

Back to Work Jobseeker Support Pool

Funding Guidelines

Effective 1 July 2024

Introduction

The Back to Work program represents a commitment to delivering targeted employment support to assist both employers and disadvantaged jobseekers in Queensland.

Evolving to meet the needs of Queenslanders, the revitalised Back to Work program focusses on intensive support for jobseekers, employers and their employees, and comprises of the following suite of initiatives:

- Employer Incentive Payments
- Growing Workforce Participation Fund
- Small Business Support Pool
- Small Business Short Courses
- Pre-Employment Support
- Jobseeker Support Pool

Overview and objectives

The Back to Work program provides the support necessary to give businesses the confidence to employ Queenslanders who have experienced a period of unemployment as well as provides the opportunity for jobseekers and those at risk of unemployment to upskill or retrain to succeed in the fast-paced environment that is the Queensland economy.

Jobseeker Support Pool

The Jobseeker Support Pool is one of the initiatives under the Back to Work program. It provides tailored assistance to disadvantaged jobseekers to secure ongoing employment and supports individuals, currently supported under Back to Work through the Employer Incentive Payments that may be at risk of becoming unemployed.

The Jobseeker Support Pool supports eligible individuals to access flexible avenues to gain soft skills, enterprise skills and job readiness skills to help them gain employment and/or stay in the workforce.

The Jobseeker Support Pool is administered by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) and delivered by TAFE Queensland in conjunction with Back to Work Jobseeker Officers and Back to Work Employer Officers.

Where will the initiative be delivered?

The Jobseeker Support Pool is available to eligible jobseekers throughout Queensland.

Who is eligible to receive support?

The Jobseeker Support Pool supports jobseekers who identify as belonging to one or more of the following target groups:

- First Nations peoples;
- people with disability;
- young people aged 15-24 years;
- the culturally and linguistically diverse; and
- long-term unemployed people (unemployed for 52 weeks or longer).

The Jobseeker Support Pool also supports individuals currently supported under Back to Work through the Employer Incentive Payments that may be at risk of becoming unemployed.

Additionally, to be eligible, applicants must live in Queensland and be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, or temporary resident with the necessary visa with appropriate work and/or study permits.



What support can be accessed?

The Jobseeker Support Pool provides support to eligible individuals on a case-by-case basis and includes support such as:

- delivery of 'soft' or 'enterprise' skills to promote job mobility and adaptive capacity
- delivery of career advice, job search techniques and job readiness skills
- delivery of foundation skills including language, literacy, and numeracy training where identified necessary
- delivery of accredited or non-accredited training packages
- delivery of financial assistance to address barriers to employment including costs associated with driving lessons, White Card, Blue Card, Yellow Card fees, short non-accredited courses aligned to job requirements, machinery tickets or other licences, funding to purchase identification (birth certificate/driver licence/18+ card), uniforms and appropriate tools and equipment relevant to the chosen career path.

Funds under the Jobseeker Support Pool cannot be used to:

- purchase assets or capital equipment (e.g. items greater than \$500)
- supplement wages.

To avoid duplication of services, funding is not available for the same services being delivered through other initiatives or programs.

How is the support accessed?

For jobseekers:

Eligible jobseekers must make contact with a Back to Work Jobseeker Officer or a Back to Work regional team member. The contact details of these Officers can be found under relevant locations on the [Back to Work website](#).

Jobseeker Officers support jobseekers through the Pre-employment Program to better understand the jobseeker's skills, aspirations, and work history. Jobseeker Officers will also undertake eligibility checks for the Jobseeker Support Pool. Where an eligible jobseeker has identified potential employment, the Jobseeker Officer liaises directly with the potential employer to understand the skills and experience needed to undertake the particular role the jobseeker may be interested in.

Jobseeker Officers support eligible jobseekers to complete an application form that details all assistance required. Only one application per jobseeker will be accepted.

The completed application form must be submitted to TAFE Queensland to arrange the provision of the support, services and/or training, as outlined in the application form.

For individuals currently supported under Back to Work:

Back to Work supported employees at risk of losing employment must make contact with a Back to Work Jobseeker Officer or a Back to Work regional team member. The contact details of these Officers can be found under relevant locations on the [Back to Work website](#)

Jobseeker Officers supports the employee through the Pre-employment Support Program to better understand their skills, aspirations, and work history (if not previously undertaken) and liaises directly with the employer to identify gaps or areas for improvement and what skills are required for the employee to be retained in their current role.

Jobseeker Officers will undertake eligibility checks for the Jobseeker Support Pool and if eligible, support the employee to complete an application form that details all the assistance required. Only one application per Back to Work supported employee will be accepted.

The completed application form must be submitted to TAFE Queensland to arrange the provision of the support, services and/or training, as outlined in the application form.

Applications for the Jobseeker Support Pool are capped at 350 or until funds under the Jobseeker Support Pool are exhausted, whichever is sooner.

How many times can support be accessed?

Eligible jobseekers and Back to Work supported employees can only access the Jobseeker Support Pool **once**.

It is expected that Back to Work Jobseeker Officers develop a comprehensive tailored plan at the Pre-Employment Support stage to ensure all barriers within the scope of this initiative will be addressed.

Support can be provided for up to 12 months per applicant, depending on the nature of the support required.

What level of funding per applicant is available?

All eligible jobseekers and supported employees will be assessed on a case-by-case basis with identified support identified specific to each individual's needs.

It is expected that the total combined support per application will not exceed \$3000, however, in certain circumstances, this may be exceeded at the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training's direction.

TAFE Queensland will seek approval from the Department where support exceeds \$3000.

Exception to eligibility

Any exception to current eligibility must be assessed through a business case. Business cases to the Department requesting exemption to eligibility must explicitly detail the service/financial support required, what extenuating circumstances lead to this service being necessary, and what other avenues have been pursued previously to obtain the services requested (and why they failed/couldn't be accessed).

It is the responsibility of the Jobseeker Officers to present these business cases to the Department for consideration.

Expected outcomes

The Jobseeker Support Pool aims to increase the employability skills of jobseekers and at-risk Back to Work supported employees and equip individuals with the skills and supports necessary to gain and maintain long-term employment.

Funding conditions

TAFE Queensland has entered into a Services Agreement with the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training to deliver the Jobseeker Support Pool until 30 June 2025.

Human Rights consideration

The intention of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Act) is to ensure every person in Queensland is treated equally and without discrimination.

Although the eligibility criteria under Back to Work is not extended to all Queenslanders and therefore may limit the rights of those that are unable to access it, this is described as reasonable and justifiable under the Act (Section 13(2)) as the intent of Back to Work aims to achieve the purpose of the Act by supporting and encouraging equitable participation across a broad range of cohorts that generally face barriers to their participation in the labour market.

More information

For more information on the Jobseeker Support Pool please contact the Back to Work team on 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or email at: backtowork@desbt.qld.gov.au.

Need help in your language?

Call 1800 512 451 and ask for an interpreter. If you require further assistance, please contact the Back to Work Team.