



Australian Government



Mutual Obligation Requirements for newly arrived migrants/ temporary protection visa holders and humanitarian entrants

Information for Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance (other), Parenting Payment Single and Special Benefit (Nominated Visa Holders) recipients.

Mutual Obligation Requirements and Job Plans

If you are paid Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance (other), Parenting Payment Single (once the youngest child turns 6) or Special Benefit (Nominated Visa Holders) you will be required to look for work and undertake other activities to help you get a job. These activities are called 'mutual obligation requirements' and will be put in a Job Plan with a jobactive provider.

There are different mutual obligation requirements for Principal Carer Parents, Early School Leavers, job seekers 55 years of age and over and Special Benefit recipients under 18 years of age undertaking secondary study. Please discuss your personal circumstances with your provider.

What I do I need to do?

As part of your claim for payment, you will need to complete the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI). The JSCI is a set of questions used to assess the level of support you need in employment services. It is not a job interview. More information about the JSCI can be found at www.employment.gov.au/translated-jobactive-factsheets

Understanding your Job Plan

The Department of Human Services (Centrelink) will refer you to a jobactive or other employment services provider. Your provider will create a Job Plan with you and connect you to services to help you find a job. You will need to meet with your provider regularly to review and update how you are going with your Job Plan – these meetings are called 'provider appointments', and they are a requirement under social security law. If you need an interpreter, your provider will arrange one for you. You may also bring a friend or relative to your provider appointments. If you would like time to think about your Job Plan, you can have two business days 'Think Time' before signing or accepting.

How to meet your Mutual Obligation Requirements

You must meet your mutual obligation requirements to receive your payment. You meet your requirements by doing the things in your Job Plan – attending provider appointments, looking for work and doing other activities that your provider believes will help you find a job. Most job seekers will also need to do a work-like activity for a set number of hours for six months each year. This is called an 'Annual Activity Requirement' (AAR) and may include Work for the Dole, a language course or other study, voluntary work or another activity in your Job Plan.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy courses

Your provider can refer you to a Language, Literacy and Numeracy course like Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) or the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP) and include this in your Job Plan. If you are already in a course it is good to let your provider know so that they can include it in your Job Plan as one of your requirements.

Can study meet my mutual obligation requirements?

Depending on your requirements, the hours undertaken in any approved courses, including SEE and AMEP, may count toward meeting some, or all, of your mutual obligation requirements. In addition to study, it is likely that you will need to attend appointments scheduled with your provider as well as look for work and attend job interviews. Your provider can give you personalised advice.

Can I study full-time?

You may be able to study full-time if the course is less than 12 months (two semesters) and your provider agrees that it is likely to lead to an early employment outcome; or you have been unable to get a job and have six months or less remaining to complete your course that would greatly improve your job prospects.

Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) Principal Carer Parents receiving the Pensioner Education Supplement (PES) for their course are able to study full-time in courses that are 12 months or longer.

Do I still need to look for work while studying?

Yes, most job seekers need to do up to 20 job searches a month as well as their other

activities. Your provider will set the number of job searches you need to do, taking all of your circumstances into account, including your English language skills. You must report your job searches to your provider each month.

Must I accept paid work while in an approved course?

Yes, you must accept any suitable work that is not at the same time as any approved course in your Job Plan.

What if I am unable to meet my requirements?

If you can't make an appointment or one of your activities, you must let your provider know beforehand or you might lose some of your payment or your payment might be stopped. If you are unable to tell them beforehand, you must contact your provider as soon as possible so they can decide if you had a good reason for not telling them beforehand.

Want more information?

If you have any concerns with your provider you can telephone the Department of Employment **National Customer Service Line 1800 805 260** (free call from landlines).

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450* and ask them to assist you with a call to the Department of Employment's National Customer Service Line

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