

Understanding the NDIS

Booklet 1 of 3

Easy Read version



ndis

ndis.gov.au

How to use this booklet



The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) wrote this booklet. When you see the word 'we', it means the NDIA.



This booklet is written in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold
Not bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 36.



This Easy Read booklet is a summary of another booklet.

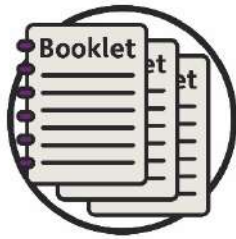


You can find the other booklet on our website at www.ndis.gov.au



You can ask for help to read this booklet.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



There are 3 booklets that all work together.



Booklet 1 explains what the NDIS is.



Booklet 2 explains how to make an NDIS plan.



Booklet 3 explains how to use your NDIS plan.



This is Booklet 1.



You don't have to read this booklet all at once.



You can take your time and work through it at your own pace.

Changes during coronavirus (COVID-19)



Some things have changed at the NDIS due to **coronavirus** (COVID-19).



Coronavirus is a virus that has affected many people around the world.



During coronavirus, more of our services are available online.



And we are working with people on the phone instead of having face-to-face meetings.

Now NDIS plans:



- are more flexible – you can make changes if you need to because of coronavirus



- last for a longer time – plans are being extended for 12 months.

Where do you find more information about these changes?

You can visit our website at www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus

What's in this booklet?

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What is the NDIS?



The NDIS provides services and support to people with disability.



NDIS stands for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.



National means all around Australia.



Disability can affect:

- a person's senses – such as their sight or hearing
- a person's ability to move or use their body
- the way a person thinks, learns or understands
- the way a person feels, or their mental health.



Insurance is a service you pay for to protect yourself against problems in the future.

For example, if you get a disability in the future, the insurance pays for the cost of your supports and services.



Scheme is a type of government program.

What does the NDIS do?



The NDIS pays for support and services for people with disability.

Supports and services can include:



- help with daily life



- aids and equipment



- help to meet your goals and do the things you want to do.



We think that it's better if people can get services and support:

- as early as possible in their lives
- when they first get a disability.



This is called **early intervention**.



It can apply to both children and adults.



Not everyone with disability can get the NDIS.



So the NDIS helps people with disability to find and use other services too.

We explain who can use the NDIS on page 14.

Who works on the NDIS?

National Disability Insurance Agency



The NDIS is run by the National Disability Insurance Agency.



We call it the NDIA.



The NDIA is a part of the Australian Government.



It was set up according to the law.



The law that applies is called the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*.

Partners in the Community



Partners in the Community are community organisations that we work with.

Local Area Coordinators



Local Area Coordinators are people who work for our Partners in the Community.



We call them LACs.



They help people with disability find and use services and support.

Early Childhood Partners



Some of our partners support children with disability and their families.



We have a program for children with disability younger than 7 years old.



It's called the early childhood approach.



Early Childhood Partners help us with this program.



You can find out more about this program on our website at www.ndis.gov.au.

Support Coordinators



Support Coordinators are people who help people with disability plan and use their supports.

How do you find an Early Childhood Partner or LAC?

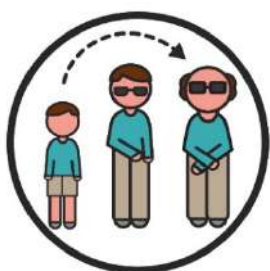
You can visit our website at www.ndis.gov.au or call **1800 800 110**.

Who can take part in the NDIS?



If someone can take part in the NDIS, we say that they are **eligible**.

To be eligible, you must have a disability that is:



- **permanent** – it won't go away



- **significant** – it affects the way you live your day-to-day life.

↓ 65



You must be under 65 years old.



You must live in Australia.

You need to be 1 of these:



- a citizen
- a permanent resident
- a holder of a Protected Special Category visa.



People who use the NDIS usually need support to live their day-to-day life.

This support might be:



- help from other people, like a carer



- products or technology



- changes to their home.



Some people can get help now to reduce the help they need later in life.

And some people need help to:



- learn new skills



- reach their goals.

Are you eligible for the NDIS?

You can visit our website at www.ndis.gov.au and complete the checklist to find out.

If you are eligible, you can apply.

We explain how to apply on the next page.

How do you apply for the NDIS?



If you think you are eligible to use the NDIS, you can apply.



There is a form you need to fill out.



We call it an Access Request.



You can get this form on our website at www.ndis.gov.au



Or you can get it at an NDIS office near you.



You can search for the office that is closest to you on our [website](#).

You can apply for:



- yourself



- your child



- someone else if you are their **legal representative.**



A legal representative is someone who supports another person with legal decisions.

What if you need help?



You can ask for help to apply.



A family member, friend or other support person may be able to help you.

An NDIS office near you can find someone to help you apply, such as a:



- Early Childhood Partner



- LAC.

Information you need to include



You need to tell us about yourself when you apply for the NDIS.

We need to know:



- your name



- your age



- your address

We need to know whether you are:



- an Australian citizen
- a permanent resident
- a holder of a Protected Special Category visa.

We also need to know:



- what kind of disability you have



- how your disability affects your day-to-day life.



You need to show us evidence that you have a disability.



This evidence might be a letter or report from your doctor or other health care provider.



Please make sure you keep your own copy of this information.



You'll also need to tell us that it's ok to talk to your doctor or health care provider about your disability.

You need to send this information to us.

You can:



- send the information in an email to:
enquiries@ndis.gov.au



- post the information to:
GPO Box 700
Canberra ACT 2601



- take the information to your local NDIS office.

What happens next?



Once we receive your form and information, we will read it.



We might need to ask you for more information.



Once this is done, we will tell you if you can use the NDIS.



If you can't use the NDIS, we can help you find or use other services.



Participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.

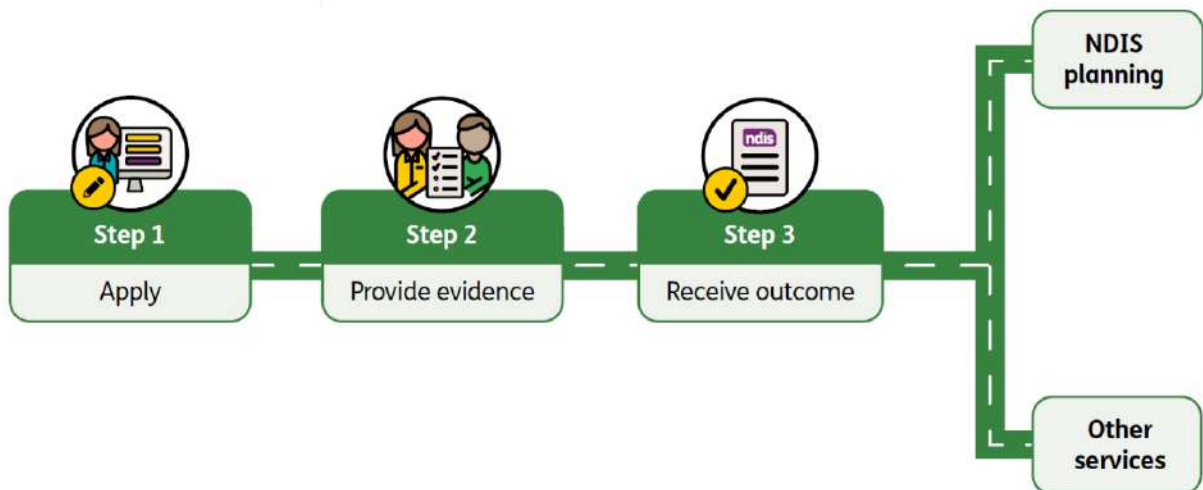


When participants start using the NDIS, they make a plan.



We explain how to make a plan in Booklet 2.

Steps to apply for the NDIS



What if you don't agree with our decision?



If you don't agree with a decision we make, you can ask for a review.



Your LAC, Early Childhood Partner or the NDIA can explain how to do this.



If you're still not happy after the review, you can contact the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).



The AAT reviews government decisions.

You can:



- call them on **1800 228 333.**



- visit their website at **www.aat.gov.au**

What does the NDIS pay for?



The NDIS pays for services and support for people with disability.

The services and support must be:



- **reasonable** – something that is fair



- **necessary** – something that a person needs.

The services and support should also:



- be good value for money



- work well for you



- work well with any help or support you get from other people or places, like family and friends.



The NDIS doesn't pay for day-to-day living costs, like rent or groceries.

And it's different to other payments you might get, such as:



- the **Disability Support Pension (DSP)** – a payment from the government to help with your day-to-day living costs



- **compensation** – money you might receive if you have an accident.



The NDIS will not affect your DSP or any compensation payments you might receive.

What about families and carers?



Most NDIS supports and services are for people with disability.



But some supports and services can also be helpful for families and carers.



Some families get extra help with day-to-day support.

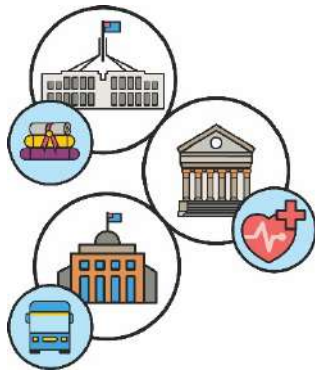


And some families use **respite** services.



This is when they take a break from caring for someone with disability.

What about other government services?



The NDIS works together with other government services.

This includes:



- education – school, university and TAFE



- health – hospitals and health care



- employment – finding and keeping a job



- family support – keeping children safe and supporting families in need.

Education



The education system pays for:

- teachers
- equipment
- buildings
- transport to activities and excursions.

The NDIS pays for the support you might need to take part in education, such as:



- support with day-to-day activities, like eating or getting around
- special equipment or technology
- training for teachers about your needs.

Health



The health system pays for:

- doctors, nurses and other staff
- medical, dental and hospital care
- medication and treatment.

The NDIS pays for health care you may need because of your disability, including:



- therapy
- technology you may need
- wheelchairs and equipment.

Employment

Employers and the government pay for:



- changes at your work to help you do your job



- help to find a job if that's what you need.

The NDIS pays for support to help you reach your employment goals. This might include:



- technology you may need, such as screen readers



- help to build your skills



- support while you are at work.

Family support

The family support system pays for:



- helping children in need



- services to support families, such as counselling.

The NDIS pays for the support a family might need because of disability. This can include:



- therapy or support



- changes to a home.

More information

For more information about this booklet,
please contact us.



www.ndis.gov.au



1800 800 110



Follow us on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/NDISAus

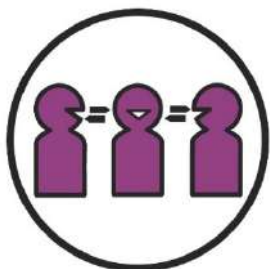


Follow us on Twitter.

[@NDIS](https://twitter.com/NDIS)

Support to talk to us

If you speak a language other than English,
you can call:



Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

131 450

If you have a speech or hearing impairment,
you can call:



TTY

1800 555 677



Speak and Listen

1800 555 727



National Relay Service

133 677

www.relayservice.gov.au

What you can expect

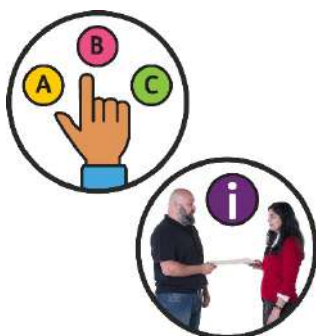


Our Participant Service Charter explains what you can expect from the NDIS.



We want participants to have a good experience when they use the NDIS.

You can expect us to do things on time, including:



- making decisions
- giving you information.



You can find more information on our website at www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/policies/service-charter

Word list



Compensation

Compensation is money you might have received if you had an accident.



Coronavirus

Coronavirus is a virus that has affected many people around the world.



Disability Support Pension (DSP)

The Disability Support Pension is a payment from the government to help with your day-to-day living costs.



Early intervention

Early intervention is when people get services and support:

- as early as possible in their lives
- when they first get a disability.



Eligible

If someone can take part in the NDIS, we say that they are eligible.



Legal representative

A legal representative is someone who supports another person with legal decisions.



Local Area Coordinators

Local Area Coordinators are people who work for our Partners in the Community.



Necessary

When something is necessary, it is something that a person needs.



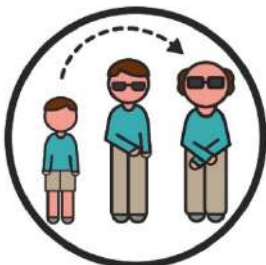
Participant

People who can use the NDIS are called participants.



Partners in the Community

Partners in the Community are people who work for community organisations.



Permanent

When something is permanent it won't go away.



Reasonable

When something is reasonable it is fair.



Respite

When someone takes a break from caring for someone with disability, it is called respite.



Significant

When something is significant it affects the way you live your day-to-day life.



Support Coordinators

Support Coordinators are people who help people with disability plan and use their supports.



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