Guide to working with disability employment services

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*Disability is an evolving concept and that* *disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others[[1]](#footnote-1)*

1. People with disability and work
	1. Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to:

* Provide information about people with disability and work
* Outline how to identify and address barriers to inclusion in the workplace
* Outline the different types of disability employment services available to NSW government agencies
* Explain how engagement with disability employment services can be incorporated into workforce planning & recruitment strategies
	1. People with disability and work

The table below outlines the representation of people with disability across a wide range of occupations. The table also links to occupations in the NSW public sector.

**Table 1:** *Occupation categories, employed people with disability and NSW government employee examples*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Occupation of main job (ABS) (National Occupation Categories)** | **National representation of employees with disability in each category**  | **NSW government role examples** |
| Managers | 7.5 % | * Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators
* Education, Health and Welfare Services Managers
* Business Administration Managers
* ICT Managers
 |
| Professionals | 8% | * School Teachers
* Midwifery and Nursing Professionals
* Social and Welfare Professionals
* Legal Professionals
* Human Resource & Training Professionals
* Business and Systems Analysts, and Programmers
 |
| Technicians and Trades Workers | 9 % | * Miscellaneous Technicians and Trades Workers
* ICT and Telecommunications Technicians
* Electronics and Telecommunications Trades Workers
* Electricians
 |
| Community and Personal Service Workers | 8% | * Fire Fighters and Police
* Education Aides
* Health and Welfare Support Workers
* Prison and Security Officers
 |
| Clerical and Administrative Workers | 8% | * General Clerks
* Clerical and Office Support Workers
* Contract, Program and Project Administrators
* Call or Contact Centre Information Clerks
* Receptionists
 |
| Machinery Operators and Drivers | 10% | * Bus and Rail Drivers
* Mobile Plant Operators
* Stationary Plant Operators
* Truck Drivers
 |
| Labourers | 12% | * Cleaners and Laundry Workers
* Food Preparation Assistants
* Farm, Forestry and Garden Workers
* Construction and Mining Labourers

  |

**Source:**

[*https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/disability-and-labour-force*](https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/disability-and-labour-force)

The information in the next sections indicates that the chances of recruiting suitably skilled candidates with disability increase when we can:

* Offer full-time or part-time work
* Create a more inclusive workplace
* Embed workplace flexibility
* Reduce system and attitudinal barriers
	1. Working arrangements

There are already a substantial number of people with disability in the workforce, working in many different professions, with over a quarter working full time.  It’s important not to make any assumptions about whether a person prefers to work part-time or full-time. There’s already strong representation of people with disability who are working in all main national occupation categories.

A review of the [data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release) shows that:

* 28.3% of people with disability of working age were employed full-time
* 19.6% of people with disability of working age were employed part time
* 11.4% of people with a profound or severe disability of working age work full-time

The [AIHW deeper dive of employment statistics](https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/employment/employment-participation-needs-and-challenges) noted that of the 12% of people with disability who do require specific arrangements:

* 50% need special equipment or modified buildings/fittings, or to be provided special/free transport or parking.
* 25% need a special support person to assist or train them on the job (applies to salary or wage earners only) or to be provided help from someone at work, or to be provided training/retraining.
* 26% need to be allocated different duties.

For more information on the employment of people with disability in Australia, refer to the [Includeability](https://includeability.gov.au/resources-employers/disability-and-employment-australia) resources.

* 1. Education levels of people with disability

The best predictors of whether a person with disability will be employed (or not) are work experience during education and their educational attainment.

The [AIHW deeper dive of educational attainment statistics](https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/education-and-skills) found that:

* 33% of people with disability had completed year 12 or equivalent
* 16.1% had a bachelor’s degree or above
* 9.2% had an advanced diploma or diploma

Unsurprisingly – a higher percentage of people with disability with postgraduate degrees, graduate diplomas, certificates, or bachelor’s degrees are employed while proportionately more people with a Certificate III/IV experience higher levels of unemployment.

When university students with disability have a chance to work during their education, they increase their chances of employment after graduation. For example, over 80% of university graduates who completed a ‘Stepping Into Internship’ are employed 4 months after finishing their studies while 57% of graduates with disability who didn’t do an internship were employed 4 months after finishing their studies.

1. Barriers to employment and what you can do
	1. Barriers that prevent people with disability from getting work – and what you can do

This section covers some of the barriers that prevent people with disability from getting into work and outlines your role in removing obstacles to increase fairness and equity in the recruitment process.

In 2008 Australia ratified the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD),](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) a human rights treaty designed to protect the rights and dignity of people with disability. The CRPD is based on the social model of disability which underlines that ‘disability’ results from the interaction between persons with impairments and societal barriers. In employment settings, these barriers can be categorised as:

* **Attitudinal barriers**: lack of knowledge and understanding, lack of confidence of recruiters and hiring managers, low expectations, fear of making a mistake.
* **Systemic barriers:** job descriptions, application processes, built environment barriers, lack of time and resources, lack of ‘straight-through’ processes, complexity of employment service programs and providers.
* **Structural barriers**: education, work experience and discrimination.
	1. Attitudinal barriers

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Typical attitudinal barriers in the workplace**  | **What you can do** |
| Negative attitudes towards or assumptions about people with disability | * Build [disability confidence and awareness](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/learn-more-about-disability/disability-awareness-training) at all levels of your agency, including for management, team leaders, supervisors, and peers
* Understand the [data on people with disability](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release) in Australia
* Check yourself – avoid making assumptions about the skills, capabilities or working preferences of people with disability
 |
| Lack of knowledge about how to recruit/retain people with disability | * Learn about how to run a more [inclusive recruitment process](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability)
* Become accredited as a [Disability Confident Recruiter](https://www.and.org.au/pages/building-disability-confident-recruiters-overview-for-members.html)
* If you are a people manager is to refer to the [Managing in the Age of Inclusion resources](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/managing-in-the-age-of-inclusion)
 |
| Workplace culture  | * [Educate yourself](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/learn-more-about-disability) and think about the [language](https://www.afdo.org.au/news/language-guide/) that you use
* It should go without saying, but treat everyone with [respect](https://www.and.org.au/pages/etiquette.html) and lead by example
* Share your knowledge with others – especially hiring managers and those in workforce planning
* For more advice, visit the [Includeability Resources for Employers pages](https://includeability.gov.au/resources-employers)
 |

* 1. System Barriers

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Typical system barriers**  | **What you can do**  |
| Workforce planning targets do not include people with disability | * Embed workforce equity and diversity considerations into your 3-5 year [strategic workforce planning](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/strategic-workforce-planning) processes
 |
| Inaccessible websites (preventing proceeding through the application process and successfully uploading); inaccessible role descriptions  | * Educate yourself and your team on the [basic standard of accessibility](https://www.digital.nsw.gov.au/digital-service-toolkit/design-standards/design-with-users-for-users/accessibility-and-inclusivity) expected for the NSW government sector and learn how to make your [services and processes more inclusive and accessible](https://www.digital.nsw.gov.au/digital-service-toolkit/design-standards/design-with-users-for-users/accessibility-and-inclusivity)
* Ensure websites are accessible and allow for all candidates to proceed through the application process and upload documents.
* If there are known accessibility issues, make sure you have a contact person who can support a person with disability to complete and submit their application
 |
| Role descriptions which do not clearly state essential or inherent requirements  | * Refer to the [Essential requirements factsheet](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/recruitment/recruitment-and-selection-guide/filling-a-role/role-analysis/essential-requirements-factsheet).
* Inclusion of essential requirements in a role description or job advertisement needs careful thought. If these are not necessary to achieve the outcomes of the role they may be discriminatory.
 |
| Inflexible interview requirements | * Consider how assessments can be as inclusive as possible. For example, talk to all applicants about their needs for interviews and other assessments. Be flexible and make adjustments to support individual needs.
* To understand best practice interviewing techniques, refer to the [practical guide for interviewing](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/recruitment/recruitment-and-selection-guide/assess-candidates/practical-guide-to-interviewing)
 |
| Lack of adjustments throughout the application process | * Refer to [further information on workplace adjustments](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/making-the-workplace-accessible/workplace-adjustments)
 |
| Psychometric testing | * Recognise that psychometric assessment may not always be available in accessible formats and can have the unintended consequence of unfairly disadvantaging people with disability. Consider use of other assessments ahead of psychometric testing.
* You may need to make workplace adjustments to psychometric assessments for people with disability if you still choose to use this assessment method. Speak to HR or your supplier about options for adjustments
 |
| Inaccessible premises  | * Think about how you can be flexible at interview stage; understand how to make your [workplace more accessible](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/making-the-workplace-accessible)
 |
| Health declarations or assessments, where it is not made clear what is required to ‘pass’; or which assess attributes other than those directly linked to inherent requirements | * Explain why screening checks such as health assessments are being done.
* A health assessment may be carried out where a candidate’s physical fitness to perform the duties of a role to which they are to be assigned is a [condition of engagement](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/recruitment/recruitment-and-selection-guide/assess-candidates/conduct-pre-screening).
* Health assessments of this kind should be carried out only to assess the person’s capacity to carry out the inherent requirements and demands of the role.
 |
| Format of offer  | * You can learn more about recruiting and onboarding, anti-discrimination laws [here](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability).
 |

* 1. Structural barriers

Structural disadvantage compounds over time. You may not have any direct role in overcoming the structural disadvantage, but knowledge of it helps you to contextualise the multilayered barriers that people with disability can face.

Examples include:

* Experiences of institutional ableism and discrimination
* Socio economic disadvantage; higher unemployment rates
* Inequality in education
* Inequitable access to health services
* Social exclusion and marginalisation – and many others not listed in this guide

**What you can do**

* Be informed about the attitudinal, system and structural barriers that people with disability face at work
* Inform others by providing information that counters [myths and misconceptions](https://www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/disability/disability-myths-and-stereotypes) about people with disability in the workforce
* Recognise barriers in your organisation, call them out, build barrier free systems and take steps towards [making your workplace inclusive](https://includeability.gov.au/resources-employers)
* Embed [inclusive recruitment practices](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability/how-to-recruit-people-with-disability), take a critical view of your own agency’s recruitment process and try to identify barriers, and develop methods to eliminate them
* Provide meaningful employment to people with disability

1. Disability Employment Services
	1. Introduction

Some people with disability do not need employment programs, or targeted jobs, while other people do.

Disability employment programs:

* Build the candidate’s confidence that their disability will be accepted and accommodated by the employer
* Assist with matching skillsets, aspirations, and interests of the jobseeker with type of role and organisation culture
* Assist with navigating and/or negotiating workplace adjustments
* Provide supports and assistance that intersect between disability, the role, and the workplace
	1. What are Disability Employment Services (DES)?

The [Disability Employment Services (DES) program](https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/disability-employment-services) funded by the federal Department of Social Services assists >310,000 jobseekers with disability to get and keep employment.

DES are independent organisations contracted by the Australian Government to find long term sustainable jobs for program participants. DES providers are paid for the job placement outcomes they achieve. There are around 40 DES providers in hundreds of locations across NSW. These organisations may be large and small, non-profit, and private sector.

* 1. What do DES do?

DES support some people with disability to gain and maintain meaningful employment in the open labour market. They do this by connecting candidates to the right job for them, preparing both the workplace and candidate for employment and offering ongoing support to ensure success in the long term.

Through offering pre-employment and on the job support to candidates, DES can save employers time and money in the recruitment of high-quality people.

This could include sourcing the right candidate for the role; providing pre-employment screening and training; or support in organising and funding workplace adjustments. Providers continue to offer support after an employee commences in the new role, to ensure that a new employee is settling into the new role. All this support is provided at no cost to the employer.

Each provider works with their own program participants and there is no straightforward method to reach candidates across providers.

Almost all DES are ‘generalist’ services, meaning they work across all types of disability. Some are ‘specialist’ services meaning that they work with participants with a type of disability.  For example, there are specialist providers for people with intellectual disability, vision impairment and mental illness.

DES providers and their locations [are listed here](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability/disability-employment-services). The resource has been divided into NSW government regions. Currently, there isn’t really any information that informs you about the quality of services.

DES Participants and unemployment:

* 15% have been unemployed for less than a year.
* 19% between 1-2 years
* 65% of participants have been unemployed for 3 years or more which may impact on their ‘job readiness’ and currency of skills.

**Table 2:** *DES Age Profile as percentage of participants.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DES AGE PROFILE** | **TOTAL DES (National figures)** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Under 21 | 16,151  | 5.2% |
| 21 - 24 | 25,522  | 8.2% |
| 25 - 34 | 50,888  | 16.4% |
| 35 - 44 | 49,523  | 15.9% |
| 45 - 49 | 33,375  | 10.7% |
| 50 + | 135,300  | 43%  |

Disability Employment Services are paid when their participants are employed for at least their pre-determined ‘benchmark’ hours.

* 11% of participants are required to work 8 hours per week.
* 67% of participants are required to work 15 hours per week.
* 21% of people in DES are likely to work 23 hours a week or more

|  |
| --- |
| **NSW government sector usage of DES** A snapshot of placements made by just two DES providers (MaxEmployment and APM) during the period May 2020 and May 2021 indicates that 30 people were recruited into the NSW government from two DES providers. Role types were diverse roles and included nurse, teacher, police officer, bus driver, education aides, special care worker, ICT support technician, civil engineer, and administration. Fifteen of the roles were casual, six were full-time and nine were part-time.  |

1. How and when do you engage with Disability Employment Services?
	1. Steps to take
2. **Prepare:** the first step is to do your research and understand the providers in your area – [these lists](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability/disability-employment-services) will give you an idea of what services are operational in your location.
3. **Connect and communicate:** the next step is to connect with a DES provider. Explain your business requirements, the role/s on offer (and the role description/s), and how public sector recruitment works. The earlier the engagement the better to ensure that the DES provider can meet your needs.
4. **Develop the relationship:** DES providers will work closely with you to develop a relationship, and understand your agency, and the vacancies available at any given time. The aim is to find a great match between what you are looking for and the DES participant put forward for interview. Building a good relationship can lead to more mutually beneficial outcomes, including more sustainable employment opportunities for people with disability.

**Demand Led Partnerships**

There are many different approaches to recruitment and some providers are better matched to some methods. While the primary focus of DES is on individual placements, some of the larger services provide innovative and ‘demand led’ or project led approaches.

Demand led partnerships are when an employer develops a strategic partnership with a DES provider to fill roles, leveraging the skills of the provider to source suitably skilled candidates. Although not commonly used, this recruitment method can provide excellent and mutually beneficial outcomes. This could be a method for you to consider when working with larger DES providers – especially if you have multiple roles available and can take adequate lead time to work with the provider to plan the approach and source suitable candidates.

* 1. Other organisations which provide fee for service disability employment programs

These organisations are not funded by government and are funded by the employers who use their services. A key difference between these services and DES, is that the fee for service programs start with the employer’s needs and then matches the jobseeker. DES providers usually start with the candidate and then look for a suitable employer.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Provider**  | **Further information** |
| [**Stepping into Internship Program (Australian Network on Disability)**](https://www.and.org.au/pages/stepping-into...-programs.html) | **Overview:** AND’s Stepping Into program is an internship program that matches talented university students with disability to specific requirements of member organisations. **Engagement:** Individual internships  **Internal resources**: - co-ordination with hiring managers**Cost** $3,900 for each intern (AND membership required) **Lead-time:** February for July program, July for December/January/February program**More information:** <https://www.and.org.au/pages/stepping-into...-programs.html>  |
| [**Auticon**](https://auticon.com.au/) | **Overview:** Provides people on the autism spectrum with employment in IT. Auticon commenced in Australia in 2019 and is an approved IT supplier under the NSW Government procurement scheme. **Engagement:** Contracted services**Internal resources**: commitment to contracted services. **Cost:** requires discussion.**Lead-time:** requires discussion**More information:** <https://auticon.com.au/> |
| [**Dandelion Programs**](https://www.dxc.com/au/en/cp/social-impact-practice/dxc-dandelion-program) | **Overview:** DXC Technology established the Dandelion Program in Australia in 2014 to help establish careers for people on the autism spectrum. DXC is an approved IT supplier under the NSW Government procurement scheme. The Dandelion Program focuses on information technology skills, testing, data science and cyber security. Its employment programs are 1-, 2- or 3-years duration with various support structures.**Engagement:** Programs and contracted services with individual placements at program completion.**Internal resources**: commitment, negotiation, and project manager.**Cost:** requires discussion.**Lead-time:** requires discussion**More information:** <https://www.dxc.com/au/en/cp/social-impact-practice/dxc-dandelion-program> |
| [**Jigsaw**](https://jigsawaustralia.com.au/academy/sydney/) | **Overview:** Jigsaw is a social enterprise that trains and transitions people with disability into award wage employment and is an approved provider under the NSW Government talent acquisition scheme. **Engagement:** Individual roles**Internal resources:** Program leader for co-ordination**Cost:** requires discussion.**Lead:** time 3-6 months**More information:** <https://jigsawaustralia.com.au/>  |
| [**Specialisterne**](http://www.specialisterne.com.au) | **Overview:** international not for profit social innovation enterprise that creates employment opportunities for people with autism**Engagement:** Programs and/or individual placements**Internal resources**: Co-ordination, liaison, negotiation, (internal project manager for establishment)**Cost:** program dependent**Lead-time:** for program approach 6 months +**More information:** <http://www.specialisterne.com.au/> |
| [**Xceptional Testing Pty Ltd**](http://www.xceptional.io) | **Overview:** Xceptional exists to create meaningful careers for autistic individuals and has pioneered new approaches to recruitment to source skilled and often overlooked talent, and is an approved provider under the NSW Government talent acquisition scheme. **Engagement:** Programs, Contracted services and/or Individual Placements **Internal resources**: Liaison, co-ordination, and project management  **Cost:** requires discussion**Lead-time:** requires discussion**More information:** <http://www.xceptional.io/>  |

1. Key concepts for working with Disability Employment Services
	1. How do I work with a DES provider?

Before you begin it is important to ensure:

* Your recruitment process [meets the NSW government standards](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/recruitment/recruitment-and-selection-guide)
* If you are targeting the recruitment process for people with disability you have used GSE Rule 26 (see fact sheet for [Public Service agencies](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/Rule%2026%20summary%20for%20managers%20at%20Public%20Service%20agencies.pdf); and for [government sector agencies](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/Rule%2026%20summary%20for%20managers%20at%20non-Public%20Service%20agencies.pdf))
* your recruitment process is [inclusive](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability/how-to-recruit-people-with-disability)

This section outlines some of the key actions that you should be aware of when working with a DES provider. For example, a DES provider will undertake a job analysis, may request workplace adjustment or job customisation on behalf of their clients, and will codesign a support plan with you and the successful candidate.

Finally it is important that employers understand the Work Assist program, which offers immediate support to help employees and their managers get additional support if there’s a risk of job loss because of disability, illness, or injury.

**Job Analysis by a DES provider**

Candidates with disability who are working with a provider may have specific needs and the best way to accommodate their strengths and needs is to undertake a job analysis to ensure a good job match.  The job analysis should be completed by the provider, a representative of the employer and the candidate if appropriate.

A job analysis confirms the inherent requirements (essential and focus requirements) and may review the following:

* Details of any physical requirements.
* Working hours.
* Customer service requirements including whether using the telephone is required.
* Interpersonal skills.
* Communication skills.
* Computer skills.
* Literacy skills; and/or
* Numeracy skills.

While interviews and assessments are the usual methods of determining whether candidates are a good match, this may not work well for some candidates with disability.  For this reason, allowing a candidate to show what they can do through a work-trial may be more beneficial, and practical.

The employment service can assist in setting up an appropriate work trial that meets the needs of the hiring manager and the candidate with disability.  Work sampling or work trials are [valid capability assessment methods](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/recruitment/recruitment-and-selection-guide/planning-a-recruitment-and-selection-approach/work-sample-exercises) for people with disability.

**Workplace or Reasonable Adjustments**

While it is important to remember that most candidates with disability will not require any adjustments, sometimes it may be necessary to make a few changes to the way things are done to allow an employee with disability the best possible chance to be successful during recruitment. The DES provider may be involved in requesting adjustments on behalf of their client. For more information refer to how to [recruit people with disability](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability/how-to-recruit-people-with-disability).

**Job Customisation**

Job customisation involves reallocating certain tasks or duties of a particular role to other team members or creating a customised role for a particular candidate.  The process for creating a specific role for a particular candidate is called ‘job carving’.

This can be a great opportunity for experienced and skilled staff to take on more responsibility, while allowing the candidate with disability to work to their strengths.  More experienced staff may benefit from exchanging some of their routine tasks for more complex work and the candidate with disability benefits by securing meaningful employment.

While job customisation, and/or job carving are effective strategies, they generally represent a small proportion of workplace opportunities.

**Support Plans developed by a DES provider**

Disability employment service providers should work with you to develop a support plan. Support plans guide all the essential information needed to facilitate a successful outcome for both the hiring manager and the candidate.

A quality support plan should be created in partnership with the provider, the hiring manager, and the new employee.

The support plan provides clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the employer, the new employee, and the employment service.

An effective support plan may include the:

* Type of support the new employee will need to learn the job.
* Frequency, duration, and type of support the provider can offer, including timeframes, review periods and requesting additional support (types of support may include formal or informal support, one-to-one training, workplace guidance, non-vocational support, etc).
* Training requirements for specific tasks and productivity coaching.
* Identification of natural workplace supports and co-worker supports.
* Process for reducing the level of support provided and
* Names and contact details of all parties

If the new employee requires reasonable adjustments, the support plan may also include:

* The equipment that needs to be purchased for the new employee.
* A plan for adapting any existing equipment or tools.
* Briefing of co-workers on adjustments that they may be required make; and
* Any training requirements for the new employee in the use of equipment

The support plan should be signed off and a copy given to all involved, as well as a copy placed on the new employee’s human resources file. This should be repeated whenever any revisions are made to the document.

**Ongoing support provided by a DES provider**

There may be no ‘end date’ on the support available from a DES, and depending on needs, support can be ongoing and indefinite.  However, the goal is to facilitate the relationship between the hiring manager and employee. It’s a good idea for managers, providers, and the new employee to review the Support Plan regularly to incorporate any changes to circumstances that may occur.

As the employee’s employment continues, the employment service may reduce the support they provide, however it is important that all parties know that they can request additional (flexible) support at any time as required.

The employer or employee may want the employment service to assist if the:

* Job/tasks/hours/location are changing
* Supervisors or co-workers are changing
* Organisation or team is undergoing restructure
* Employer/supervisor has any concerns.  (Concerns may be related to welfare, performance, or conduct).

**Work Assist**

The Australian Government funds a program called ‘Work Assist’ that offers immediate support to help employees and their managers get additional support if there’s a risk of job loss because of disability, illness, or injury. Work Assist is delivered through Disability Employment Services <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/downloads/work-assist>

The employee does not necessarily have to already be a client of a DES to be eligible for the program.  This means that support is available at any time to help navigate keep a valued employee in work.

More information about recruiting people with disability can be found [here](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment/recruiting-people-with-disability/how-to-recruit-people-with-disability).

* 1. Recruiters and workforce planners: what do I do next?

**Develop your workforce plan**

When developing your plan to achieve your targets, it’s likely that a combination of recruitment methods and programs will be required. This may mean that you need to partner with DES as well as partner with one or more fee for service providers. You can profile the skills required in your workforce and identify the best probability sources to meet your skill needs.

A comprehensive plan may include:

* Selecting one or more DES providers to partner with on individual vacancies and targeted roles
* Using AND’s internship program (seasonally) to articulate into your graduate recruitment program
* Introducing a program with one or more of the fee for service providers and
* Ensuring career development for current employees with disability to achieve representation at higher grades

Collaboration and teamwork between recruiters, workforce planners, diversity and inclusion practitioners and your executive champions will ultimately determine your success.

**Meet Your Targets**

Meeting targets will require a detailed workforce plan; consider the following:

* The gap you need to fill – current representation of people with disability in your agency and your recruitment target
* Your current internal resources to undertake recruitment
* Senior executive commitment
* Budgets
* Timeframes
* Role types
* Recruitment methods
* Known changes to your workforce
* Linking with your workforce planning process and cycle

**Select the right approach for your agency**

Within agencies, removing system barriers from your recruitment and selection processes is essential and working towards accreditation as a [Disability Confident Recruiter](https://www.and.org.au/pages/building-disability-confident-recruiters-overview-for-members.html) is recommended.

For agencies with a significant gap between current representation and targets, a combination of recruitment methods will be required.

**Table 3:** *Recruitment Methods, Providers and Considerations*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recruitment method** | **Providers** | **Considerations** |
| Standard job vacancy | DES  | You can modify the recruitment process using GSE Rule 26 to facilitate the employment of people with disability |
| Targeted vacancies | DES$Specialisterne, $Jigsaw, $Xceptional | May need to reach out to several providers to fill the role; cost implications for fee for service providers  |
| Bulk Recruitment | DES | Inherent requirements of the specific role may be unknown. Assumes recruitment process is accessible.Demand Led Partnership approach preferrable |
| Talent Pools |  | Inherent requirements of the specific role may be unknown. Assumes recruitment process is accessible.Demand Led Partnership approach preferable.  DES not paid unless jobseeker is employed due to ‘outcomes base funding’ |
| Casual/Contract  | DES, $Stepping into  | Co-ordination at manager level or program co-ordinator required |
| Customised roles  | $ Jigsaw, $Specialisterne $XceptionalJobsupport (DES) | Job designed for a specific individual  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Program Approaches**  |
| Tailored Talent (Autism) | $ Specialisterne $Xceptional | Need engagement, commitment  |
| Internships  | $ Stepping into program  | Need engagement, commitment  |
| Graduate program | NSW PSC |  |
| Traineeships/Cadetships | $ not currently | Needs program management. Central and agency liaison, co-ordination, and suitable roles |
| Demand Led Partnership | Not currentlySome DES | Demand Led Partnerships give best results. Needs co-ordination and suitable roles.  |

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| --- |
| **Disability Confident Recruiters**The Department of Communities and Justice and the Public Service Commission have become accredited as a [Disability Confident Recruiter](https://www.and.org.au/pages/building-disability-confident-recruiters-overview-for-members.html) by the Australian Network on Disability which means they have eliminated systemic barriers and can treat people fairly in the recruitment and selection process.   |

1. *UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106 (preamble section 5)* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)