

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

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

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM0798_15

Senator Siewert provided in writing.

Question

Work for the Dole - Under 30s

Please advise how the new requirement for participation in Work for the Dole by people under 30 years on unemployment payments will be implemented: (a) Will all people in the target group (e.g. those unemployed for 6 months) be referred in the first instance to Work for the Dole or will there be a range of possible mutual obligation activities? (b) How many hours a week will people be required to participate in Work for the Dole, and in what circumstances will they vary? (c) Will the JSA provider make referrals to Work for the Dole and will participants be required to maintain contact with the JSA provider and have job search requirements? (d) How will the Work for the Dole coordinators be funded? What is the average level of funding and what inputs or outcomes will be funded? (e) Will vocational or other training be provided? (f) If participants are engaged in work that is similar to paid employment, will they be paid accordingly? (g) Will participants receive assistance with expenses associated with participation?

Answer

- a) Subject to the passage of legislation, from 1 July 2015, work ready job seekers aged under 30 years who are in receipt of Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance (other) or Special Benefit will be required to participate in six months of Work for the Dole after six months of unemployment.
- b) From 1 July 2015 all job ready job seekers under 30 years of age will be required to participate in Work for the Dole for 25 hours per week. As this measure applies only to fully work ready job seekers, the hours cannot be varied unless the job seekers circumstances change.
- c) A job seeker will be referred to a Work for the Dole placement by their employment services provider. While participating in a Work for the Dole placement, a job seeker will be serviced by their employment services provider and will be required to look for work, attend any required appointments with their employment services provider and attend job interviews.
- d) \$5.2 million has been provided in the 2014-15 Budget for Work for the Dole Coordinators. The Government is considering funding for Work for the Dole Coordinators as part of the arrangements for Employment Services 2015.

- e) Training within a Work for the Dole activity will only be offered to participants if it forms part of or is required by the Work for the Dole activity. Examples of acceptable training include: work, health and safety training, 'on the job' training related to the placement, and the use of tools and equipment to be used in the placement.
- f) Job seekers participating in Work for the Dole are not considered as employees and will receive income support payments.
- g) Job seekers participating in Work for the Dole are paid a supplement of \$20.80 per fortnight to assist them meet the additional costs of participation in the activity.