

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM0764_15

Senator Collins provided in writing.

Question

Work for the Dole/Newstart payments

The 2014-15 Budget provides that new jobseekers under 30 will have to wait up to six months before receiving unemployment benefits, and will then have to participate in Work for the Dole - Given that Work for the Dole obligations will therefore coincide with Newstart payments, will Work for the Dole only be mandatory where Newstart payments are being received? - Will Work for the Dole obligations continue during the entire 6 month period where Newstart payments are being received? - Can a job seeker elect to undertake Work for the Dole obligations prior to being unemployed for 6 months in order to gain access to payments sooner? o If not, why not?

Answer

Those job seekers subject to the Stronger Participation Incentives for Job Seekers aged Under 30 will be required to participate in Work for the Dole for 6 months to be eligible to receive Youth Allowance (other) or Newstart Allowance. This payment period follows an initial 6 month waiting period when they will receive no income support (unless they had their waiting period shortened for prior employment history).

A job seeker can choose to voluntarily participate in Work for the Dole during this initial 6 month period however, they will not receive income support during this waiting period (unless they had their waiting period shortened for prior employment history). The job seeker will need to continue undertaking Work for the Dole for the full six months after the initial six month waiting period to be eligible for income support.

The waiting payment period is intended to encourage job seekers to find employment rather than to participate in other activities such as Work for the Dole.