

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Social Services Portfolio
2014-15 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 1

Question No: 318

Topic: Disability Support Pension Reviews

Hansard Page: 04/06/2014 CA 118

Senator Moore asked:

Can the Department please provide what the current review process is for DSP, how often they are reviewed and what stimulates a review? Also can the Department provide what the enhanced process is, how is it going to operate?

Answer:

Current DSP review process

Reviews are not automatic. DSP recipients may be subject to a review process. This is normally brought about by changes in circumstances such as earnings, assets, or updated medical information. DSP medical reviews are not undertaken more than once in a two year period.

DSP recipients may be subject to a review as part of the Random Sample Survey (RSS) or service profiling reviews. The RSS reviews provide assurance of the integrity of social security outlays and identify current and emerging risks associated with incorrect payments. Service profiling reviews select DSP recipients on the basis of risk factors. These reviews include reviews of income and assets, medical reviews and non-declaration of earnings.

DSP recipients may be required to provide details about their medical condition and work ability. Red tape reduction measures introduced by the Department of Human Services currently ensure that only those DSP recipients chosen for a medical review who supply evidence that their medical condition has improved progress to a full Job Capacity Assessment.

Review process for 2014-15 Budget measure to review certain DSP recipients aged under 35

From 1 July 2014 over 18 months, targeted one-off reviews will be undertaken of DSP recipients aged under 35 with a work capacity of 8 hours or more per week who were granted between 2008 and 2011. A comprehensive review of their qualification will be undertaken under the current qualification criteria, including the revised Impairment Tables and work capacity criteria. An estimated 28,000 DSP recipients will be affected.

The reviews are being conducted by appropriately qualified allied health professionals employed by the Department of Human Services. DSP recipients selected for review under this measure will need to provide current medical evidence about their medical conditions. This will include a report from the person's treating doctor and any other supporting medical evidence. On provision of this medical evidence, a Job Capacity Assessment will be undertaken to determine an impairment rating and work capacity, identify any barriers to participation and recommend interventions. Based on this assessment, ongoing qualification for DSP will be determined.