

Post School Options Application Information Package

The ACT Government provides Post School Options (PSO) support to assist young people with a disability who are leaving school and cannot presently participate in full time employment, or may not be able to do so in the future.

Purpose

All young People have a unique and integral role to play in their families, social networks and as a contributing member of the social, cultural, and economic life of the ACT community.

The PSO program supports young people leaving school to further develop their roles as a member of the ACT Community, and in doing so:

- Minimise the effects of the disability and maximise independence through the provision of timely and appropriate supports,
- Make a substantial difference to the quality of life for an individual; and
- Strengthen and support family members in their roles as mothers, fathers, siblings, partners and carers.

The Types of PSO Support

Support is being offered in the following areas (you may apply for one or both types of support):

1) Transitional Pre Vocation Support – available for up to 3 years

Assists people who have the capacity to participate in vocational activities such as employment, volunteering, further education, training, but who are not ready, or not able to do so without additional support.

The transitional support program supports individuals to set goals build their skills and experience, and confidence so that in the future they will/may be able to participate in vocational activities independently.

Transitional Support programs are individually based and will assist each person with the supports they need to plan and work towards their goals.

In the past transitional support has included;

- Developing skills in utilising public transport
- Establishing small business
- Finding work experience
- Finding tertiary courses etc.

2) Ongoing Community Access Service

Provides support to people who require ongoing service responses to assist them further develop their role as a member of the ACT community. Community access services assists school leavers to maintain and further develop their artistic, recreational learning and life skills, to access community venues and to participate in community events.

Most community access services occur during business hours, and may be provided in the home, at community venues or from a centre base. Community access will be individualised, and will be provided in a person's own home or community locations that are normative to the activity being undertaken.

The hours of service available to each client will be determined through the individual assessment and planning with each client.

Who is eligible to apply for support?

It should be noted that there are limited resources and whilst every effort will be made to accommodate those people applying for support, not all applicants will be successful.

Wherever possible, alternate options will be given to people in the form of referral and information.

Eligibility criteria for the support is as follows:

The person seeking support:

1) has a disability as defined under the ACT Disability Services Act 1991 and the Commonwealth/State/Territory Disability Agreement:

The person must have a disability that is attributable to an intellectual, cognitive, neurological, sensory, psychiatric or physical impairment, or a combination of these impairments. The person with a disability will need support due to a substantive reduction of their capacity for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility.

The disability is permanent or likely to be permanent and may be of a chronic episodic nature, and

- 2) is a current resident of the ACT, **and**
- 3) has completed school with no option to return, **and**
- 4) is not and will not be undertaking full time study or full time training, **and**
- 5) cannot realistically pursue full time employment.

Who is in the priority target group?

Priority in the target group include school leavers:

- who **have a primary disability** that is not solely attributed to a mental illness, and;
- where the support would make a **substantial difference to the quality of life** of the person, and/or;
- where the support would substantially **reduce risk** of current support arrangements breaking down.

How will people with a disability be selected for support?

A **panel** will review all applications requesting support and will determine your eligibility and priority within the available supports. The panel will consist of people from Government and non government organisations.

The panel will abide by the [Bowen Declaration code of conduct](#).

What criteria will the panel use?

Applications will be rated by the panel and short-listed on the degree of impact that the support would have on the person's life. This includes:

- minimising the effects of the disability
- maximising independence
- therefore making a substantial difference to the individual's quality of life
- for those people with family or carers in their life, the degree to which their support can be strengthened.

The panel will also consider information regarding:

- the support required for people with high and complex needs
- the capacity of the applicants existing support arrangements
- risks to these arrangements
- the person's current living circumstances
- whether the person with a disability/carer or family member is at risk or vulnerable to injury.
- How the support will affect the community presence and participation of the applicant, their competency, level of choice and respect.

What is the process?

Using the above criteria, the panel will short-list the applications. All applicants (both those short-listed and those not short-listed) will be advised of the outcome of this process.

An assessor will then meet the short-listed applicants and their carer/s, to clarify and verify the information provided, the support identified and the preferred support provider (if known). The assessing officer will clarify with the applicant how the proposed support will minimise risk and improve the individual's quality of life.

Upon completion of the assessment and estimated costing by the assessing officer, the information will be forwarded to the panel who will make the final recommendations for a support allocation to the Executive Director, Disability ACT for approval.

Applicants will then be advised in writing of the outcome of their application in early December 2008.

Disability ACT will retain the unsuccessful applications. The support needs identified in these applications will be used for inclusion in future planning for unmet need.

The Assessing Officers

The assessing officers will be drawn from Disability ACT's Assessment Team, with assessors from government and non government organisations.

Each of the assessing officers has experience in supporting people with disabilities and will be given additional training to ensure that a consistent assessment approach is maintained.

The assessing officer will also discuss options for alternative approaches, information and referral that applicants may wish to consider.

Understanding the application form

Disability ACT will hold information sessions on the support process, the application forms and to answer questions that people may have.

The times and dates for these sessions are as follows:

- Wednesday 23 July 2008 - 6.30pm to 7.30am at **Black Mountain School**
Cnr Faunce Crescent & Dryandra Street, O'Connor.
- Thursday 24 July 2008 - 7.00pm to 8.00pm at **Centre for Teaching and Learning**.
Fremantle Drive, Stirling
- Thursday 14 August 2008 - 7.00pm to 8.00pm at **Phillip Health Centre**,
Cnr Corinna and Keltie Streets, Phillip.

How to apply for Transitional or ongoing Community Access support?

To apply for support, please follow the following steps:

- 1) Complete the registration of interest form
- 2) Application forms are available online at www.dhcs.act.gov.au (please click on Disability ACT) or by phoning Disability ACT's Information Service on 02 6207 1086. (please read carefully and follow the directions).
- 3) Please ensure that you sign the application. If you have a legally appointed guardian, the guardian must sign the form as well.
- 4) Forward the completed application to the address indicated on the application form before the **closing date of 21 August 2008**.

Timelines

4 July 2008	Disability ACT advises of the 2008 Post School Options Assessment process for School Leavers
23, 24 July 14 August	Disability ACT will conduct information sessions for people with disabilities, families and service providers
21 August	Closing date for applications
September - October	Panel will short-list the applications
	All applicants will be advised of the outcome of the short-listing process
	The short-listed applicants will then meet with an assessor
	The assessors submit a report to the panel
Mid November	The panel will make final recommendations to the Executive Director of Disability ACT
Early December	The short-listed applicants will be advised of the panel's final recommendation and the Executive Directors decision. Successful applicants will receive funded support plans to complete and send back for approval
2009	Disability ACT will arrange support plans approved.

Privacy

Protecting your Privacy:

Disability ACT is collecting information on the application form to identify if you are eligible for assistance and to determine those individuals who will be prioritised to receive support. Within Disability ACT, access to this information is strictly limited to those people who have a need for the information. This includes the panel members, whose role it is to prioritise each applicant, the executive, who will approve the panel recommendations and the project officer responsible for managing the process of the support and collating applications for the panel.

It is acknowledged that the process of allocating support is lengthy and involves families, carers and individuals with a disability having to disclose their circumstances. However, in order to give you the best opportunity to accurately demonstrate your need, such details are necessary to assist the panel members.

Disability ACT respects the right to privacy and the personal nature of the information requested of families, carers and individuals. Disability ACT will not release your details outside the department unless you agree to do so by signing the specific section included in the application form.

Consent provides Disability ACT with the option to link you with existing appropriate supports or to retain the information to assist in future planning to address identified unmet need.

GLOSSARY

Applicant: The person with a disability for whom the support is being sought

Carer: People who provide support to the applicant

Family: People who are related to the applicant

Guardian: A person who has the legal status to act on behalf of the applicant

Health issues: Medical issues that impact further on the applicant's disability

High and complex need: This is a multidimensional concept that refers to the support needs of people with a disability who:

- have a profound activity restriction in at least one of the core areas of self-care, mobility or communication, and consequently
- always require assistance for those activities, and
- require an across-agency response because at least one of the following additional areas of support need have been identified:
 - secondary or multiple disabilities that require ongoing and sustained support **and/or**
 - medical/health/mental health needs that require specialised support **and/or**
 - assistance is of a highly specialised nature, **and/or**
 - pose a threat to themselves, their carers or the general community.

People with high support needs may at times be considered as 'high and complex' when these additional supports are required, but at other times would not fall within the 'high and complex' category.

Notional amount: Disability ACT will not allocate a specific amount of dollars to individuals identified by the panel but will allocate a notional amount pending approval of a support plan

Primary Disability: The disability that has the greatest impact on your capacity to engage in daily activities.

Risk: The applicant's current support arrangements are at risk of failing or breaking down immediately, or within the next twelve months, without additional resources being sourced .

Support: The additional assistance needed by a person with a disability to undertake activities

Support plan: A plan developed with the applicant detailing the funded supports and services to be provided within the notional support. The allocated support may not be sufficient to meet all your requests, and the support plan will enable you to prioritise areas for support. The support plan will be approved by Disability ACT who will then purchase the approved support/services on your behalf

Support arrangements: Those actions undertaken by people who are paid/not paid which enable the applicant to meet at least the essential needs that the applicant is unable to achieve due to their disability