



Australian Government

Guideline:

New Employment Services Trial (NEST)- Stronger Transitions

The Stronger Transitions Package (Stronger Transitions) provides support to individuals, in five identified regions that have been especially impacted by structural change, to transition to new jobs and prepare for the jobs of the future. Intensive assistance includes pre-retrenchment support, provided outside New Employment Services Trial (NEST), and post-retrenchment support delivered by NEST Providers (NEST Providers).

This Guideline details the core elements and requirements for NEST Providers in managing and servicing retrenched workers who are eligible for post-retrenchment support under Stronger Transitions.

Stronger Transitions Eligible Participants (Participants) are eligible for immediate access to NEST Enhanced Services upon commencement. Any relevant Guidelines or materials that apply to NEST Enhanced Services job seekers more generally also apply to Participants, unless otherwise specified in the relevant Guidelines.

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Related documents and references

New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Direct
Registration Guideline

Using the Employment Fund General Account
Guideline

New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Eligibility Referral and Commencement Guideline

New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Managing Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job Guideline

New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Period of Service, Suspension and Exits Guideline

New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Structural Adjustment Programmes Guideline

Adelaide Region factsheet

New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Deed 2019 - 2022

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1. Registering and Commencing Stronger Transitions Participants

Directly registering Participants

Participants who are eligible under the Stronger Transitions Package can register directly with a NEST Provider. Information on registering a Participant can be found in the New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Direct Registration Guideline.

Checking eligibility on registration

When registering a Participant, a NEST Provider must ensure that the Participant is eligible for post-retrenchment support under Stronger Transitions. Participants are eligible if they:

- can produce a letter of retrenchment, which includes their date of retrenchment and their retrenching Employer
- register with a NEST Provider within nine months of their retrenchment date, (note: if the Participant has a Stronger Transitions Support Statement they can also register up to three months prior to their retrenchment date)
- they reside, or the Employer their position is to be retrenched from is located, in one of the following identified Stronger Transitions Regions:
 - Adelaide (South Australia)
 - Mandurah (Western Australia)
 - North Queensland (Queensland)
 - Melbourne North/West (Victoria)
 - North/North-West Tasmania (Tasmania)

NEST Providers should confirm region eligibility using the relevant Stronger Transitions Region factsheet. Each factsheet provides a map and list of associated postcodes or Employment Regions.

Note: Participants eligible for alternative Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) cannot register for support under Stronger Transitions, refer to New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Structural Adjustment Programme Guideline.

NEST Providers with any concerns regarding region boundaries and/or a Participant's eligibility should contact their Contract Manager or the Stronger Transitions team (StrongerTransitions@employment.gov.au).

Applying the Stronger Transitions special placement indicator on registration

Once a NEST Provider has confirmed a Participant's eligibility they must apply one of the two Stronger Transitions special placement indicators. Having two special placements is designed to assist NEST Providers to effectively Service Participants and improve data collection for reporting and evaluation purposes. See Table 1 Special placement indicators.

1. Stronger Transitions pre-retrenchment support - This placement is used when a Participant has received skills and training support under Stronger Transitions before they were retrenched. These Participants will have a

Stronger Transitions Support Statement which outlines all the support they have received so far under Stronger Transitions.

2. Stronger Transitions post-retrenchment - This placement is used for Participants who have been retrenched and have not received any Stronger Transitions support to date.

Table 1 Special placement indicators

Special placement indicator	Evidence required	Retrenchment Date Eligibility
Stronger Transitions pre-retrenchment support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy letter or separation certificate (from Employer), and • Stronger Transitions Support Statement (from employment facilitator, page 6). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 months pre-retrenchment, or • up to 9 months post-retrenchment
Stronger Transitions post-retrenchment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy letter or separation certificate (from Employer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 9 months post-retrenchment

Any eligibility queries should be raised with a NEST Provider's Contract Manager, employment facilitator or the Stronger Transitions team (StrongerTransitions@employment.gov.au).



System step: NEST Providers must apply the relevant Stronger Transitions Special Placement Indicator in the Special Client Type field to record that the Participant is eligible for Stronger Transitions. The relevant Stronger Transitions Region must also be applied for each Participant.



Documentary evidence: The NEST Provider must retain and upload a copy of the Participant's redundancy letter or employment separation certificate and, if relevant, the Stronger Transitions Support Statement.

Updating or removing a Stronger Transitions special placement

NEST Providers may update or remove a Stronger Transitions special placement if they have incorrectly applied them to a Participant. Prior to removing a Stronger Transitions special placement indicator, the NEST Provider must contact their Contract Manager outlining the reason for removing the special placement indicator.

Classifying Participants

A Participant has immediate access to Enhanced Services on Commencement, unless an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt) indicates that additional assistance is required.

Participants do not require an initial Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) Assessment before being Commenced in Enhanced Services. However, it is recommended that NEST Providers conduct the JSCI for Participants to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their circumstances relevant to the labour market.

If the NEST Provider determines that a Participant requires an ESAt, they should refer the Participant to Services Australia for further Assessment.

Commencing Participants

NEST Providers must conduct an Initial Interview for all Participants. At the Initial Interview the NEST Provider must explain to the Participant the services they will receive. This includes:

- explaining the Enhanced Services that the NEST Provider will offer them
- providing access to the Service Guarantee
- explaining the assistance that a Participant can receive in NEST, specific to the Stronger Transitions package, including immediate access to the Relocation Assistance To Take Up a Job programme and the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)
- identifying if the Participant has undertaken a Comprehensive Skills Assessment. If they have not:
 - arrange for a Comprehensive Skills Assessment with an approved skills assessor. NEST Providers must use a Transition Services Panel Member (TSP Member).
- assisting the Participant to access a foundation skills assessment (such as literacy, numeracy and language skills), if required, and help them to access any identified training needs
- identifying the Participant's strengths and any issues they may have finding a job
- preparing a Job Plan with the Participant which sets out the voluntary activities that the Participant agrees to undertake, if the Participant provided a Stronger Transitions Support Statement this should be used to identify training/assistance already completed, and the training/assistance that might still be required
- providing access to Self-help Facilities to enable the Participant to undertake job search and prepare a résumé
- providing advice about the best ways to look for and find work
- providing advice on the labour market, including employer needs and skill shortage areas
- providing access to suitable Vacancies and assistance to apply for jobs where required, and
- assisting the Participant to access relocation assistance if they relocate to secure employment.

Participants who are eligible for support under Stronger Transitions are automatically Commenced in jobactive once the NEST Provider records attendance at the Initial Interview and they have an approved Job Plan.

(Deed Reference: Clause 98, 87, 123)

2. Servicing Stronger Transitions Participants

NEST Providers must continue to provide Enhanced Services to the Participant until they Exit. Even though these Participants do not have Mutual Obligation Requirements, the NEST Provider is required to deliver Enhanced Services to the Participant in accordance with the Participant's Job Plan, the Deed and the Service Guarantee.

The NEST Provider must ensure that the Participant is provided appropriate assistance to undertake activities to help them find and keep employment depending on the Participant's individual circumstances, skills and the labour market. This may include assisting with the Participant's job search, promoting training or work experience opportunities and supporting their continued Participation, holding Appointments with them to encourage their progress, or assisting them to access services to address any non-vocational barriers.

(Deed Reference: Clause 126)

Using Transition Services Panel Members to deliver Comprehensive Skills Assessments

All Participants should be encouraged to undertake a Comprehensive Skills Assessment. The additional Employment Fund credit provided under Stronger Transitions can be used by NEST Providers to fund Comprehensive Skills Assessments. See the Using the Employment Fund General Account Guideline.

NEST Providers must use a TSP Member when arranging Comprehensive Skills Assessments for Participants. The list of approved TSP Members which includes contact details for NEST Providers to use when sending a Request For Quotation (RFQ) for Comprehensive Skills Assessments can be found on the Provider Portal.

Once the Comprehensive Skills Assessment has been conducted TSP Members will provide the Participant(s), and their NEST Provider, with a written report detailing the outcomes of the assessment.

NEST Providers should use the information contained in the written report to assist Participants to address any identified barriers and/or access any identified development opportunities that might help them in securing sustainable employment.

(Deed reference: Clause 126.2)

Arranging the Comprehensive Skills Assessment

When arranging Comprehensive Skills Assessment(s) for Participants, NEST Providers must:

- issue an RFQ for a Comprehensive Skills Assessment(s) to a TSP Member in the relevant Stronger Transitions Region, using the list of approved TSP Members
- consider if the quotation returned by the TSP Member is an acceptable response to the RFQ, including that the rates provided do not exceed the maximum rates identified in the list of approved TSP Members
- negotiate and execute a CSA Work Order with the TSP Member, and
- refer the Participant(s) to the TSP Member.

Unless circumstances do not allow, NEST Providers should ensure that the Comprehensive Skills Assessment are conducted face-to-face.

NEST Providers can arrange for multiple Comprehensive Skills Assessments to be carried out under the one CSA Work Order, noting that Comprehensive Skills Assessments must be delivered individually to each Participant. The CSA Work Order template can be found on the Provider Portal.

(Deed reference: Clause 126.2)

Paying TSP Members for a Comprehensive Skills Assessment(s)

A NEST Provider may only pay a CSA Amount to a TSP Member if the:

- NEST Provider has executed a CSA Work Order and the CSA Amount is in accordance with that CSA Work order
- terms of the CSA Work Order have been met by the TSP Member
- TSP Member has provided a written report, detailing the outcomes of the Comprehensive Skills Assessment, to both the NEST Provider and the relevant Participant(s)
- NEST Provider pays in accordance with any Guidelines, using their own funds and only once for each Participant.

Once the NEST Provider has paid the CSA Amount, they may submit a claim for reimbursement in accordance with the Using the Employment Fund General Account Guideline.



Documentary evidence: NEST Providers should retain and upload a copy of the written report for each Participant they refer to have a Comprehensive Skills Assessment.

(Deed reference: Clause 126.4, 126.5, 126.6)

Employment facilitators

Employment Facilitators are located within each of the five Stronger Transition regions. The Employment Facilitators provide a local point of contact and work with Employers, state government and other key stakeholders to assist and support Participants to find and transition into sustainable employment. NEST Providers are encouraged to collaborate closely with their local Employment Facilitator to better assist Participants to find work.

Participants who have participated in pre-jobactive support under Stronger Transitions will have a Stronger Transitions Support Statement, provided by their Employment Facilitator. The support statement will outline the training and support a Participant has received to date, as part of Stronger Transitions.

Relocation Assistance

Participants are eligible for immediate access to the Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job Programme. NEST Providers should assist participants seeking relocation assistance in line with the Managing Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job Programme Guideline.

(Deed Reference: Clause: 123)

Activities

Although Participants do not have an Annual Activity Requirement, Participants should be encouraged to access Activities such as, training opportunities, activities designed to improve a Participant's employment prospects, participate in work

experience placements and address any non-vocational barriers as required. NEST Providers should also encourage Participants interested in starting their own business to consider the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS).

Activities must be specified in the Participant's Job Plan and agreed to by both the Participant and the NEST Provider. NEST Providers should monitor the Participant's progress, encouraging them to actively participate, noting that all the Activities in a Participant's Job Plan are voluntary.

Note: In placing Participants into Activities, including Work for the Dole, the NEST Provider must give priority to Fully Eligible Participants (Mutual Obligation) over other Participants (see clause 107 of the Deed).

(Deed Reference: Clause 99, 107)

3. Payments

Participants who are eligible for support under Stronger Transitions will attract Payments and Employment Fund credits. This includes:

- Engagement and Progress Fees for Enhanced Services per Period of Service,
- Outcome Payments where a Participant commences in Employment and meets the requirements for a four, 12, or 26 Week Outcome, and
- an Employment Fund credit (including an additional SAP credit—see below).

(Deed Reference: clause 138, Section E1.1, Annexure E1 Payments and Employment Fund Credits)

4. Managing structural adjustment credits

NEST Providers receive credits into their Employment Fund notional bank balance at the NEST Provider Site level. The amount credited is in line with Table 1 and Table 2, Annexure E1 of the New Employment Services Trial Deed 2019-22.

Participants, who are eligible for support under the Stronger Transitions Package, will also receive a once-only Stronger Transitions credit of \$550 (referred to as SAP credit) on Commencement into Enhanced Services.

Notes:

- NEST Providers can only use SAP credits for participants assisted through a SAP or the Stronger Transitions Package.
- The Department's IT Systems displays the SAP credit balance separately to the General Account credit balance. NEST Providers are expected to manage their SAP balance.

Where a Stronger Transitions Participant transfers from jobactive and Commences into the New Employment Services Trial (NEST), SAP credits in respect of the participant, are allocated once to an Enhanced Services provider.

For more information, please refer to:

- Using the Employment Fund General Account Guideline

5. Transfer of SAP Employment Fund credits

SAP Employment Fund credits can be transferred between a NEST Provider's individual Sites, and when a Participant transfers to another NEST Provider.

Transferring Credits between Sites

A NEST Provider can transfer SAP credits between any of its Sites within or across any Employment Region unless:

- the SAP credit transfer is from a NEST Site to a jobactive Site
- the SAP credit transfer is from a jobactive site to a NEST Site
- the Department has quarantined or reserved those credits for a particular purpose

or

- the Department has placed limits on or restricted a Provider's ability to transfer credits between its Sites.

Transferring Credits to another NEST Provider

When a Participant is transferred to a different NEST Provider, the transfer of SAP credits will be negotiated between the relinquishing and receiving NEST Providers, consistent with arrangements for the general Employment Fund pool.

A NEST Provider cannot transfer SAP credits to another Provider if:

- the SAP credit transfer is from a NEST Site to a jobactive Site
- the SAP credit transfer is from a jobactive Site to a NEST Site
- the SAP credit transfer is from an Enhanced Services Site to a Digital Services Site

or

- the SAP credit transfer is from a Digital Services Site to an Enhanced Services Site.

For more information on transfers, refer to the Transfers (New Employment Services Trial (NEST) Guideline).

6. Exiting Stronger Transitions participants

Participants are not automatically Exited from jobactive. NEST Providers should manually Exit Participants who no longer wish to participate or who have achieved an Employment Outcome and no longer need post placement support. Refer to the Defined Periods, Suspensions and Exits Guideline.

7. Duration of Stronger Transitions

New registrations under the Stronger Transitions Package will cease on 30 June 2020. All Participants registered with a jobactive Provider prior to 30 June 2020 will remain active and continue to receive employment services.

8. Further information

NEST Providers who have any questions about Stronger Transitions should contact their Contract Manager or email the Stronger Transitions team StrongerTransitions@employment.gov.au

All capitalised terms in this guideline have the same meaning as in the New Employment Services Trial Deed 2019 - 2022 (the Deed).

In this guideline, references to NEST Provider means a New Employment Services Trial Provider, and references to Participants means Enhanced or Supported Services Participants as defined in the Deed.

This Guideline is not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of Employment Services Providers' obligations. It must be read in conjunction with the Deed and any relevant Guidelines or reference material issued by Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business under or in connection with the Deed.