

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2005-2006 BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING  
30 ,31 MAY and 3 JUNE 2005**

**EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Outcome 3: Increased workforce participation**

**Output Group 3.1: Working age policy**

**Outputs 3.1.1: Working Age Policy and Legislation**

**Question Number: W182-06**

**Question:**

Senator Wong provided in writing:

Please confirm earlier advice that under 'Welfare to Work', parents and people with disabilities will have an activity requirement of 150 hours, in addition to part-time work requirements. Please explain whether a lack of childcare will mitigate this requirement.

**Answer:**

From 1 July 2006, people with disabilities who are able to work 15-29 hours per week at award wages in the open labour market with up to two years of assistance will be assessed for Newstart Allowance. Participation requirements for these people will depend on individual circumstances, including current work capacity. People will be required to:

- a) work at least 15 hours per week; or
- b) participate in recommended services or programmes, including looking for work of at least 15 hours per week where appropriate; or
- c) look for work of at least 15 hours per week.

People with disabilities who have partial work capacity and are working 15 hours or more per week or participating in specialist services will satisfy their participation requirements and will not have to undertake any additional activities. People who are required to look for work of at least 15 hours per week, have been in receipt of Newstart for six months or more and are not participating in specialist services will have annual Mutual Obligation requirements of 150 hours over six months in addition to looking for work.

Parents on Newstart Allowance or Parenting Payment (grandfathered) with youngest child aged 6 or over (and following the grace period for grandfathered PP recipients) will be required to:

- a) work at least 15 hours per week; or
- b) participate in appropriate services and programs (for example Job Network services including Employment Preparation) and look for work of at least 15 hours per week; or
- c) look for work of at least 15 hours per week.

Parents who are required to look for work and have been in receipt of Newstart for six months or more, or who have accessed employment services for six months or more and their grace period has ended (grandfathered PP recipients), will also have a part-time Mutual Obligation requirement of 150 hours over six months.

Part-time annual Mutual Obligation activities for parents will be held at family friendly times. During school holidays, family circumstances such as caring responsibilities and/or the availability of suitable vacation child care will be taken into consideration when determining participation requirements during these periods.

In addition, parents with part-time work requirements will not be expected to take up work if that work is to occur outside school hours and no suitable child care is available, or the cost of care would result in a very low or negative financial gain from working. Similarly, they will not face any penalties if they are unable to meet their participation requirements because their child is sick.