



DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

About Australian Disability Enterprises

A fact sheet for parents and carers



As a parent or carer of a person with disability, you know how difficult it can be to help the person in your care make decisions about their future.

If you are in this situation, think about the following question.

What sort of difference would it make to their lives if the person you care for had a job, like everybody else?

An Australian Disability Enterprise can make this a reality. An Australian Disability Enterprise gives people with disability the opportunity to have a real job, with real wages, in a real business.

What is an Australian Disability Enterprise?

An Australian Disability Enterprise is a business. It makes products or provides services, like any other business. It operates like any other business. But there is one difference. An Australian Disability Enterprise employs people with disability, and provides a **supported** work environment.

'Supported' means assistance is given, where necessary, so that each person can do their job successfully. For example, a person with restricted mobility may need the height of their workbench adjusted so they can reach their tools. Or a person with learning difficulties may need regular reminders from their supervisor about doing a task.

There are over 600 Australian Disability Enterprises across Australia. Australian Disability Enterprises are not sheltered workshops. They are real businesses, providing quality products and services to a range of customers.

What sort of jobs does an Australian Disability Enterprise provide?

Each Australian Disability Enterprise is an independent business and they differ in what they do. This means there is a wide range of jobs that people could do. As an example, if the person in your care worked at an Australian Disability Enterprise, they may be involved in:

- ▶ packaging
- ▶ manufacturing products
- ▶ gardening
- ▶ recycling materials
- ▶ cleaning
- ▶ making timber products
- ▶ sorting mail
- ▶ preparing food
- ▶ selling clothes and books.

Can anyone with disability work in an Australian Disability Enterprise?

As a parent or carer, you may be concerned about how the person you care for will cope with work.

Australian Disability Enterprises employ people with all types of disability and various support needs. While work may not be an option for some, most people with disability, including those with high support needs, can work successfully in a job if they have the right support.

If you or the person you care for have doubts or concerns about work, have a chat with the Australian Disability Enterprise in your area, or the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

You may be surprised at what is possible in a supported working environment.



Is the work environment safe?

Australian Disability Enterprises are real businesses, so they must comply with the same Commonwealth and State laws, such as Occupational Health and Safety, and Anti-discrimination, as other businesses.

Australian Disability Enterprises must also comply with the Disability Services Standards. These Standards ensure Australian Disability Enterprises provide quality care and support to the people they employ.

Finally, Australian Disability Enterprise employees are regularly assessed to check they are receiving the support they need to successfully do their job. This means the person you care for will always have access to the right help to work happily, safely and productively.

Why would people want to work at an Australian Disability Enterprise?

What would working in an Australian Disability Enterprise mean for the person you care about?

- ▶ **Having a meaningful job, like everybody else.** It's real work, in a real business.
- ▶ **Learning new skills.** The Australian Disability Enterprise will aim to continually advance work and personal skills.
- ▶ **Earning wages.** All work will be paid work.
- ▶ **Receiving the right help to do the job successfully.** Ongoing assessments identify and monitor any support requirements.

- ▶ **Gaining valuable employment experience.** Having a job helps people realise their employment goals, whatever they may be. For example, the person you care for may simply want a job, or they may use the experience as the first step to open employment.
- ▶ **Gaining confidence.** Skills are valued, encouraged and continually developed. The focus on ability can increase self-esteem.
- ▶ **Developing more independence.** The experience of having meaningful, paid work encourages financial, emotional and physical independence.
- ▶ **Making new friends.** Meeting and working with other people encourages friendships and builds social skills.

Who do I contact?

For more information about Australian Disability Enterprises and what's available in your area, contact Centrelink by phone on 132 850 to make an appointment or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

You can also contact the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Phone 1300 653 227

Email enquiries@fahcsia.gov.au

Web www.fahcsia.gov.au

Or, search for an Australian Disability Enterprise in your area using the online directory of Australian Disability Enterprises, www.australiandisabilityenterprises.com.au

"I think I was more unsure and apprehensive about Anne working than she was, but I had nothing to worry about. She loves it here, the staff are great. She's a different person."

Anne's mum

"When Tikka left school, she was a bit lost for a while. She desperately wanted a job, but didn't know where to start. Fortunately there was an Australian Disability Enterprise not far from here that employed her. It took her a while to get used to the work routine, but she got heaps of support from the staff. They even helped her with transport to and from work. Now there's no stopping her."

Tikka's carer

