

# Welcome to APM

Disability Employment  
Services Participant  
Handbook



# Welcome to APM

## Who are we?

APM is Australia's largest provider of Disability Employment Services.

We understand how hard it can be to get a job if you're living with an injury, illness or disability.

We have been helping people find work or keep their jobs for more than 25 years and our teams have the skills and experience to help you overcome these barriers to employment.

## How we will help you?

Your employment consultant will meet with you regularly to discuss:

- Managing health issues that may be making it difficult for you to find work
- Discovering your strengths and capabilities
- Developing your work skills
- Finding and getting a job that's right for you
- Supporting you once you are in work



## Our promise to you

As a participant with APM we will treat you with respect and provide you with a program that suits your cultural, family and personal circumstances.

## Your team

You will have a dedicated consultant to work with you one-on-one and personally guide you in your journey to finding meaningful and long term employment. They will be there to support and assist you every step of the way.

# APM and Centrelink

- The **Disability Employment Services** program is funded by the Australian Government
- Centrelink may have referred you to APM for support in finding work
- APM is a private company and separate from Centrelink
- If you have mutual obligations, APM must notify Centrelink if you do not meet your participation requirements in the Disability Employment Services program. Should this occur, there may be an impact on your Centrelink allowance.

## What happens if your circumstances change and you receive payments from Centrelink?

- If you have a change in your health condition or a personal crisis, it is important you talk to your employment consultant and Centrelink
- Centrelink may be able to provide you with a temporary exemption from your Disability Employment Services mutual obligations
- Centrelink will also decide if you should take some time away from the program
- Your employment consultant will be there to assist when you return

# Every step of the way

## 1 Build your personal job plan

- ✓ Meet your employment consultant
- ✓ Understand the program
- ✓ Explain your mutual obligations
- ✓ Understand your circumstances
- ✓ Identify your needs
- ✓ Understand your job search requirements
- ✓ Create your personal job plan

## 2 Find the right job for you

- ✓ Identify suitable work options
- ✓ Teach you how to search for work
- ✓ Link you to relevant community support
- ✓ Identify any training you require

## 3 Make the best start at work

- ✓ Promote you to an employer
- ✓ Support your own job search efforts
- ✓ Assist with workplace assessments and modifications
- ✓ Support you for at least 12 months when you get a job

# Step 1



## When you start with us

If you are registered with Centrelink, they will have assessed your eligibility for the Disability Employment Services program.

If you registered with APM directly, we will organise an assessment to make sure this is the best program for you and that we can help you.

To be eligible for Disability Employment Services, you must be:

- An Australian resident over the age of 14 and not eligible for the aged pension
- Receiving an income support payment, disability support pension, an NDIS participant or an eligible school leaver
- Able to work between eight to 30 hours per week (with support when required)

- Not studying full time (unless you're an eligible school leaver)
- Not already working at or above your assessed work capacity

### First appointment

You will meet your dedicated APM employment consultant who will get to know you, your goals and what support you may need. They will:

- ✓ Explain the program in detail and how you will work together
- ✓ Advise on how you can get the most from the program
- ✓ Develop a personal job plan that focuses on helping you gain suitable work

You are welcome to bring a support person or advocate with you at any time.

## Your job plan

Your employment consultant will work with you to create your personal job plan, built on your goals and steps needed to achieve them.

### Preparing your job plan may include:

- ✓ Outlining your strengths and capabilities
- ✓ Discussing anything that is stopping you from working and finding ways to overcome them
- ✓ Detailing your options and opportunities for employment
- ✓ Identifying job opportunities in your local area
- ✓ Developing your resume and job searching skills
- ✓ Discussing training opportunities to help you secure work

### Your plan also takes into account:

- ✓ Your education, training, skills and experience
- ✓ Any areas of assistance you may need to obtain, maintain or progress in employment
- ✓ Other factors, such as caring responsibilities or restrictions due to a medical condition
- ✓ Injuries, illness or disability



# Step 2

## Find the right job for you

### Your job search

As part of your job plan, your employment consultant will help you find the most suitable jobs to search for and help prepare you for work as soon as possible.

- ✓ You will get a program of support after we identify the right services for you.
- ✓ We assess your circumstances and determine what steps work best for you when it comes to securing a job

- ✓ You may receive vocational counselling and planning to find suitable job goals
- ✓ How to use MyGov to access your online dashboard and calendar to manage your program
- ✓ We can help you access suitable training and work experience

### Applying for jobs

Your employment consultant will help you:

- ✓ Meet employers as part of your job search
- ✓ Visit potential workplaces to look for jobs
- ✓ Apply for suitable job vacancies
- ✓ Prepare you for job interviews

### Wage subsidies

We help support your job search by offering employers wage subsidies to reduce costs when they give you long term employment.

When employers are considering you for a role, we will work with them to explain how they can benefit from subsidies and the ongoing support available when they hire you.

# Step 3



## Make the best start at work

### On the job support

The support of your employment consultant doesn't stop when you find a job. They help you and your employer for at least the first 12 months to make sure everything runs smoothly.

We support you with:

- A workplace assessment, or helping with modifications if required
- Help to settle into the role
- Help with any issues that may occur at work, including talking with your employer where appropriate

- Developing strategies to overcome personal circumstances that might affect work
- Speaking with your support services so everyone works together
- Linking you with supports for your health, training and community involvement

### Ongoing support

If you feel you need more support beyond the twelve months of work, we will discuss the available options with you.

### When you get paid

When securing your employment we can help you to make sure the working conditions and pay rates are the same as those that apply to everyone.

Your employment consultant will be available to help direct you to get the right information about:

- The National Employment Standards for all workers
- Workplace requirements (such as notifying your employer when you are sick)
- Safety at work and what to do if you are hurt on the job
- What to do if you experience harassment or discrimination at work
- Any other issues that may concern you about working

More information about employment conditions can be obtained from the Fair Work Ombudsman – **13 13 94** and **fairwork.gov.au**

# Your responsibilities and obligations

Finding you a job is our priority, and to ensure you get the best result in the Disability Employment Services program, there are a set of responsibilities you need to meet.

These are called your mutual obligations.

They include:

- Attending and participating in appointments
- Providing accurate and detailed information relevant to you gaining employment
- Working in partnership with your employment consultant to design the best possible job plan for you
- Carrying out the activities in your job plan
- Providing evidence of your job search activity
- Doing your best at every job interview
- Making every effort to achieve your goal of gaining employment
- Advising your employment consultant about any concerns you may have about your program

# Declaring to Centrelink

When you've found a new job, make sure you tell your APM employment consultant. You may be able to get extra support when you start work.

It's also very important you tell Centrelink. You report your income:

- through your Centrelink account in myGov
- using the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app
- by calling 133 276 (13 EARN)

## Changes to your income

If you are overpaid by Centrelink because they don't know about your earnings, your income support could be at risk and you may incur debt.

As your income increases, your Centrelink benefits may get smaller depending on the type of your allowance. Even with this reduction, you'll still be better off financially when earning an income compared to only receiving a Centrelink benefit.

Ask your APM employment consultant about how to accurately report changes to your income to Centrelink.

## Need more information about your requirements?

- Talk to your employment consultant
- Access your online dashboard through MyGov
- Access online information at [servicesaustralia.gov.au/mutual-obligation-requirements](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/mutual-obligation-requirements)

# Your rights

Your employment consultant will explain the Employment Services Code of Practice and the Employment Services Guarantee to you and make sure you have a clear understanding of Disability Employment Services and your rights and responsibilities, while they work with you to achieve your employment goal.

## Privacy

- You will only be asked for information that is necessary for us to assist you in finding and keeping a suitable job
- To assist with your program, you will also be asked to sign consent forms enabling APM to obtain and release information to third parties (such as a family member, doctor or employer)
- Information will only be released to parties to help your program and for whom you have completed a consent form
- All data is stored within Australia and will comply with all applicable privacy laws or data protection laws that are in force to regulate the collection, storage, use and disclosure of personal information

## Human Rights

APM upholds the human rights principles of the National Standards for Disability Services which include:

- Respect for the inherent dignity and independence of a persons individual autonomy
- The freedom to make one's own choices
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity and accessibility

If you encounter a situation where you feel your rights are not being respected, please raise this at any time through our complaints process or you may wish to contact:

## National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Free Call: 1800 880 052  
National Relay Service: 1800 555 677  
Telephone Interpreter Service: 13 14 50  
Email: [hotline@workfocus.com](mailto:hotline@workfocus.com)

## Australian Human Rights Commission

Telephone: 02 9284 9600  
Complaints infoline: 1300 656 419  
TTY: 1800 620 241  
[humanrights.gov.au](http://humanrights.gov.au)



# Can you help improve our service?

APM invites you to contribute your ideas about changes we could make by:

- Talking to your employment consultant or the local manager
- Completing a feedback card (available at all APM offices) - these can be completed at any time and given to your employment consultant or the local manager
- Responding to APM's participant surveys

## Feedback, compliments and complaints

We consider any feedback (good or bad) as an opportunity to improve the service we are providing you.

A complaint may be made if you:

- Have concerns about the service you are receiving
- Are not able to resolve the issue with your consultant
- Do not feel that you are able to raise a complaint with your consultant

## How do we deal with complaints?

### 1. Lodging a complaint

A complaint can be made either to a local APM manager, our national office on 1300 366 047, or online at [apm.net.au/feedback](http://apm.net.au/feedback)

### 2. Investigation

The complaint will then be investigated and if it is unable to be resolved, it will be escalated to the next level of management.

### 3. APM's response

Contact with the person who lodged the complaint will be made to advise the outcome or to discuss any steps needed to resolve the issue.

### 4. Need to take it further?

At any point, or if the person is unhappy with the response, they can contact the Department of Social Services National Customer Service Line on 1800 805 260, or JobAccess Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) on 1800 880 052 (or TIS 13 14 50).

# National Standards

## for Disability Services

### STANDARD 1

#### Rights

**“The service promotes individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making and actively prevents abuse, harm, neglect and violence.”**

#### APM

- Takes a person-centred approach and treats you with dignity and respect
- Supports your choice and active decision-making in determining and achieving your goals
- Actively prevents your discrimination, exploitation, abuse, harm and neglect, and safeguards your human rights.

- Maintains privacy by gaining your informed consent before the release of confidential information and ensures your information is securely stored
- Promptly addresses any breach of rights and provides support to access legal advice and/or advocacy.

#### Ways we comply with this standard

- Our Participant Handbook
- Our complaints process
- Our consent forms
- Our participant surveys
- Our initial appointment process
- Our provision of information in suitable formats.

### STANDARD 2

#### Participation and inclusion

**“The service works with individuals and families, friends and carers to promote opportunities for meaningful participation and active inclusion in society.”**

#### APM

- Promotes employment as an opportunity for participants to be actively involved and have a valued status within the community
- Provides a holistic goal-focused service which is respectful of your abilities, interests, aspirations, identify, heritage, preferences, and support network.

- Works in collaboration with a range of local community partners and relevant services to ensure an integrated approach
- Promotes community and cultural connection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

#### Ways we comply with this standard

- Scope for family, carers and advocates to be involved in your program
- Connections with community services and supports
- Tailored job plan
- Linkages to work and other support programs.

## STANDARD 3

### Individual Outcomes

“Services and supports, are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed to build on individual strengths and enable individuals to reach their goals”

#### APM

- Provides a service which is tailored to you and designed to achieve your agreed program goals
- Uses an analyse, plan, implement and monitor approach to facilitate achievement of the desired goals
- Works collaboratively with local services, training providers and employers to create opportunities for you to be involved in the community.

#### Ways we comply with this standard

- Tailored job plan
- Individual case management
- Connections with community services and supports.

## STANDARD 4

### Feedback and Complaints

“Regular feedback is sought and used to inform individual and organisation-wide service reviews and improvement.”

#### APM

- Promotes a variety of ways in which you can provide feedback about your service and your experience of the organisation
- Encourages and utilises feedback both positive and negative, to improve the service we provide
- Supports you to resolve any negative feedback in a transparent and timely manner

#### Ways we comply with this standard

- Participant Handbook
- Feedback cards
- Complaints process
- Participant surveys.

## STANDARD 5

### Service Access

“The service manages access, commencement and leaving a service in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way”

#### APM

- Provides the Disability Employment Service and eligibility criteria through community engagement and linkages to support a streamlined referral process
- Supports participants that do not meet program eligibility to identify more appropriate services
- Applies access, eligibility and exit criteria in a fair, consistent and transparent manner
- Regularly reviews services to ensure streamlined access and reduce any potential barriers

#### Ways we comply with this standard

- Participant Handbook
- Initial appointment process
- Communication of your service rights and responsibilities.

## STANDARD 6

### Service Management

“The service has effective and accountable service management and leadership to maximise outcomes for individuals”

#### APM

- APM is structured to enable the effective management of daily operations, performance, service delivery/design, audit/compliance, information system/technology and organisational development.
- Each of the managers of these departments is responsible for:
  - Governance
  - Leadership, planning and best practices
  - Continuous improvement
  - Communication

#### Ways we comply with this standard

- Formal and supportive management structure
- Accredited quality framework
- Leading edge IT support systems
- Key Performance Indicators

# Useful Links

## **APM website**

[apm.net.au](http://apm.net.au)

## **Employable Me job seeker portal**

[employableme.com](http://employableme.com)

## **Department of Social Services**

[dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers](http://dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers)

## **JobAccess**

[jobaccess.gov.au](http://jobaccess.gov.au)

## **MyGov**

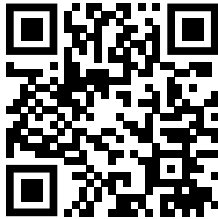
[my.gov.au](http://my.gov.au)

## **Fair Work Commission**

[fwc.gov.au](http://fwc.gov.au)

## **Centrelink**

[servicesaustralia.gov.au/centrelink](http://servicesaustralia.gov.au/centrelink)



Scan here to  
get started



## APM Employment Services

### Head Office:

347 Moorabool Street  
South Geelong  
VIC 3220

 **1800 276 276**

 **support@apm.net.au**

 **apm.net.au**