

Information for families considering the Disability Support Pension for their child

Purpose of this information:

Support families in their transition planning for their young people into adulthood. For some families, accessing the disability support pension can be an important step in this process. For the most accurate and up to date information, regarding the Disability Support Pension, please visit: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/disability-support-pension>. Your child can access the Disability Support Pension, without the Disability Carers Allowance being removed.

Important timeline information:

For the reasons outlined below, it would be useful to review the Disability Support Pension criteria and determine what information you need as a family once your child is around **14 years** of age.

1. Your child can apply for the Disability Support Pension when they are **15 years and 9 months**, and if successful can claim payments from **16 years** of age.
2. If you require assessments, such as an Intellectual Disability assessment to support your application and need to access this through the public (non-fee paying) system, this can take **3-12 months**.

Eligibility:

To be eligible, you must meet both the non-medical rules and the medical rules.

1. Non medical rules include: Age, residence, and income/asset test considerations. See the following link for more information: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/non-medical-rules-for-disability-support-pension?context=22276>
2. Medical rules include: Either meeting the 'manifest medical rules' or the 'general medical rules':
 - a. Manifest medical rules includes (you only need one) <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/manifest-medical-rules-for-disability-support-pension?context=22276> :
 - i. you are permanently blind
 - ii. you need nursing home level care

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- iii. you have a terminal illness with average life expectancy of less than 2 years
 - iv. **you have an intellectual disability with an IQ of less than 70**
 - v. you have Category 4 HIV/AIDS
 - vi. you get a Department of Veterans' Affairs Disability Compensation Payment at the Special Rate (totally and permanently incapacitated) paid under the Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986 (VEA).
- b. General medical rules: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/general-medical-rules-for-disability-support-pension?context=22276>
- i. your condition is likely to persist for more than 2 years
 - ii. your condition is diagnosed, reasonably treated and stabilised
 - iii. you have an impairment rating of 20 points or more
 - iv. you meet Program of Support rules, if these apply to you
 - v. your condition will stop you working at least 15 hours a week in the next 2 years.

Intellectual Disability Eligibility, Referrals, and Assessments:

If you are hoping to access a Disability Support Pension for your child under the medical condition of 'Intellectual Disability', you will require a report from a psychologist that confirms their diagnosis of Intellectual Disability, including their intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour. This needs to include information about their IQ score, or the child's ability to undergo IQ testing. If your child does not already have a diagnosis and subsequent report confirming this diagnosis, but you suspect they have an Intellectual Disability, you will need to access an assessment through a psychologist. This can be completed through the public system or the private sector.

1. **Public (non-fee paying) option:** You can self-refer as a family through the following link: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments/departments-of-communities/neurodevelopmental-disability-assessment-service-ndas>. Your application will be reviewed, and if successful, your child will be placed on a 3-6month waitlist.
2. **Private (often fee paying) option:** You can self-refer as a family to any clinic that provides Intellectual Disability assessments. The following link may support you in selecting a clinic: <https://perthkidshub.com.au/find-providers/?type=therapists&concerns=intellectual-disability&tags=accepting-new-referrals,waitlist&sort=nearby>. Some useful questions when calling clinics may include:
 - a. Asking about Medicare, NDIS, and/or private health options that may reduce fees associated with the assessment.
 - b. Ensuring that they include an adaptive functioning assessment, intellectual functioning assessment, and a report as part of their fees.

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