

Disability Employment Program (DEP)

Guidelines for Agencies and Providers



Providing employment, training and development opportunities for people with diverse abilities

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Acronyms	Full form
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Sector
OCPE	Office of the Commissioner of Public Employment
DEP	Disability Employment Program
DES	Disability Employment Services
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
PSEMA	Public Sector Employment and Management Act

Contents

- 1. Context.....4**
- 2. Definitions.....4**
- 3. The Program5**
 - 3.1 Purpose.....5
 - 3.2 Eligibility5
 - 3.3 Key Dates.....5
 - 3.4 Duration of Employment6
 - 3.5 Employment Hours6
 - 3.6 OCPE Funding.....6
- 4 Program Management.....7**
 - 4.1 Roles and Responsibilities.....7
 - 4.2 NTG Agency Application.....8
 - 4.3 Training and Development Plan8
 - 4.4 Matching and Application Process.....8
 - 4.5 Induction of DEP Participants.....8
 - 4.6 Induction of Supervisors and Team members8
 - 4.7 Workplace Adjustments.....9
 - 4.8 Ongoing Employment.....9
 - 4.9 Payment.....9
- 5 Program Evaluation.....9**
- 6 Records and Reporting9**
- 7 Further Information9**
- Appendix A: Request for Funding..... 10**
- Appendix B: List of DES Providers..... 12**
- Appendix C: Program Timeline 13**
- Appendix D: Recruitment Checklist for DEP Supervisor..... 14**

1. Context

The Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) is dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce, while creating employment pathways for people with different abilities. Since 1994, the Disability Employment Program (DEP) has supported this goal by funding employment opportunities for people of all abilities through an annual levy.

The NTPS [EmployAbility Strategy 2024-2027](#) commits to increasing the representation of people with diverse abilities, the DEP is vital in achieving the target and encouraging inclusivity, and accessibility within the NTPS. The Disability Employment Program (DEP) is a core component of the EmployAbility Strategy and Agency participation in the program satisfies a number of agencies' obligations under the Strategy.

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
Participant	For this program, a participant is a person with disability assessed by a DES Provider, who is deemed eligible for employment under the DEP.
Agency	The NTG department where the DEP participant will be working.
OCPE	The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment is the Agency responsible for overseeing and providing funding for the DEP.
DES Provider	DES operate under the federal government's Department of Social Services. DES providers offer flexible support to both employers and employees, or separately with the employees. The support available from a DES provider may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face support • Advice on job redesign • Comprehensive workplace assessments • Workplace modifications or provision of special equipment • Support in the workplace to help manage the impact of the disability. • Interventions such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, pain management or psychological counselling A list of NT DES providers is available in Appendix B .
DEP positions	Participants are employed in entry level positions for the duration of their DEP contract. They receive full award wages and employment conditions corresponding to their position, which may be classified as Administrative Officer 2, Physical 2, or Technical 1 or 2, depending on the role offered.
Employment Contract	An employment contract is a legal document through which the employee is offered and accepts employment in the NTPS for a specified period. The contract includes details such as the designation (level), employment dates (start and end dates), and the remuneration package. Additional unique terms relevant to the employment may also be included. DEP Participants are employed under Determination 2 of 2015 .

Term	Definition
Training and Development Plan	A Training and Development plan is prepared by the participant's supervisor and outlines specific workplace tasks aimed at developing the participant's skills and capabilities throughout the program.
Disability	<p>The NTPS follows the World Health Organisation's definition of disability.</p> <p><i>A person with disability has long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment/s which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Disability may be present from birth, acquired due to illness or accident, or come about progressively as we age.</i></p>

3. The Program

3.1 Description

The Disability Employment Program (DEP) has been operating since 1994 with all agencies contributing annually through an apportioned levy. This levy is used to fund the direct wage costs of agencies that employ people through the DEP. Participants are employed with a particular agency under [Determination 2 of 2015](#) to undertake duties or tasks considered suitable for an entry level position.

3.2 Purpose

The DEP aims to:

- Provide temporary employment, skill development, and workplace exposure to eligible individuals who have faced barriers to employment due to their disability.
- Address the under representation of Equal Employment Opportunity groups in the NTPS.
- Create pathways for DEP participants to transition into ongoing employment.

3.2 Eligibility

Applicants for the DEP must:

- Be an Australian citizen, hold Australian permanent residency status or an appropriate visa;
- Have a disability;
- Be registered with a DES provider; and
- Be new to the DEP - Have not previously held a contract on the DEP.

3.3 Key Dates

Disability Employment Program (DEP)



The detailed Program Timeline is available in **Appendix C**.

3.4 Duration of Employment

The DEP provides temporary employment opportunities, up to a maximum of **two years** to people with disabilities who are unable to compete for jobs based on merit. Participants are employed with a particular agency and undertake duties suitable for entry level positions. Participants are employed under [Determination 2 of 2015](#).

3.5 Employment Hours

The number of hours the participant works per week is negotiated between the NTG Agency, the DES Provider and the participant. The agreed hours must be approved by OCPE before offering employment as funding for the DEP is limited.

Participants should work enough hours to benefit from the opportunity and develop their workplace skills. Agencies have discretion in determining the minimum hours based on the participant's capacity and agency needs. Working more than 30 hours per week may affect any Centrelink payments the participant receives.

3.6 OCPE Funding

OCPE advances payments to the host agency in 12 monthly instalments or in alignment with the financial year. These payments cover the direct wage costs of employing participants under the DEP. Agencies are responsible for managing these funds and ensuring participants receive their fortnightly wages. Acquittal of funding is required at the end of the financial year, and unused funds do not carry over to the next year.

The funding from OCPE includes:

- Full award wage and employment conditions of an entry level position (e.g. Administrative Officer 2, Physical 2 or Technical 1/2).
- Actual salary plus 21% of on-costs to cover associated allowances (e.g. NT Allowance), payroll tax and employer superannuation contributions.
- In addition, up to **\$1000¹** per participant for training and development activities.

Direct wage costs **do not** cover:

- Higher duties allowance,
- Accommodation,
- Consumables, office stationery and general expenses,
- Information technology charges, hardware, and software expenses,
- Other equipment expenses, including workplace adjustment equipment.

¹ Training funds are determined by OCPE on an annual basis.

4. Program Management

The DEP guideline outlines clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders, including NTG agencies, DES Providers, and OCPE. It is important to note that while OCPE manages the DEP funding and overall process, it **does not** get involved in matching participants to positions, providing counselling, making placements, or handling other employment-related matters concerning DEP participants.

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

NTG Agency	DES Provider	OCPE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify positions for the current intake and seek OCPE funding approval. • Manage the employment of the DEP participant, including coordinating the employment contract and providing an induction. • Upon confirmation of funding, liaise with local DES Providers to identify potential candidates and arrange necessary support throughout the placement. • Develop a Training and Development plan with the participant and submit it to OCPE within four weeks of commencement. • Notify OCPE and the participant of any ongoing employment opportunities before the program ends. • Explore solutions for ongoing employment or assist the participant in transitioning to other roles. • Participate in the program evaluation and focus groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the NTG Agency to identify and address the support needs of the participant. • Assist in designing accessible and suitable job roles for employees with disabilities. • Support contract discussions and finalisation for DEP participants, ensuring timely return to the relevant Agency contact. • Assist with the Agency’s induction process to ensure the new employee integrates smoothly into their role and workplace. • Provide training and awareness activities for employers and colleagues. • Offer ongoing support to both the participant and the workplace as needed. • Participate in program evaluation and focus groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide program information to NTG Agencies. • Provide program information to DES Providers. • Manage the DEP Budget. • Assess placement requests based on available funding. • Administer funding to Agencies. • Lead the program evaluation and reporting efforts.

4.2 NTG Agency Application

Agencies seeking DEP funding must complete the **DEP Request for Funding** form (see **Appendix A**).

A Recruitment Checklist for new DEP supervisor is available in **Appendix D**.

At the end of the financial year, an acquittal process for the funding will be conducted. If funding allows, extensions of placements may be approved.

4.3 Training and Development Plan

During the employment period, participants are expected to engage in training and development opportunities suited to their capabilities. **A Training and Development Plan is required as a condition of DEP funding**, ensuring that structured skills development occurs tailored to each participant. The plan should be developed no later than four weeks after the participant starts their role. OCPE will request a copy of this plan as part of the four-week reporting process and assist in its development.

While most training needs for entry-level employees will be provided in-house, funding of up to \$1,000² per participant is available from OCPE to support additional training and development activities. Agencies can contact DES Providers and OCPE to explore available training options.

4.4 Matching and Application Process

Once NTG Agencies have identified suitable positions and have received approval of funding, they will contact local DES Providers to explore potential candidates. Agencies will supply information regarding the position and application process to DES providers and DES providers will identify the most suitable candidate. The process for matching people to positions may vary between agencies.

The DEP Provider is required to liaise directly with the relevant NTG Agency for application requirements.

4.5 Induction of DEP Participants

Induction into the workplace should be undertaken in conjunction with the participant's DES Provider. This is an opportunity to ensure that the participant settles into employment with support and understands the expectations of their role. It is also a good opportunity for the supervisor to understand the individual needs of the participant and to consider reasonable adjustments to support the participant to perform their role. Ensure to make any standard agency induction processes accessible for a person with disability ensuring the new employee is familiarised with the workplace environment, facilities, team members and procedures of the agency. The DES Provider can provide ongoing support in the workplace for the participant, if required.

4.6 Induction of Supervisors and Team members

A successful DEP relies on ensuring that managers, supervisors, and colleagues are properly briefed on the new employee and understand any necessary adjustments. Disability awareness training is an effective way to prepare staff for working with employees with disabilities in a supportive and inclusive manner. Free online disability confidence training is available on [MyLearning](#), offering courses such as:

- The [Disability Confident Managers](#) course - for managers, supervisors and leaders.
- The [Disability Confident Workforces](#) course - for all team members.

² Training funds are determined by OCPE on an annual basis.

Further information including the Australian Network on Disability's Manager's Guide is also available on [NTG Central](#). OCPE encourages managers to contact other DEP supervisors across the NTPS to facilitate networking opportunities and requests. DES Providers can also provide further support by delivering disability awareness sessions to supervisors, managers and work teams if required.

4.7 Workplace Adjustments

Agencies should work with DES Providers to make reasonable adjustments if needed to accommodate a DEP participant.

OCPE has developed a Workplace Adjustment Policy, guidelines, and supporting documentation are available on [NTG Central](#) to assist supervisors in making these adjustments confidently. Additional resources are also available on NTG Central. For queries about workplace adjustments, contact your HR department.

Potential funding and further advice are available through the Australian Government initiative, [JobAccess](#). Your participant's DES Provider can offer guidance and information on the assistance provided by JobAccess.

4.8 Ongoing Employment

Agencies are encouraged to offer suitable participants further employment where possible. Agencies may apply for direct appointment under the [Public Sector Employment and Management Act \(PSEMA\) s30\(1\)\(b\)](#).

4.9 Payment

Once funding is approved by OCPE, NTG Agencies must raise a Ledger Transfer Funds (LTF) request or an invoice to receive the funds. For detailed instructions, read the [guides](#) on NTG Central for the process.

5 Program Evaluation

DEP Participants and their agency supervisors will be asked to complete surveys at specific points during the program to gather feedback and continuous improvement. DES Providers will also be invited to provide their input.

OCPE will send a survey request when these evaluation points are reached and will provide further details. The evaluation process aims to gather meaningful information while minimising the time burden on stakeholders.

6 Records and Reporting

All Agencies must maintain records related to the engagement and progress of DEP participants. Reports on participant numbers, progress, and employment status will be provided to OCPE on a case-by-case basis, as required.

7 Further Information

For more information, please visit the [OCPE website](#) or contact the Strategic Workforce Planning and Development team at OCPE by phone at 8999 3708 or via email at swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au.

Appendix A: Request for Funding

This request should be completed and forwarded to the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) prior to the issuing of an offer of employment as funding is limited.

Please forward completed request to:

OCPE, Strategic Workforce Planning and Development
 Email: swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au
 Phone: 8999 3708
 Postal: GPO Box 4371, Darwin NT 0801

Host Agency Details			
Agency:			
Supervisor's Name:			
Work Unit:			
Location:		Phone:	
HR Contact		Email:	
Nomination Details			
Participant details	Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Mx <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		
	First Name:		
	Surname:		
Position details	Classification: AO2 <input type="checkbox"/> PH2 <input type="checkbox"/> PH3 <input type="checkbox"/> T1 <input type="checkbox"/> T2 <input type="checkbox"/> Other ____		
	Position title:		
Placement details	Hours Per Week:		
	Length of placement (months):		
Job Description Attached:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Training and Development Plan			
Agencies are required to provide OCPE with a copy of the Training and Development Plan for each DEP Participant no later than four (4) weeks from the date of funding approval. Please indicate if you require assistance from OCPE to develop a plan. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

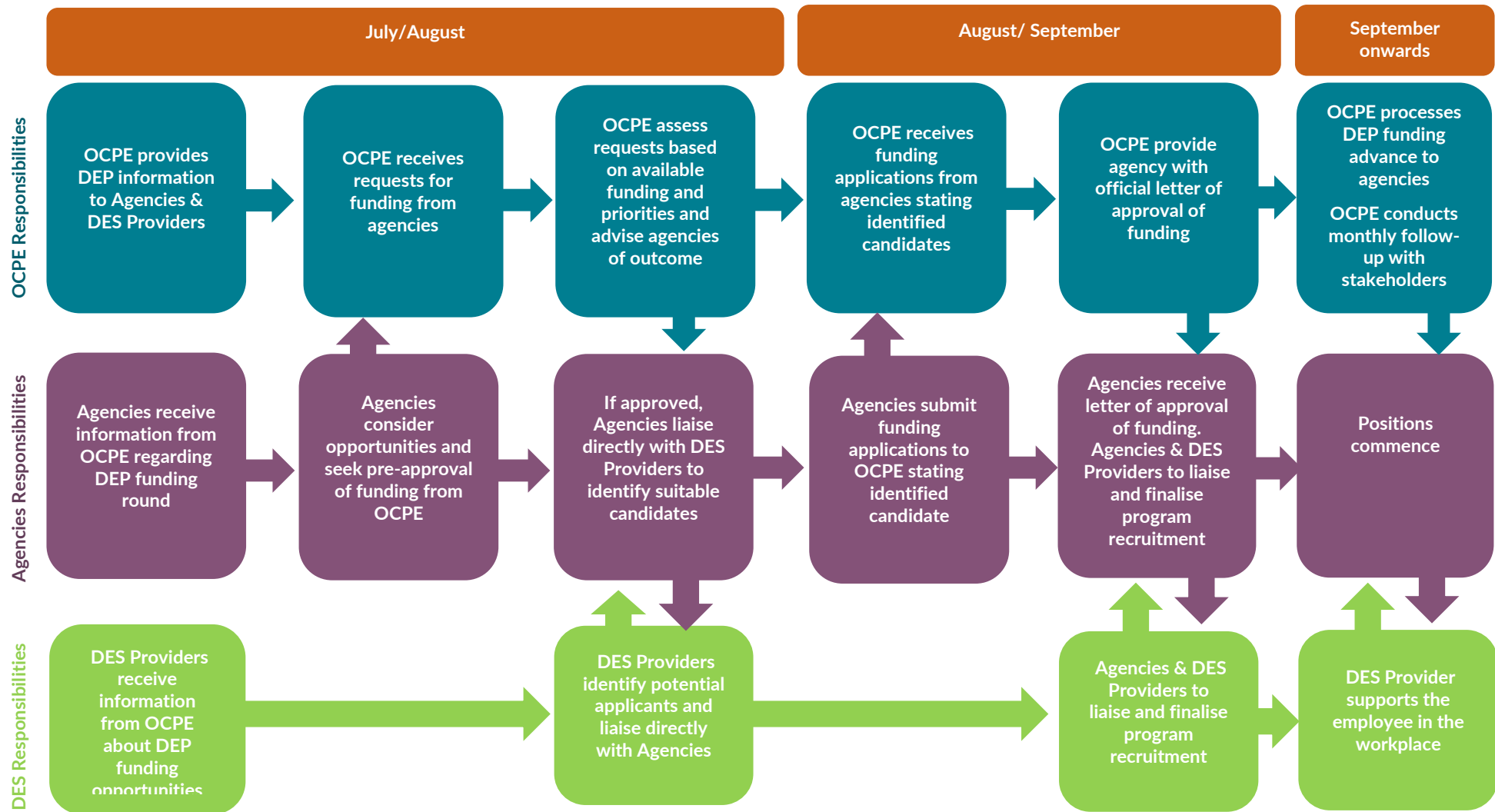
Disability Employment Services (DES) Provider			
DES Provider:			
Contact Name:			
Agency Declaration (please tick confirming the following)			
The nominee meets the eligibility criteria under the DEP			<input type="checkbox"/>
The nominee has not previously received funding under the DEP, including in another agency			<input type="checkbox"/>
The manager has completed the Disability Confident Managers eLearn and encouraged team members to also complete the training.			<input type="checkbox"/>
The manager has read the following documents and is aware of, and agrees to, their obligations under this program.			<input type="checkbox"/>
The DEP Guidelines (attached to this form)			
The EmployAbility Strategy			<input type="checkbox"/>
Determination 2 of 2015			<input type="checkbox"/>
Signed:			
Office Use Only			
Nomination/s received at OCPE			
Nomination meets Eligibility Criteria	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Comment:	
Approved:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Comment:	
Agreed Salary:		Contract Dates:	
		Hours per week:	
Approved Program Manager		Date:	
Approved Senior Director SWPD		Date:	

Appendix B: List of DES Providers

Visit the Northern Territory [DES provider search page](#) on JobAccess.

Provider Name	Contract details	Region
Advance Personnel Management (APM) Employment Services	e: Jennifer.Morris@apm.net.au e: apm4jobs@apm.net.au Ph: 1800 276 276 w: www.apm.net.au	Darwin City Casuarina Palmerston City Alice Springs
AimBig Employment	e: CHoltze@aimbigemployment.com.au e: info@aimbigemployment.com.au Ph: 1300 034 997 w: www.aimbigemployment.com.au	Palmerston
MAX Employment Solutions	e: alicesprings@maxemployment.com.au Ph: 1800 625 350 w: www.maxsolutions.com.au	Casuarina Palmerston Alice Springs
Mission Australia	e: NeiblingA@missionaustralia.com.au e: adminnt@missionaustralia.com.au Ph: 8935 0916 w: www.missionaustralia.com.au	Darwin City Casuarina Palmerston
STEPS Employment Solutions	e: alicesprings@stepsgroup.com.au Ph: 8950 7600 w: www.stepsemploymentsolutions.com.au	Alice Springs
Wise Employment Ltd	e: Sharna.Rowley@wiseemployment.com.au e: Samantha.Allen@wiseemployment.com.au e: DES.NT@wiseemployment.com.au Ph: 1800 685 105 w: www.wiseemployment.com.au	Darwin City Casuarina Palmerston

Appendix C: Program Timeline



Appendix D: Recruitment Checklist for DEP Supervisor

The DEP recruitment process is divided into five stages: Identifying potential positions, sourcing and selecting suitable candidates, offer of employment and induction of new employee.



This checklist is designed to assist new DEP supervisors in understanding and navigating the DEP recruitment cycle.

DEP PARTICIPANT NAME	
SUPERVISOR NAME	
IDENTIFY STAFFING NEED	ACTIONED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a gap in staffing that requires entry level assistance. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a job brief for the position. Do not use a job description, only note the essential requirements of the role, the daily responsibilities and what it should achieve in the next 12 months. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the job brief with your colleagues to ensure the team understands what the participant will be responsible for on a day-to-day basis. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request pre-approval of DEP funding from OCPE via email to swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au (as DEP budget is limited). Once approved, funding can be reserved for a reasonable period. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the free online MyLearning courses on Disability Confidence Training and support immediate team members to also complete the training. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
SOURCING	ACTIONED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact a DES Provider (a list of DES Providers is available in Appendix B of the DEP Guidelines for Agencies). 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the job brief to the DES Provider and discuss requirements of the role. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess skills and suitability of identified candidates 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss any workplace adjustments that may be required. Refer to the Workplace Adjustment resources for further information. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss and negotiate hours candidate can work. Note: Hours must be confirmed by OCPE prior to offering employment. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

SELECTION	ACTIONED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a Request for Funding application in Appendix A of the DEP Guidelines for Agencies 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send completed form to OCPE at swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au for final approval 	<input type="checkbox"/>
OFFER	ACTIONED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once funding is approved, advise DES Provider and participant of job offer 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a contract request (Non-Advertised RTF) in e-Recruit under Determination 2 of 2015 for the contract period approved by OCPE 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate workplace support with DES Provider 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Training and Development Plan with DEP Participant 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a copy of the Training and Development Plan to OCPE within four weeks of commencement 	<input type="checkbox"/>
INDUCTION	ACTIONED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure supervisors, managers and team members are suitably briefed on the new employee and have completed Disability Confidence Training 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask DES Provider to assist in the induction process - Provide workplace induction as you would any employee being mindful of any workplace adjustments that may be required 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up weekly meetings with DEP Participant to support their transition into the role and track their progress 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further information

For queries, please contact swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au