEWR IT system.

Accepting Suitable Work

To satisfy activity test or participation requirements, job seekers must accept suitable work in a variety of fields, not just those in which they have qualifications or work that they prefer to do. The definition of 'suitable work' will depend upon the circumstances of the job seeker (e.g. if

the job seeker is a Principal Carer Parent (PCP) and does not have access to child care during the hours of employment, the work may not be considered as suitable).

In general terms, a job may be unsuitable if it:

- aggravates a job seeker's medical illness or condition;
- is above the job seeker's assessed work capacity ;
- does not meet the applicable statutory conditions of work;
- requires the person to change their residence;
- involves unreasonable commuting time from home to work (60 minutes for PCPs and PCWs and 90 minutes for other job seekers);
- involves skills the job seeker does not possess and appropriate training is not provided by the employer;
- results to a PCP not at least \$50 per fortnight financially better-off as a result of undertaking the work.

Information on unsuitable work (including specific provisions for parents and those with a partial work capacity) can be found in the [Guide to Social Security Law](#) -

http://guidesacts.fahcsia.gov.au/guides_acts/ssg/ssguide-3/ssguide-3.2/ssguide-3.2.8/ssguide-3.2.8.60.html

Participation requirements for other cohorts

Different participation requirements apply for the following groups:

- Principal Carer Parents (PCP);
- Job seekers with a Partial Capacity to Work (PCW);
- Job seekers with a Temporary Reduced Work Capacity (TRWC);
- Job seekers aged 55 and over (MA 55+).

Information on participation requirements for the above job seeker groups is available on the *Participation and Engagement* screen of the Provider Portal.