



Changes to the Disability Employment and Supported Employment Services Scheme

Last updated 14 October 2020

The Department of Social Services (the department) has worked with the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) to revise the Disability Employment and Supported Employment Services Scheme (the Scheme). These revisions have been made in response to concerns raised by Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) regarding difficulties booking assessors, administrative burden and high costs associated with undertaking two separate audits.

Currently, organisations that are both ADEs with a Disability Employment Assistance (DEA) grant, and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers must be audited against:

- *Disability Services Act (National Standards for Disability Services) Determination 2014 (NSDS) and*
- *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018 (NDIS Practice Standards).*

These audits are likely to be completed by the same assessor, with separate reporting to the department and the NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission.

The changes to the Scheme, in effect since 15 June 2020, mean:

- Certifying Bodies¹ can extend ADE certification expiry under the Scheme by up to 12 months, so ADEs can bring their re-certification or surveillance audit into alignment with their next NDIS Approved Quality Auditors (AQA) Scheme surveillance or (re)certification audit
- the entire audit process can be conducted remotely.

¹ Certifying Bodies are organisations accredited by JAS-ANZ to audit and certify organisations against the NSDS.



Frequently Asked Questions – 14 October 2020

1. Why have these changes been made to the Scheme?

These changes have been made to reduce the financial and administrative burden on ADEs.

Updating the Scheme enables the timing of certification under the NSDS and the NDIS Practice Standards to be aligned for affected ADEs.

The changes also allow the entire audit to be conducted remotely, which is increasingly necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For those organisations having issues organising audits due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the updated Scheme allows the Certifying Body to conduct remote audits and/or align their recertification or surveillance audit date with their next NDIS AQA audit.

2. What do the changes mean for ADEs supporting DEA clients?

The revised Scheme will provide the opportunity for ADEs who are supporting DEA clients to have their recertification deferred by up to 12 months (previously re-accreditation could only be deferred for one month), to align their audit under the Scheme with their first mandatory NDIS AQA certification audit, or subsequent surveillance/recertification audits.

The decision to extend NSDS certification to facilitate alignment of the Scheme and NDIS AQA (re)certification audits for ADEs is the responsibility of the Certifying Body. Certification extensions should only be granted where criteria as outlined in the Scheme are met.

3. What is the department doing to prevent the need for two audits to occur?

The department is continuing to work towards adopting the NDIS Practice Standards for the Disability Employment Continuity of Support (DECoS) program, set to commence on 1 April 2021.² This work involves subordinate legislative change to the NSDS, which can be a lengthy process.

² Under the DECoS program, the department will provide funding to ADEs to ensure their supported employees ineligible for NDIS funding are not disadvantaged in the transition. To be eligible for the DECoS program, providers must be compliant with the NSDS or currently undergoing re-certification or a surveillance audit.



4. If an ADE does not have a DEA agreement but received Temporary Viability Support (TVS) as part of the 2020-4117 grant round from March 2020, are they required to maintain NSDS certification?

NSDS certification was required for organisations to be eligible for TVS grant funding.

From 30 June 2020, ADEs have not been required to maintain certification under the NSDS if they:

- received TVS funding; and
- do not have a current DEA agreement.

Please note to receive funding from the department in the future, such as in a future TVS round, NSDS certification may be required.

5. If an ADE has no DEA clients but still receives the rural and remote service supplement, are they required to maintain NSDS certification?

Yes - as the DEA program has been extended to 31 March 2021, the NSDS audit is still required to access the rural and remote service supplement.

6. If an ADE receives the Supported Wage System (SWS) supplementation but do not have a current DEA agreement, are they required to maintain NSDS certification?

In this situation, there is no obligation to maintain NSDS certification. The SWS supplementation is separate to the DEA program.

7. Can an audit of an organisation's Disability Employment Services (DES) activities under the NSDS also cover their ADE activities?

Some organisations deliver services as both a DES provider and as an ADE. If an organisation is seeking to have an NSDS audit cover both their DES and ADE activities, they will need to liaise with their Certifying Body and JAS-ANZ, who will inform them if one audit is sufficient and how the scope of the audit may be expanded to cover both activities. This approach was not affected by the revisions to the Scheme.

8. What happens if an ADE is overdue for a recertification or surveillance audit?

ADEs and Certifying Bodies should prioritise conducting audits as soon as possible if they are overdue. Retrospective extensions may be granted in certain circumstances, pending authorisation by JAS-ANZ.



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Australian Government payments to ADEs

Name	Acronym	Description
Case-based funding	CBF	CBF means to type of payments paid by the department to ADEs for the delivery of supported employment services.
Disability Employment Continuity of Support	DECoS	Beginning on 1 April 2021, the DECoS program is one of a number of continuity of support programs aimed at continuing to support clients confirmed ineligible for the NDIS, to achieve similar outcomes to those prior to the introductions of the NDIS.
Rural and Remote Service Supplement	RRSS	The RRSS is available under DEA grant agreements for ADEs located in rural and remote areas.
Supported Wage System	SWS	The SWS Wage Supplementation Activity supplements the wages of supported employees in ADEs whose wages are determined using the SWS tool.
Temporary Viability Support	TVS	Under the DEA program, TVS funding is available to ADEs facing short-term financial difficulties where closure of the service would result in people with disability losing their jobs. The most recent TVS grant round occurred in May 2020 to support ADEs facing short-term financial difficulties while dealing with the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Summary of rules around National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) certification for Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs)
This is designed to assist ADEs and Certifying Bodies to determine whether certification is required under the NSDS. Further information about the payments listed can be found in the table on page 4.

