2019 NTPS
Disability Employment Program
Guidelines for DES Providers

Providing entry level employment, training and development opportunities for people with disability
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Introduction

The Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) recognises the advantages of having a workforce that reflects and draws on the full diversity of the community it serves and is committed to increasing employment opportunities for people with disability within the Northern Territory.

The NTPS EmployAbility Strategy 2018-2022 commits the NTPS to increase the representation of people with disability in the NTPS staffing profile as well as nurturing an inclusive workplace culture, promoting accessibility and supporting skills acquisition and career development for people with disability. The Disability Employment Program (DEP) has been operating since 1994 and is a core component of the EmployAbility Strategy 2018-2022.

Definitions

Participant: For the purpose of this program, a participant is a person with a disability who has been assessed by a Disability Employment Service (DES) Provider and deemed eligible for employment under the DEP.

Agency: The Northern Territory Government (NTG) department where the DEP participant will be working.

OCPE: The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment is the Agency that oversees and monitors the delivery of the DEP.

Employment Contract: A legal document in which the employee is offered, and accepts, employment in the NTPS for a specified period. The contract details the designation (level), employment dates (start date / end date) and remuneration package. There may be other unique information relevant to the employment.

Training and Development plan: A training plan is completed by the supervisor and identifies tasks in the workplace which are aimed towards developing the participant for the duration of the program.

The Program

Purpose

The DEP aims to:

- Provide temporary employment for eligible people with disability to support increased skill acquisition and workplace exposure;
- Address the under representation of EEO groups in the NTPS; and
- Provide pathways into ongoing employment for DEP participants

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for employment under the DEP, participants must:
- Be an Australian citizen, hold Australian permanent residency status or an appropriate visa;
- Have a disability;
- Be registered with a Disability Employment Service (DES); and
- Be new to the NTPS – having not previously been employed on the DEP or in the NTPS.

Suitability of potential participants should be considered by DES providers taking into account the individual’s skills, desires and support requirements. It is important to note that participation is not limited to people with intellectual disability. The program is open to all eligible people seeking employment through a DES provider.

**Key dates**

In early June, information will be provided to DES Providers and NTG agencies regarding the upcoming intake. During this period, NTG agencies will identify appropriate positions, and contact local DES providers regarding potential opportunities to fill those positions.

It is envisaged that positions will commence in or after July, depending on available positions.

**Duration of employment**

Successful participants are offered a temporary employment contract for an initial 12 months with a view to extend for a further 12 months (maximum 2 years) where they will undertake duties or tasks considered suitable for an entry level position. Participants are employed under the Public Sector Determination 2 of 2015.

The number of positions available each year varies, depending on employment needs of NTG agencies involved in the program and available funding.

**Hours**

Ideally, a participant needs to work enough hours to benefit from the opportunity and develop their workplace skills. Agency discretion is applied to the minimum hours the DEP participant works taking into account the participant’s capacity and the agency’s need. The maximum hours a participant may work is 30 hours per week to ensure protection of any Centrelink funding the participant may receive.
The number of hours the participant works per week, is negotiation between the NTG Agency, the DES Provider and the participant. The agreed hours must be approved by OCPE prior to offering employment as funding for the DEP is limited.

Salary
Participants in the DEP receive the full award wage and employment conditions of an entry level position (e.g. Administrative Officer 1 or 2; Physical 1, 2 or 3 or Technical 1 or 2) depending on the position offered.

Program Management

How the program works
The DEP is overseen by The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) and each year, OCPE provides information to NTG Agencies and DES Providers about the upcoming intake.

Once Agencies have identified positions for the current intake, they will seek approval of funding from OCPE before liaising with local DES providers to see if there are potential candidates for the positions. DES Providers then support the potential applicant/s to complete the application requirements and return these to the relevant Agency contact person by the closing date. Application processes are determined by each Agency and may vary.

Roles and responsibilities
Once participants are placed, the following roles and responsibilities apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NTG Agency</th>
<th>DES Provider</th>
<th>OCPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Manage employment of participant</td>
<td>• Liaise with NTG Agency regarding support needs of participant/s</td>
<td>• Provision of program information to NTG Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liaise with DES Provider regarding supports for the employee in the workplace for the duration of the placement</td>
<td>• Support job design for employees with disability</td>
<td>• Provision of program information to DES Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a training and development plan with the participant</td>
<td>• Provide training information and awareness activities for employers and colleagues</td>
<td>• Assessment and approval of placements based on available funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advise at the conclusion of the placement period regarding potential for ongoing employment</td>
<td>• Provide assistance with contract discussions and finalisation for DEP participants</td>
<td>• Administration of funding for DEP placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participate in program evaluation</td>
<td>• Provide support with induction process to ensure new employee</td>
<td>• Lead program evaluation and reporting</td>
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</table>
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 new employee 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. The DES Provider can also deliver disability awareness sessions to supervisors, managers and work teams and provide ongoing support to the participant, should they request it.

Training and development

It is a condition of the program that each Agency develops a Training and Development Plan in partnership with the participant. The participant and/or the supervisor may require support by the DES Provider through this process. Funding is available to support training and development of the participant during employment on the DEP.

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 and DES Providers will identify the most suitable candidate. The process for matching people to positions may vary between agencies. Please liaise directly with the relevant NTG Agency for application requirements.

Conclusion of program

At the conclusion of the program employment period, host agencies are strongly encouraged to offer ongoing employment to the participant if a suitable position is available and the participant has demonstrated the ability to undertake the core duties of the role. If a position is available, the Agency will negotiate with the participant and DES Provider in relation to ongoing conditions of employment, such as work hours.

Further Information

For further information, please visit the OCPE Website or contact the Strategic Workforce Planning and Development team in OCPE via phone 08 8999 3708 or email swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au.