

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000065**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***ParentsNext assessment and considerations***

##### **Question**

1. Does the department formally assess how a ParentsNext participant will meet their basic needs (and those of their children) before their Parenting Payments are suspended, reduced or cancelled for non-compliance?
2. Does (and if so, in what manner) the department consider whether the suspension, reduction or cancellation of a ParentsNext participant's Parenting Payment is in the best interests of the participant's child before the action is taken?

##### **Answer**

1. Consideration of parents and their children is fundamental to the design of ParentsNext.

As outlined in IQ21-000077, compulsory participation in ParentsNext has a range of positive outcomes for parents and their children. A necessary condition of compulsory requirements is some consequence for not meeting those requirements.

2. It is important to note that parents' labour market status has a profound effect on children. Research has shown that one of the most important factors which can contribute to child poverty is living with parents who are jobless<sup>1</sup>, and has suggested that joblessness is associated with intergenerational disadvantage and impacts on children's development.<sup>2</sup> Joblessness amongst Australian families continues to be a significant social and economic problem, with Australia having one of the highest proportions of children living in jobless families in the OECD.<sup>3</sup>

Early intervention to assist parents with young children can have a positive impact on future workforce participation, particularly for women. Research shows that early intervention through the provision of outreach support services to those furthest from the labour market is an important support strategy in engaging individuals and influencing attitudes to employment.<sup>4</sup> ParentsNext is one such intervention. By supporting participants to work towards achieving their education and employment goals, ParentsNext improves the work and study outcomes for participants, thereby also directly benefitting participants' children and their development.

---

<sup>1</sup> OECD Family database, LMF1.1: Children in families by employment status, July 2014, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children Annual statistical report 2012.

<sup>3</sup> OECD, 11/7/2014, Children in families by employment status:

[http://www.oecd.org/els/family/LMF\\_1\\_1\\_Children\\_in\\_families\\_by\\_employment\\_status\\_Jul2014.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/els/family/LMF_1_1_Children_in_families_by_employment_status_Jul2014.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Greene, A & Hasluck, C. (2009) "Action to reduce worklessness: What works? Local Economy 24(1), 28-37.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000067**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Participation requirements for parenting payments***

##### **Question**

The Social Security Legislation Amendment (Streamlined Participation Requirements and Other Measures) Bill 2021 seeks to give the Secretary more discretion as to whether to suspend a person's payment for a mutual obligation failure. It is not clear how, and in accordance with what guidelines or criteria, that discretion would be exercised. Can you explain how those amendments are intended to operate in the context of participation requirements for parenting payments?

##### **Answer**

Current provisions in the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* specify that failures to comply with mutual obligation requirements 'must' result in a payment suspension, regardless of whether the person has a good reason for missing their requirement. In practice, this means that in cases where a person has a valid reason for missing a requirement, their payment suspension is ended at the same time it begins – with no practical effect on the payment. The amendments proposed by the *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Streamlined Participation Requirements and Other Measures) Bill 2021* would mean the requirement for this suspension would cease, and instead would provide flexibility on whether or not a payment suspension should apply.

As explained in the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, the proposed amendments would more clearly support, not alter, existing practice by not requiring a participant's payment to be suspended if the participant has a good reason for missing a requirement or if they have already re-engaged with their provider.

Further detail on the operation of the targeted compliance framework is available at:

- <https://guides.dss.gov.au/guide-social-security-law/3/11/13>; and
- [https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/targeted\\_compliance\\_framework\\_1.pdf](https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/targeted_compliance_framework_1.pdf).

The provisions in the Bill will not result in any changes to the processes contained in these documents.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000068**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Exemptions from the requirement to participate in ParentsNext***

##### **Question**

In relation to exemptions from the requirement to participate in ParentsNext:

1. Why do ParentsNext providers grant exemptions rather than the department? How does the department have oversight of exemptions granted by providers?
2. How are participant's notified that they may be able to seek an exemption?
3. The department's exemption guidelines state that providers must 'use their judgement' in terms of granting certain exemptions, and the type of documentary evidence they should obtain to justify the exemption (or refusal for an exemption). For example, it states that a relationship separation is not itself grounds for an exemption, but if a person is experiencing an 'unusually high level of stress' associated with a relationship breakdown, they may be granted an exemption. What does this mean and how does the department assess whether a particular provider delegate has appropriately used their judgement in practice?
4. From 1 July 2018 to the current date, how many people have: sought an exemption from participating in ParentsNext; had an exemption refused; sought review of a refusal to grant an exemption; and had an exemption granted/refused on review? Please break this information down by demographic (including: gender; indigeneity; single parent; disability, homelessness; and CALD status), and expressed both in raw numbers and as a percentage of the total number of participants during that year.

##### **Answer**

1. ParentsNext providers are contracted by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment to deliver the ParentsNext program on behalf of the Australian Government, in accordance with the ParentsNext Deed 2018-2021 (ParentsNext Deed 2018-2024 from 1 July 2021). Under social security law, ParentsNext providers are delegated a range of powers and responsibilities by the Secretary of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment including the power to assess and grant exemptions from requirements in a range of circumstances, such as where participants are not reasonably able to meet requirements.

The delegation of exemptions to providers reflects the relationship ParentsNext providers develop working closely with participants to plan and prepare for work, discuss and agree participation plans, and provide assistance in connecting them to support services. Providers are required to take into account each participant's individual circumstances when setting requirements and are best situated to make decisions about exemptions.

Participants are also able to seek exemptions from Services Australia, if they are not comfortable with disclosing their circumstances to a ParentsNext provider.

Providers are required to record exemption decisions in the department's IT system, including the reason for granting or not granting an exemption.

2. ParentsNext providers are contractually obligated to inform each participant about exemptions and the circumstances in which they may be available at their initial interview.

3. Social security law and policy recognises that there are instances where participants may experience circumstances which make it unreasonable for them to meet their participation requirements for a temporary period. The legislation and policy allows for a range of different exemption types which can be applied.

Services Australia and ParentsNext providers can assess and consider whether a person meets the criteria for an exemption, or if it would be more appropriate for a person's requirements to be adjusted. While some types of exemptions can be automatically granted, others are to be considered and applied on a case-by-case basis – this requires individual consideration of a person's circumstances, capacity and requirements.

Each type of exemption has specific documentary evidence requirements that (if required) providers must consider when making a decision whether to grant an exemption. Like all decisions under social security law, decisions about whether to grant an exemption are also reviewable, and can be appealed.

The department also undertakes targeted assurance activities to review exemption decisions by providers, ensuring they are compliant with the ParentsNext 2018-2024 Deed, Guideline and social security law. These reviews inform where further guidance can be made available to providers through Guideline updates or tailored communications to ensure appropriate judgement is made.

4. If a participant is not satisfied with the outcome of their exemption request, they can request a review of the decision from their provider, and further to this they can request a departmental review via the National Customer Service Line. There have been no departmental reviews undertaken to date.

Exemption requests can be made to both Services Australia and ParentsNext providers. Services Australia do not hold data on exemption requests that have been refused.

The department's IT system and data does not distinguish between an original provider exemption decision and a provider exemption review decision but the following information can be provided:

- From 2 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, 53,070 participants requested an exemption, of these, 50,469 made a request to their provider (31 per cent of all participants). 285 participants had a request refused (less than 1 per cent of participants who made an exemption request). The following table provides a further breakdown of this information:

Year	Requests	Refusals	Proportion Refused
2018	10,634	8	<1%
2019	26,127	129	<1%
2020	19,891	108	<2%
2021	9,646	40	<3%
Total	50,469	285	<4%

- Of the 285 parents who have had an exemption request refused, 119 (42 per cent) have subsequently had an exemption granted and 166 (58 per cent) have not.

The following tables provide a breakdown of participants who have requested an exemption, had an exemption request refused, and had a subsequent exemption request granted, by demographic, expressed in numbers and as a percentage of the total number of participants for each year.

**Participants with exemption requests per year**

Year	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a disability	Homeless	CALD
2018	531	10,103	1,912	7,584	2,054	457	2,577
2019	1,023	25,104	5,424	19,707	5,017	1,378	5,387
2020	678	19,213	4,179	14,541	3,864	1,027	4,228
2021	315	9,393	2,201	7,099	1,917	526	2,011

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Participants with exemption requests – percentage of total cohort per year**

Year	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a disability	Homeless	CALD
2018	15%	16%	16%	14%	22%	14%	19%
2019	16%	24%	5%	22%	32%	25%	25%
2020	11%	18%	20%	16%	23%	19%	19%
2021	7%	11%	12%	10%	14%	11%	11%

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Participants with exemptions refused per year**

Year	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a disability	Homeless	CALD
2018	0	8	<5	6	<5	0	<5
2019	17	112	21	103	30	<5	29
2020	8	100	16	78	31	<5	24
2021	<5	36	5	28	12	0	<5

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Participants with exemptions refused – percentage of total cohort per year**

Year	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a disability	Homeless	CALD
2018	0	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0	<1%
2019	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
2020	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
2021	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0	<1%

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Participants with exemptions subsequently granted after a refusal per year\***

Year	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a disability	Homeless	CALD
2018	0	<5	0	<5	<5	0	<5
2019	6	35	9	32	7	0	10
2020	<5	30	5	19	10	<5	10
2021	<5	14	<5	11	5	0	<1

*\*Only exemptions granted in the same year as the refusal shown*

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Participants with exemptions subsequently granted after a refusal per year\*  
– percentage of total cohort per year**

Year	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a disability	Homeless	CALD
2018	0	<1%	0	<1%	<1%	0	0
2019	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0	<1%
2020	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
2021	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0	<1%

*\*Only exemptions granted in the same year as the refusal shown*

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000069**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***ParentsNext complaints***

**Question**

How many complaints have been received about ParentsNext from 1 July 2018 to the current date (if possible, broken down by nature of complaint and the demographics of the complainant)?

**Answer**

Since 1 July 2018, out of 161,734 ParentsNext participants, the department has received 387 unique contacts to the National Customer Service Line (NCSL) and recorded a total of 633 complaint topics. Complaints by topic are outlined in the below table:

<b>NCSL Complaint Topic</b>	<b>Number</b>
Policy	<b>189</b>
Provider Servicing	<b>140</b>
Participation Plan / Participation Requirements	<b>71</b>
Eligibility	<b>67</b>
Targeted Compliance Framework - Suspension of Payments and Demerits	<b>48</b>
Exemptions	<b>43</b>
Activities	<b>40</b>
Provider Nomination	<b>29</b>
Privacy	<b>6</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>633</b>

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000070**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***ParentsNext providers***

##### **Question**

How, and in accordance with what criteria, does the department assess the provision of services by ParentsNext providers? Does the department conduct audits or spot-checks of providers? How does the department ensure that providers and sub-contractors understand and correctly apply social security laws, including in relation to the provision of exemptions, and the determination of mutual obligation failures (for example, for a failure to be 'punctual' for an appointment)?

##### **Answer**

The department assesses provider performance against six key performance indicators (KPIs) measuring efficiency, effectiveness and quality. Performance against the following criteria is assessed annually and reported every 6 months:

- Efficiency is measured through the rate of participants' commencement, attendance at appointments, and participation in activities.
- Effectiveness is measured by the improvement in participants' work readiness, participation in education and connection to employment.
- Quality of services as assessed by the department taking into account administration and Deed compliance, and participant experience.

In addition to annual performance reviews, departmental account and contract managers assess providers service offer commitments at least once per year to ensure that providers are delivering ParentsNext in accordance with their agreed approach, and to identify and provide guidance on any performance issues. Account and contract managers also undertake ongoing provider site visits both announced and unannounced to monitor compliance with the ParentsNext Deed 2018-24 (the Deed).

The department has a robust assurance strategy to ensure the effective and efficient management of its programs and compliance with Deed and contractual requirements. The department undertakes regular assurance activities including the ongoing Rolling Random Sample audit exercise to monitor the integrity of payments to providers. Desktop monitoring and targeted assurance activities are also conducted to identify potential areas of non-compliance.



## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000071**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Demerit points***

##### **Question**

1. Please outline the process by which a demerit is applied to a participant's record. Who can apply a demerit – providers, or the department, or both?
2. What percentage of persons subject to demerit points are Indigenous (broken down by each demerit point level)? If Indigenous participants are over-represented in the proportion of those subject to demerit points, what are the reasons for this?

##### **Answer**

1. ParentsNext providers are contracted by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment to deliver the ParentsNext program on behalf of the Australian Government, in accordance with the ParentsNext Deed 2018-2021 (ParentsNext Deed 2018-2024 from 1 July 2021). This includes application of the Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF).

The mechanism through which demerits are applied depends on the Mutual Obligation Failure type and the number of demerits already applied to the participant's record. Under the TCF most demerits applied to ParentsNext participant's records are applied manually by their ParentsNext provider. When a participant appears to have not met a mutual obligation requirement, such as attending a provider appointment, the provider will attempt to contact the participant to discuss the reason for the missed appointment. If the participant does not have a valid reason this is recorded in the department's IT systems and a demerit will be applied. ParentsNext providers are required to follow program guidelines when determining whether to apply demerits.

The department's IT system will only automatically apply a demerit to a participant's record where they fail to agree to their Participation Plan within the allocated timeframe. The exception to this is where a Capability Interview or Assessment is required at demerit points 3 and 5.

Demerits automatically expire from a Participant's record after six months.

2. From 2 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, 14,194 participants have incurred a demerit under the Targeted Compliance Framework. 4,470 (31 per cent) of these participants are Indigenous.

Indigenous participants make up 18 per cent of all participants serviced program-to-date, and 21 per cent of the caseload as at 31 May 2021.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000072**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***ParentsNext evaluation***

**Question**

The department's 2018 ParentsNext trial evaluation states that a further evaluation of the expanded program will be conducted (p. 11).

1. Has a further evaluation been conducted? If so, could you please provide this to the committee.
2. Have any independent evaluations (i.e. not conducted by the department) of ParentsNext been conducted or is there any intention to do so?

**Answer**

1. An evaluation of the ParentsNext 2018-2021 national expansion is currently underway.
2. No.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000073**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Consultation with organisations***

##### **Question**

Your submission notes (at pages 4 and 6) that consultation with Indigenous organisations about ParentsNext has occurred. How many organisations provided feedback about ParentsNext and how many were Indigenous-owned; was this conducted prior to the decision to roll-out ParentsNext nationally; how was the consultation conducted; and what feedback was provided by Indigenous organisations?

##### **Answer**

To inform the national expansion of ParentsNext and identify ways to improve education and employment outcomes for Indigenous parents, the department consulted with community and Indigenous stakeholders, as well as focus groups of Indigenous parents.

The department hosted 18 public consultation forums in capital cities and some regional centres in late 2017. Around 200 people attended including: community groups; Indigenous organisations; employment services providers, including ParentsNext providers; parents; and members of the public.

The department also hosted meetings with several Indigenous operated organisations including the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance, Cape York Partnerships, and ParentsNext providers, Kullarri Regional Corporation and Kuditi. Indigenous stakeholders advised of the value and importance of supporting Indigenous parents with young children to develop plans to enter or re-enter the workforce.

As a result of the feedback, as part of the ParentsNext 2018 procurement process, all providers had to identify diverse strategies to ensure culturally competent servicing of culturally diverse participants, in particular, Indigenous participants. Other feedback from Indigenous organisations that was addressed in the design of the program's national expansion includes:

- ensuring the program has a strong focus on supporting participants experiencing family and domestic violence
- ensuring additional resources about child care assistance is available to providers and participants
- expanding the range of financial assistance available through the Participation Fund by including a category for Participant Support to fund appropriate expenditure including counselling; driving lessons; and items to support training such as textbooks and laptops, and

- a review of Services Australia letters to participants to ensure information was concise and in plain English.

The department has also established a stakeholder working group and receives regular feedback from a range of stakeholders including peak bodies, advocacy groups and range of providers servicing a range of cohorts including Indigenous and CALD participants.

Stakeholder Working Group membership includes:

- Australian Council of Social Services
- National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
- Council of Single Mothers and their children
- Jobs Australia - peak body for not-for-profit employment service providers
- National Employment Services Association - peak body for employment service providers
- ParentsNext providers:
  - Wesley Mission
  - Complete Personnel (Indigenous owned)
  - Mission Australia
  - South Metropolitan Youth Link Inc
  - Max Solutions.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000074**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Jobactive employment region***

**Question**

What parts of Australia are captured by the definition of a 'jobactive employment region'? Does this include all of Australia?

**Answer**

Maps and correspondence files for the 51 jobactive employment regions can be found at [imip.gov.au](https://imip.gov.au).

## Joint Committee on Human Rights

### Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 25 June 2021

#### Outcome: Employment

#### Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000075

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### *ParentsNext during COVID-19*

##### Question

Has the department monitored how ParentsNext has operated during the COVID-19 related suspension of mutual obligation requirements? What trends (if any) have been observed?

##### Answer

The COVID-19 related suspension of mutual obligation requirements for ParentsNext participants took place from 23 March to 28 September 2020 (the suspension period). To support ParentsNext participants during COVID-19, on 23 March 2020, the department notified ParentsNext providers that alternative servicing arrangements would be put in place.

Providers were advised to:

- Deliver services as flexibly as possible. This included advice that providers were not to undertake face-to-face meetings and, instead, to utilise phone, Skype or online mechanisms.
- Move to a monthly phone contact with participants instead of the standard quarterly appointment. This recognised the potential feelings of isolation for some participants and the need for greater connection and support from their provider during this time – including connection to important support services.
- Continue granting exemptions where needed.

Between 1 July 2018 and 28 February 2020 (i.e. before the suspension period), **86 per cent** of activities and appointments were attended.

Between 1 March 2020 and 28 September 2020 (i.e. during the suspension period), **75 per cent** of activities and appointments were attended. Attendance at activities and appointments during this period would have been subject to local health advices and restrictions in place at various points in time.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000076**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Participation in the ParentsNext program results***

##### **Question**

To what extent does participation in the ParentsNext program effectively address barriers to education and employment for young parents in practice, and how is this measured?

##### **Answer**

The ParentsNext caseload is not homogenous. As at 31 March 2021, 17.6% of the caseload were young parents (under 25-year-old).

In a qualitative research conducted from April to June 2019 with 47 participants (selected through stratified random sampling), participants reported a range of barriers to engaging in work, study and/or community activities that they were working to address with their ParentsNext provider. These included childcare responsibilities, physical and mental health, family and domestic violence, lack of employment flexibility, study costs, transport and job market competitiveness. In provider surveys conducted in 2019 and 2020, providers reported similar barriers citing access to affordable training or education as a common barrier.

The effect of the program in addressing the barriers to education and employment was measured by comparing participant outcomes with matched non-participants. The analyses were conducted for two periods – before COVID-19 (starting 2 October 2018) and during COVID-19 (starting 2 October 2019). The analyses indicated that ParentsNext had an overall positive impact on education outcomes for both periods.

Despite being a pre-employment program, ParentsNext had an overall positive impact on employment outcomes during COVID-19 period. While there was overall drop in achievement of employment outcomes during the COVID-19 analysis period, this reduction was smaller for ParentsNext participants than the comparison non-participant group. For the analysis period before COVID-19, the strongest employment outcome impact measured was for participants with a youngest child aged 5.

## Joint Committee on Human Rights

### Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 25 June 2021

#### Outcome: Employment

#### Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000077

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### *Mutual obligation requirements*

##### Question

What evidence demonstrates that ParentsNext can only succeed with the imposition of mutual obligation requirements?

##### Answer

Without compulsory participation, there is strong evidence that those who stand to benefit the most from the program are much less likely to participate, for example:

- Eligible parents are currently able to voluntarily participate in ParentsNext intensive stream locations yet only just over 1,000 parents have chosen to do so over the three years since 1 July 2018.
- Australian evidence finds that service providers can find it challenging to voluntarily engage disadvantaged families, even using flexible, multi-method strategies.<sup>1</sup> It finds that parents who are unwilling to engage with services, are often those with the greatest need of support.<sup>2</sup>
- OECD research suggests that compulsory activities can be effective for lone parents who are likely to have more barriers and support needs. Voluntary activities can work effectively with lone parents who are more job-ready, with a higher level of skills or education, and work experience.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>McDonald, M. September 2010. *Are disadvantaged families "hard to reach"? Engaging disadvantaged families in child and family services*. Communities and Families Clearing House Australia Practice Sheet. [Are disadvantaged families "hard to reach"?](#)

<sup>2</sup>Cortis N, Katz I, Patulny R. *Engaging hard-to-reach families and children*. Occasional Paper No 26, Dept of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW, and Australian Institute of Family Studies. [Engaging-families](#)

<sup>3</sup>Carcillo, S., and Grubb, D., (2006), From Inactivity to Work: The role of Active Labour Market Policies, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 36.



**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000078**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Parents planning and preparing for employment***

**Question**

Have less rights restrictive alternatives to this compulsory model been trialled to help parents plan and prepare for employment?

**Answer**

Yes.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000079**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Not meeting mutual obligations***

##### **Question**

Does the department record the reasons given by participants as to why they did not meet a mutual obligation? If so, what are the most common reasons provided for not meeting a mutual obligation?

##### **Answer**

1. Yes
2. Top reasons in ParentsNext for not meeting Mutual Obligations - 2 July 2018 to 31 May 2021:

<b>Participant Reasons</b>
Family/Carer responsibilities
Notification not received
Medical/Health issue

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000080**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Targeted Compliance Framework***

**Question**

What elements of the Targeted Compliance Framework are fully or partially automated?

**Answer**

Compliance action under the Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) for the ParentsNext program is not automated and relies on a decisions and inputs recorded by a ParentsNext providers.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000081**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Self-report requirements***

**Question**

Please outline the matters which a ParentsNext participant would typically be required to self-report each fortnight (including income and activity participation). Is a participant (or their provider) required to report every fortnight regardless of how many participation requirements the participant has?

**Answer**

Like most income support recipients, ParentsNext participants report gross income to Centrelink on a fortnightly basis.

Participants are also required to report their attendance for all activities they have agreed to participate in as part of their Participation Plan. Participants are not required to report their attendance for each activity more than once per fortnight, even where they agree to attend more frequently in their Participation Plan.

Participants can report attendance at activities via the jobactive job seeker mobile phone App, their personal account on the jobactive website, or they can report their attendance to their Provider.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000083**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Participation in ParentsNext activities***

**Question**

Do participants record their participation in ParentsNext activities digitally? What options do participants have if they do not: have regular access to a smart phone or computer with internet; or have little mobile phone credit?

**Answer**

Participants can record their attendance in ParentsNext activities via the jobactive job seeker mobile phone app, their personal account on the jobactive website, or they can report their attendance to their provider.

Where a participant is unable to record their own attendance, they can contact their provider and/or their provider will call them to confirm their attendance.

## Joint Committee on Human Rights

### Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 25 June 2021

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000084**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### *People who have exited the ParentsNext program*

##### **Question**

Please provide the total number of people who have exited the ParentsNext program (broken down by reason for their exit, demographic of participant, and by reference as a percentage to the total number of participants at the relevant time) from 1 July 2018 to the current date.

##### **Answer**

As at 31 May 2021, 97,788 participants had exited the program. The below table breaks down these exits by reason\* and demographic:

Exit Reason	Demographic							
	All	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a Disability	Homeless	CALD
Youngest Child Aged 6	52,391	4,829	47,562	8,096	39,143	8,090	2,390	10,470
Parenting Payment Cancelled^	23,830	1,803	22,027	3,169	2,055	3,726	825	7,654
New Child in Care	10,430	213	10,217	2,130	8,014	1,333	613	1,926
Stable Employment	5,722	249	5,473	719	5,149	421	134	763
Change Location	3,644	84	3,560	1,061	3,165	563	391	499
Other	3,624	277	3,347	1,336	2,452	567	278	645
<b>Total</b>	<b>97,788</b>	<b>7,345</b>	<b>90,443</b>	<b>16,132</b>	<b>59,447</b>	<b>14,510</b>	<b>4,574</b>	<b>21,455</b>

\*Participants can exit the program for different reasons if they have had multiple periods of service. As such, the sum of the number of participants who have exited under each reason is greater than the total.

^Parenting Payment cancelled includes all forms of cancellation, not just due to compliance.

The number of participants that have exited the program since 1 July 2018 (97,788) represents 58 per cent of all parents who have been referred to the program (169,116). The below table shows the percentage of each demographic that has exited by reason.

Exit Reason	Demographic							
	All	Male	Female	Indigenous	Single	Person with a Disability	Homeless	CALD
Youngest Child Aged 6	31%	45%	30%	27%	30%	33%	28%	30%
Parenting Payment Cancelled^	14%	17%	14%	11%	2%	15%	10%	22%
New Child in Care	6%	2%	6%	7%	6%	5%	7%	5%
Stable Employment	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Change Stream Location	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	5%	1%
Other	2%	3%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>61%</b>

^Parenting Payment cancelled includes all forms of cancellation, not just due to compliance.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000085**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Suspensions of parenting payments***

##### **Question**

In relation to suspensions of parenting payments:

1. Please provide the number of payment suspensions for ParentsNext participants each month from 1 July 2018 to the current date (broken down by demographic of participant, reason for suspension, and as a percentage of the total number of participants at the relevant time).
2. Please provide the number of incorrectly (or potentially incorrectly) applied payment suspensions (for example, where a participant had attended an activity but this was not appropriately recorded) (broken down by demographic of participant from 1 July 2018 to the current date, and as a percentage of the total number of suspensions at the relevant time).
3. What is the longest period of time for which a ParentsNext participant has had their payment suspended?
4. The ParentsNext Deed 2018–2021 states (at p. 78) that where a participant is suspended and does not meet their reconnection requirement within four weeks, the department will usually cancel their payment. How many times has the department cancelled a ParentsNext participant's payment on this basis? Of those, how many people subsequently reapplied for Parenting Payment?
5. Please outline the impact that the introduction of a two-day grace period during which a participant can contact their provider regarding a mutual obligation failure has had on demerits, suspensions and payment cancellations? Please provide a breakdown of this data (by participant demographic).



## Answer

1. The following table provides a breakdown of all payment suspension events by month and demographic.

Year/Month	All	Indigenous	Female	Male	Persons with Disability	Homeless	Single	CALD
Jul-18	736	175	683	53	78	47	581	111
Aug-18	2,654	554	2,512	142	297	149	2,051	568
Sep-18	4,868	1,017	4,610	258	615	255	3,895	1,104
Oct-18	8,054	1,802	7,613	441	894	421	6,580	1,666
Nov-18	7,649	1,995	7,154	495	939	515	6,391	1,318
Dec-18	4,715	1,257	4,384	331	576	302	3,939	793
Jan-19	6,784	2,004	6,287	497	904	459	5,860	907
Feb-19	8,983	2,588	8,390	593	1,093	627	7,563	1,529
Mar-19	10,254	3,082	9,580	674	1,321	725	8,708	1,518
Apr-19	6,375	1,999	5,947	428	778	415	5,443	901
May-19	11,897	3,915	11,109	788	1,538	800	10,085	1,563
Jun-19	9,238	3,196	8,591	647	1,181	639	7,827	1,234
Jul-19	7,594	2,807	7,050	544	998	536	6,470	906
Aug-19	7,795	2,914	7,250	545	1,013	636	6,686	882
Sep-19	6,320	2,486	5,890	430	764	495	5,421	704
Oct-19	7,502	2,916	6,970	532	982	602	6,408	810
Nov-19	6,828	2,570	6,340	488	958	533	5,846	822
Dec-19	4,183	1,570	3,911	272	596	320	3,605	479
Jan-20	1,640	608	1,529	111	218	129	1,376	204
Feb-20	5,134	2,038	4,789	345	668	373	4,380	754
Mar-20	2,316	946	2,153	163	326	176	2,006	268
Apr-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
May-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jun-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jul-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aug-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sep-20	79	25	71	8	15	5	68	12
Oct-20	3,763	1,599	3,512	251	482	327	3,286	296
Nov-20	3,875	1,758	3,624	251	488	352	3,389	320
Dec-20	2,053	819	1,921	132	251	176	1,760	204
Jan-21	2,963	1,120	2,763	200	389	235	2,563	330
Feb-21	3,115	1,277	2,891	224	433	265	2,675	344
Mar-21	3,239	1,275	3,022	217	422	281	2,785	391
Apr-21	4,002	1,596	3,736	266	553	365	3,447	476
May-21	4,446	1,770	4,180	266	631	390	3,807	536

*N.B. Events can appear against multiple cohorts.*

The following table provides a breakdown by demographic of participants who received a payment suspension in each month, as a proportion of the total number of participants in that month.

Year/Month	All	Indigenous	Female	Male	Persons with Disability	Homeless	Single	CALD
Jul-18	12%	3%	11%	1%	1%	1%	10%	2%
Aug-18	13%	3%	12%	1%	1%	1%	10%	3%
Sep-18	13%	3%	13%	1%	2%	1%	11%	4%
Oct-18	15%	3%	14%	1%	2%	1%	12%	4%
Nov-18	11%	3%	11%	1%	1%	1%	9%	2%
Dec-18	7%	2%	6%	0%	1%	0%	6%	1%
Jan-19	8%	3%	8%	1%	1%	1%	7%	1%
Feb-19	10%	3%	10%	1%	1%	1%	9%	2%
Mar-19	11%	3%	11%	1%	1%	1%	10%	2%
Apr-19	8%	2%	7%	1%	1%	1%	7%	1%
May-19	12%	4%	11%	1%	2%	1%	10%	2%
Jun-19	10%	3%	9%	1%	1%	1%	9%	2%
Jul-19	9%	3%	8%	1%	1%	1%	7%	1%
Aug-19	8%	3%	8%	1%	1%	1%	7%	1%
Sep-19	7%	3%	7%	0%	1%	1%	6%	1%
Oct-19	8%	3%	8%	1%	1%	1%	7%	1%
Nov-19	7%	3%	7%	1%	1%	1%	6%	1%
Dec-19	5%	2%	5%	0%	1%	0%	4%	1%
Jan-20	2%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Feb-20	6%	2%	5%	0%	1%	0%	5%	1%
Mar-20	3%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Apr-20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
May-20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Jun-20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Jul-20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Aug-20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sep-20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Oct-20	4%	2%	4%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%
Nov-20	4%	2%	4%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%
Dec-20	2%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Jan-21	3%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Feb-21	4%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Mar-21	4%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Apr-21	5%	2%	4%	0%	1%	0%	4%	1%
May-21	5%	2%	5%	0%	1%	0%	4%	1%

*N.B. Participants can appear against multiple cohorts.*

The following table provides a breakdown of all payment suspensions by reason in each month.

Year/Month	Activity Non Attendance	Appointment Non Attendance	Misconduct at Activity or Appointment	Participation Plan Not Agreed
Jul-18	121	614	0	<5
Aug-18	1,363	1,258	<5	32
Sep-18	3,068	1,746	<5	53
Oct-18	5,565	2,409	0	80
Nov-18	4,259	3,300	<5	87
Dec-18	2,510	2,165	<5	37
Jan-19	2,778	3,971	<5	33
Feb-19	4,856	4,078	<5	48
Mar-19	5,673	4,510	<5	67
Apr-19	3,587	2,745	0	43
May-19	6,652	5,188	<5	54
Jun-19	4,921	4,270	0	47
Jul-19	2,980	4,555	<5	58
Aug-19	2,884	4,858	0	53
Sep-19	1,999	4,271	<5	49
Oct-19	2,550	4,864	<5	87
Nov-19	2,503	4,245	<5	79
Dec-19	1,164	2,976	<5	42
Jan-20	559	1,080	0	<5
Feb-20	1,422	3,659	<5	52
Mar-20	548	1,723	0	45
Apr-20	0	0	0	0
May-20	0	0	0	0
Jun-20	0	0	0	0
Jul-20	0	0	0	0
Aug-20	0	0	0	0
Sep-20	9	70	0	0
Oct-20	225	3,310	<5	226
Nov-20	458	3,171	<5	243
Dec-20	301	1,653	<5	96
Jan-21	335	2,465	0	163
Feb-21	565	2,375	<5	174
Mar-21	579	2,489	0	171
Apr-21	659	3,160	<5	182
May-21	754	3,553	0	139

The following table provides a breakdown of the proportion of participants in each month who received a payment suspension by reason.

Year/Month	Activity Non Attendance	Appointment Non Attendance	Misconduct at Activity or Appointment	Participation Plan Not Agreed
Jul-18	2%	11%	0%	0%
Aug-18	6%	7%	0%	0%
Sep-18	8%	6%	0%	0%
Oct-18	9%	5%	0%	0%
Nov-18	6%	6%	0%	0%
Dec-18	3%	3%	0%	0%
Jan-19	3%	5%	0%	0%
Feb-19	5%	5%	0%	0%
Mar-19	6%	6%	0%	0%
Apr-19	4%	4%	0%	0%
May-19	6%	6%	0%	0%
Jun-19	5%	5%	0%	0%
Jul-19	3%	6%	0%	0%
Aug-19	3%	6%	0%	0%
Sep-19	2%	5%	0%	0%
Oct-19	3%	6%	0%	0%
Nov-19	3%	5%	0%	0%
Dec-19	1%	4%	0%	0%
Jan-20	1%	1%	0%	0%
Feb-20	2%	4%	0%	0%
Mar-20	1%	2%	0%	0%
Apr-20	0%	0%	0%	0%
May-20	0%	0%	0%	0%
Jun-20	0%	0%	0%	0%
Jul-20	0%	0%	0%	0%
Aug-20	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sep-20	0%	0%	0%	0%
Oct-20	0%	4%	0%	0%
Nov-20	1%	4%	0%	0%
Dec-20	0%	2%	0%	0%
Jan-21	0%	3%	0%	0%
Feb-21	1%	3%	0%	0%
Mar-21	1%	3%	0%	0%
Apr-21	1%	4%	0%	0%
May-21	1%	4%	0%	0%

2. As at 31 May 2021, 88 per cent of participants with a Participation Plan and mutual obligation requirements self-report through the Job Seeker app or jobactive website. Providers report on behalf of the remaining 12 per cent after contacting participants (usually via phone) for advice on whether they attended their activity. Where a participant who has agreed in their Participation Plan to report activities to their provider but has failed to communicate an attendance with their provider, the provider may record *Did Not Attend – Invalid* and a payment suspension would be triggered if the participant does not make contact with a valid reason within the two day resolution period. Once the provider is notified of the participant's attendance, their re-engagement requirement would be removed and their payment would be re-instated.

Providers report on participant attendance at provider appointments. If the provider attempts to contact the job seeker following non-attendance but is unsuccessful, they record *Did Not Attend – Invalid* and a payment suspension would be triggered if the participant does not make contact with a valid reason within the two day resolution period. Given this process, it would be rare that an appointment is resulted as *Did Not Attend - Invalid* when the participant actually attended.

3. If a participant does not meet re-engagement requirements for 28 days following a payment suspension, their payment is cancelled. This has occurred for 1,223 participants out of a total of 161,734 between 2 July 2018 and 31 May 2021.
4. Between 2 July 2018 and 31 May 2021, 1,223 participants have had their Parenting Payment cancelled due to failing to re-engage for 28 days following a payment suspension. 455 have subsequently reapplied for Parenting Payment.
5. Resolution time does not impact the application of demerits or cancellations:
  - Both before and after the introduction of resolution time, participants would avoid a demerit if they had a valid reason for not meeting their requirement.
  - Both before and after the introduction of resolution time, participants would have a demerit applied if they did not have a valid reason for missing their requirement.
  - The 28 day period for participants to re-engage before their payment is cancelled, starts from the time their payment is suspended. With resolution time, participants now effectively get a total of 30 days to re-engage with their provider after a missed requirement and avoid payment cancellation.

Since 7 December 2020, participants have a two-business day resolution time period, to contact their provider to discuss the mutual obligation failure before a payment suspension is applied.

In the six months following the introduction of resolution time, **37 per cent** of non-compliance events were resolved within two business days and did not result in a payment suspension. The below table provides a breakdown of this information by cohort:

**Table: Non Compliance by cohort 7 December 2020 – 31 May 2021**

Demographic	Non-compliance events	Suspension applied	Suspension not applied (resolved)	Percentage of suspensions avoided
All Participants	31,668	20,022	11,646	37%
Males	2,048	1,333	715	35%
Females	29,620	18,689	10,931	37%
Indigenous	11,905	7,985	3,920	33%
Single	27,153	17,232	9,921	37%

Persons with a Disability	4,394	2,690	1,704	39%
Homeless	2,670	1,747	923	35%
CALD	3,721	2,302	1,419	38%

## Joint Committee on Human Rights

### Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 25 June 2021

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000087**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

#### ***Lost payments***

##### **Question**

Please set out the number of instances in which a person has lost 1 weeks' and 2 weeks' payment due to a mutual obligation failure in the penalty zone of the Targeted Compliance Framework, broken down by participant demographic, from 1 July 2018 to the current date. How many of those people have subsequently had their payments cancelled?

##### **Answer**

From 1 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, out of a total of 161,734 ParentsNext participants, there have been 10 instances in which a participant has lost 1 weeks' payment, and less than five instances in which a person has lost 2 weeks' payment, due to a mutual obligation failure in the penalty zone of the Targeted Compliance Framework. Less than five participants subsequently had their payment cancelled for a third mutual obligation failure in the penalty zone. A breakdown of participants by demographic is below:

Cohort	1 weeks' payment suspension	2 weeks' payment suspension	Subsequent Payment Cancellation
Female	10	<5	<5
Male	0	0	0
Indigenous	<5	<5	0
Single	10	<5	<5
Persons with a Disability	<5	0	0
Homeless	<5	0	0
CALD	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>&lt;5</b>	<b>&lt;5</b>

Note: Participant can be in multiple cohorts.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000088**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Payments from 1 July 2018***

**Question**

1. How many ParentsNext participants have had their payments cancelled from 1 July 2018 to the current date (broken down by year and participant demographic; and including the total number of ParentsNext participants at the relevant time). How many of those people subsequently re-applied for Parenting Payment (also broken down by demographic and year)?
2. From 1 July 2018 to the current date, how many ParentsNext participants have had their payments suspended or cancelled due to a mutual obligation failure and have dropped out of the program permanently as a result. Does the department monitor how those persons meet their basic needs in practice?
3. From 1 July 2018 to the current date, how many ParentsNext participants have been in the warning zone and the penalty zone of the Targeted Compliance Framework (broken down by month and participant demographic; and including the total number of ParentsNext participants at the relevant time).



## Answer

1. Parenting Payment cancellations can be triggered by participants reporting a change in circumstances to Services Australia (e.g. due to finding work, moving to a different payment type, or a range of other circumstances), as well as being a result of the Targeted Compliance Framework. From 1 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, 23,830 participants have had their payment cancelled and, as a result, exited the program.

Of these, 1,223 participants (<1 per cent of all participants) have had their payment cancelled due to not re-engaging with the program for 28 days following a payment suspension. The following table provides a breakdown of these participants by year and demographic.

Measure	2018	2019	2020	2021
All Participants with a Cancellations	193	799	55	182
All Participants	66,826	110,346	112,891	91,882
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.3%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%
Indigenous Cancellations	33	165	8	35
Indigenous Participants	11,959	20,440	21,205	17,931
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.3%	0.8%	0.0%	0.2%
Female Cancellations	174	704	51	157
All Female Participants	63,206	103,951	106,552	87,065
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.3%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%
Male Cancellations	19	95	4	25
Male Participants	3,620	6,395	6,339	4,817
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.5%	1.5%	0.1%	0.5%
Cancellations for those with Disability	24	86	3	16
Participants with Disability	8,987	15,658	16,912	13,909
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%
Homeless Cancellations	6	45	2	12
Homeless Participants	3,171	5,413	5,462	4,637
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.3%
CALD Cancellations	51	136	8	35
CALD Participants	13,448	21,877	22,776	18,540
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%
Single Parent Cancellations	131	622	55	138
Single Parent Participants	53,369	88,538	89,399	72,305
Proportion of cohort with cancellation	0.2%	0.7%	0.1%	0.2%

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts. Participants can also start new instances of receiving Parenting Payment in multiple years following a cancellation, hence the sum of cells will not equal the total.*

455 participants who have had their payment cancelled after a 28-day suspension period have subsequently come back on to Parenting Payment. The following table provides a breakdown of these participants by demographic and year.

Demographic	2018	2019	2020	2021
Female	85	307	13	16
Male	8	27	0	<5
Indigenous	20	79	<5	9
Single	71	287	13	17
Persons with a Disability	11	34	0	0
Homeless	5	24	0	<5
CALD	19	47	<5	0
Total	93	334	13	18

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts. Participants can also start new instances of receiving Parenting Payment in multiple years following a cancellation, hence the sum of cells will not equal the total*

- From 1 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, 1,223 ParentsNext participants have had their Parenting Payment cancelled due to not re-engaging with their provider within 28 days after a payment suspension.

Less than five parents have had their payment cancelled as a result of having three mutual obligation failures while in the penalty zone.

The Department does not monitor participants once they exit the program.

3. From 1 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, 14,213 ParentsNext participants have entered the 'Warning Zone' under the Targeted Compliance Framework. The following table provides a break down of participants who entered the Warning Zone for the first time by month and cohort.

Month	Female	Male	Indigenous	Single	Person with a Disability	Homeless	CALD	Total Participants*
Jul-18	6	0	<5	5	0	<5	0	5,583
Aug-18	82	<5	26	78	6	6	14	17,041
Sep-18	128	9	38	111	15	7	21	29,192
Oct-18	232	12	55	204	27	15	42	42,284
Nov-18	343	28	102	331	50	20	44	54,909
Dec-18	270	23	87	256	35	21	32	63,471
Jan-19	411	29	130	390	62	33	60	68,205
Feb-19	615	47	181	574	88	44	92	70,298
Mar-19	699	55	247	652	99	57	87	72,373
Apr-19	419	41	147	400	59	35	49	72,511
May-19	678	70	261	655	95	51	81	73,604
Jun-19	621	46	228	584	85	49	65	73,941
Jul-19	596	60	223	577	83	50	60	75,134
Aug-19	576	54	222	540	85	46	61	75,965
Sep-19	497	45	206	462	69	34	54	76,725
Oct-19	627	50	214	608	96	50	62	77,768
Nov-19	550	45	188	530	90	40	54	78,113
Dec-19	444	29	148	415	72	32	40	77,955
Jan-20	84	<5	28	69	14	<5	12	76,596
Feb-20	464	48	175	456	62	27	72	76,789
Mar-20	264	17	74	244	34	18	44	77,551
Apr-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76,667
May-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75,384
Jun-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74,147
Jul-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	72,842
Aug-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74,995
Sep-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	78,890
Oct-20	553	53	187	544	84	49	48	80,171
Nov-20	592	43	211	573	76	41	54	80,938
Dec-20	294	19	90	273	33	33	28	81,766
Jan-21	461	41	148	457	72	31	45	82,347
Feb-21	554	42	173	523	87	40	58	83,452
Mar-21	700	46	235	653	117	63	77	84,427
Apr-21	634	48	210	579	107	69	84	81,963
May-21	746	65	232	697	136	46	106	78,488

\* Represents the total participants serviced that month, not the total number of participants who have entered the warning zone in that month

N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.

From 1 July 2018 to 31 May 2021, 32 ParentsNext participants in total have entered the 'Penalty Zone' under the Targeted Compliance Framework. The following table provides a break down of participants who entered the Penalty Zone for the first time by month and cohort.

Month	Female	Male	Indigenous	Single	Person with a Disability	Homeless	CALD	Total Participants*
Jul-18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,583
Aug-18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17,041
Sep-18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29,192
Oct-18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42,284
Nov-18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54,909
Dec-18	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	0	0	63,471
Jan-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68,205
Feb-19	<5	0	<5	<5	0	<5	0	70,298
Mar-19	<5	0	0	<5	0	0	0	72,373
Apr-19	<5	0	0	<5	0	0	0	72,511
May-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73,604
Jun-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73,941
Jul-19	6	0	<5	6	0	<5	0	75,134
Aug-19	<5	0	<5	<5	0	0	0	75,965
Sep-19	<5	0	<5	<5	0	<5	0	76,725
Oct-19	<5	0	<5	<5	0	0	<5	77,768
Nov-19	5	0	<5	5	0	0	0	78,113
Dec-19	<5	0	<5	<5	0	0	0	77,955
Jan-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76,596
Feb-20	<5	0	0	<5	0	0	0	76,789
Mar-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77,551
Apr-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76,667
May-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75,384
Jun-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74,147
Jul-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	72,842
Aug-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74,995
Sep-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	78,890
Oct-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80,171
Nov-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80,938
Dec-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81,766
Jan-21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	82,347
Feb-21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	83,452
Mar-21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	84,427
Apr-21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81,963
May-21	<5	0	<5	<5	0	0	0	78,488

\* Represents the total participants serviced that month, not the total number of participants who have entered the warning zone in that month

*N.B. Participants can appear in multiple cohorts.*

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000089**

Dr Anne Webster MP provided in writing.

***Family violence from 1 July 2018***

**Question**

From 1 July 2018 to the current date, how many ParentsNext participants (by demographic and as a percentage of the total) have advised that they have experienced family violence?

**Answer**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Number<sup>1</sup> of Participants</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Female	7,667	97%
Male	247	3%
Indigenous	1,774	22%
Single	7,405	94%
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	645	8%
Homeless	1,103	14%
Person with a Disability	1,797	23%

<sup>1</sup>Participants can be represented in multiple categories.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000096**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

***Longest suspension period of benefits***

**Question**

Can you please provide details on what the longest suspension period of benefits has been?

**Answer**

Please refer to the department's response to IQ21-000085.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000097**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

***Children removed from families***

**Question**

Can you please provide data on the number of children removed from families as a result of parents not complying with the program. How many of these are from First Nations families? How many of these are removed permanently? On average, how long are children being removed from their families?

**Answer**

Nil.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000098**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

***Demerits and suspensions***

**Question**

Can you please provide a list of demerits and suspensions applied per ParentsNext provider?

**Answer**

The department does not release contract-specific demerit and suspension data, as it has the potential to undermine the integrity of the program.



**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000099**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

***Services available for First Nations program***

**Question**

Can you please provide me with a list of services available for First Nations program to assist them with the particular challenges they face as First Nations people?

**Answer**

ParentsNext providers support all participants by providing personalised and culturally appropriate assistance in accordance with clause 63.1 of the ParentsNext Deed 2018-2024. This clause requires services be delivered in a culturally sensitive way.

Support services to address challenges First Nations people may face can include, but are not limited to:

- connecting with Elders in the community
- counselling and support for those with physical and mental health issues
- counselling and support for those experiencing family violence
- assistance with secure housing, and
- assistance to complete year 12 or to undertake vocational training.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000100**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

***Parents find employment***

**Question**

Can you please provide data on how many parents find employment as a result of the program?

**Answer**

As at 31 May 2021 39,928 participants had commenced employment after participating in the program.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000101**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

#### ***Participating parents experience ParentsNext***

##### **Question**

Can you please provide data on how participating parents experience ParentsNext?

##### **Answer**

The Social Research Centre was commissioned by the department to conduct a ParentsNext survey as part of the data collection for the ParentsNext national expansion evaluation. The survey of ParentsNext participants was conducted from October to December 2020 to understand participant experiences of ParentsNext. Responses were received from 2260 participants via Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing and online surveys. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representative coverage of the participant population.

- Most participants (more than 90% in each case) agreed that their provider had explained what ParentsNext was, explained how they would assist them, explained their participation obligations, and talked to them about their employment and education goals.
- Almost all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their provider had treated them with dignity and respect (93.9%), and that they had tried to understand respondents' needs (86.0%).
- Almost two in three felt their provider had improved their chances of meeting their education or employment goals (63.5%).
- More than half felt their provider improved their chances of getting a job in the future (54.9%). The most common forms of assistance received from providers were:
  - creating a plan to help them reach their goals (75.7%)
  - helping them to find and undertake training or study (58.8%)
  - advising about the types of jobs that would suit their skills and abilities (56.3%).
- During COVID-19 restrictions, participation requirements in the ParentsNext program were eased. Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the easing of requirements was helpful to them (77.2%). Three in five (60.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that they participated in fewer activities due to the changes in requirements.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000102**

Senator Lidia Thorpe provided in writing.

#### ***First Nations organisations***

##### **Question**

Can you please provide me with a list of First Nations organisations consulted in the design and the implementation of this program?

##### **Answer**

The following Indigenous organisations were consulted during the expansion of ParentsNext:

- Aarnja Aboriginal Regional Body
- Cape York Partnership
- Kaiela Institute
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner
- Supply Nation
- Kullarri Regional Communities Indigenous Corporation (ParentsNext provider) and
- Kuditi – formerly PEEDAC (ParentsNext provider).

Additionally, the consultation process for the Closing the Gap employment services package announced in the 2017-18 Budget informed the national expansion of ParentsNext. The following organisations, foundations, individuals, and state and territory government departments were consulted in through this process:

- Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, South Australian Department of State Development (SA Government)
- Aboriginal Affairs NSW (NSW Government)
- Aboriginal Employment Strategy
- ACCORAS
- Advance Personnel Management
- AMES Employment
- Atwork Australia
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Australian Council of Social Service
- Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME)
- Axis Employment
- BEST Employment
- Business Council of Australia
- Cape York Institute
- CareerTrackers

- Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR)
- Communicare Inc
- Department of Aboriginal Affairs (WA Government)
- Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (QLD Government)
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources (Victorian Government)
- Downs Street Industry Co-Op Inc
- Eworks Employment Solutions Inc
- First Australians Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- GenerationOne
- Global Skills
- Inner Melbourne VET Cluster
- Jobs Australia
- Job Prospects - SYC Limited
- John Perry
- Max Employment
- MADEC Australia
- Mission Australia
- National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (Funded by the Indigenous Land Corporation)
- National Employment Services Association (NESA)
- Northern Australian Alliance - Advance Cairns
- Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (ACT Government)
- Quality Innovation Training and Employment
- Reconciliation Australia
- Shane Phillips - Empowered Communities/Tribal Warriors
- Skills 360
- Social Ventures Australia
- Supply Nation
- The Salvation Army Employment Plus
- Vocational Partnerships Group Far North Queensland
- Warren Mundine
- Western District Employment Access
- Wirrapanda Foundation
- Women in Prison Advocacy Network (WIPAN)
- Workskil Australia
- Workways Coact
- Yarn'n Aboriginal Employment Services.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000103**

Senator Lidia Thorpe on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 51

***Parents experiences***

**Question**

Ms Shannon: No, that's not our position. I would echo Ms O'Regan's comment that we're not dismissing or dismissive of people's experience of the program. I would suggest that many of the advocacy groups that have presented evidence and have strong views about the program see parents whose experience may not be as we would all want, but perhaps they also don't see the stories that we see of parents who have benefited from the program. So I guess we are trying to see both perspectives. If I were to put some evidence behind our view, we survey parents and we ask them questions about their experience of the program and their provider, and the sort of assistance that they've received from their providers, and I can give you some figures. For example—

Senator THORPE: That's great, and what we've also heard are selected samples. If you could take that on notice and provide that information—

**Answer**

IQ21-000101 refers.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000104**

Senator Lidia Thorpe on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 51

#### ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services***

##### **Question**

Ms Robertson: We actually have about a hundred Indigenous organisations that work in some capacity alongside ParentsNext providers to assist in servicing Indigenous parents in a culturally sensitive way. Some of the strategies employed include engaging local Indigenous individuals as staff members, connecting with elders in the community and working with local Indigenous organisations and programs. In addition, we have six Indigenous organisations that are actually providers of the ParentsNext program. We do similar things for people who are culturally and linguistically diverse as well.

Senator THORPE: Great. Could you provide a list of those services for the committee?

Ms Robertson: Sorry, could you repeat that, please?

Senator THORPE: Could you please provide a list of those services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and for multicultural communities?

Ms Robertson: Yes.

##### **Answer**

Currently six Indigenous organisations are contracted to deliver ParentsNext. These organisations are:

- Bamara Pty Ltd
- Complete Personnel
- KornarWinmil Yunti Aboriginal Corporation
- Kuditi – formerly Peedac
- Kullari Regional Communities Indigenous Corporation
- Wugu Nyambil Limited

Based on the commitments made when tendering to deliver ParentsNext, providers have relationships with over 100 Indigenous organisations (IQ21-000109 refers) and a range of organisations that support parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

There are no specific providers that are designated as multicultural. Rather, services to multicultural communities are generally location and site based. All providers are required to have in place appropriate support and servicing strategies for their participants, based on need.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000105**

Senator Lidia Thorpe on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 51

***Demerits and suspensions breakdown***

**Question**

Senator THORPE: Could you also provide a breakdown of demerits and suspensions applied by the ParentsNext providers?

Ms Robertson: Yes. Did you want me to read some of those out now, or do you want that on notice?

Senator THORPE: In the interests of time, I'm happy to have that on notice.

**Answer**

Please refer to the department's response to IQ21-000098.



**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: | Emp | Deputy Secretary - Nathan Smyth**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000106**

Senator / MP Lidia Thorpe on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 52

***Suspension waiting period***

**Question**

Ms Robertson: Four days is the average amount of days for suspension. What I'm saying is that any payment suspension is usually resolved within four business days. That is the average.

Senator THORPE: Including back pay?

Ms Robertson: Yes, they are always back paid in a suspension case.

Senator THORPE: But that's an average. What would be the longest waiting period?

Ms Robertson: I would probably have to take that on notice, but I can tell you that 64 per cent were lifted within three business days.

**Answer**

Please refer to the department's response to IQ21-000085.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000107**

Mr Graham Perrett MP on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page

#### ***Exemption requirements***

##### **Question**

Ms Robertson: As providers are meeting with the participants, each type of exemption has a specific documentary evidence requirement. They have to take that into account. When they're making decisions under social security law, they have to take this into account. That is part and parcel of the service they are providing to participants in the program. We ask them to do that under the deed.

Mr PERRETT: Could you talk me through, say, the sorry business documentation? What would be required—photos at a funeral?

Ms Robertson: I would have to take the specifics on notice. In relation to sorry business, you said?

Mr PERRETT: Yes, sorry business. Having four children—if you could give a few examples, that would be good.

Ms Robertson: Yes.

##### **Answer**

Documentary evidence requirements for exemptions are outlined in the [ParentsNext Guidelines](#).

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000108**

Senator Patrick Dodson on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 54-55

***Consultation feedback***

**Question**

Ms Pitt: Essentially, as a result of the feedback that we got as part of the ParentsNext 2018 procurement process, all providers had to identify diverse strategies to ensure culturally competent servicing of the culturally diverse participants, in particular Indigenous participants. Other feedback from Indigenous organisations that was addressed in the design of the program's national expansion include ensuring the program has a strong focus on supporting participants' experience in family and domestic violence; ensuring additional resources about childcare assistance are available to providers and participants; expanding the range of financial assistance available through the Participation Fund, by including a category for participant support to fund appropriate expenditure including for counselling, driving lessons and items to support training—

Senator DODSON: We're going to run out of time, I'm sorry—

Ms Pitt: And a review of Services Australia's—

Senator DODSON: Did you collate that data specific to First Nations peoples—that you sought from people?

Ms O'Regan: The feedback received as part of those consultations?

Senator DODSON: Yes.

Ms O'Regan: I'd have to take that on notice.

Senator DODSON: You don't know whether you collated it?

Ms O'Regan: I don't think we have anyone at the table who was personally involved at the time.

Senator DODSON: Take it on notice and, if you have a copy of it, we wouldn't mind having that presented to this committee.

**Answer**

Please refer to IQ21-000073 and IQ21-000102.

## **Joint Committee on Human Rights**

### **Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

#### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

#### **Outcome: Employment**

#### **Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000109**

Senator Patrick Dodson on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 55

#### ***Indigenous organisations***

##### **Question**

Senator DODSON: ... You also mentioned there are 100 Indigenous organisations that provide services to parents alongside the ParentsNext providers. Are they resourced to provide these services in addition to their function? What's their function? Are they resourced to help deliver this program?

Ms Robertson: I can talk in general terms. If you get into specifics, I will have to take that on notice. But I think there would be a lot of organisations that are already funded to do other services within a particular community. It would be about making sure that the ParentsNext provider within that particular area actually has those connections to other services that are being provided by other Indigenous organisations. On the 100 that we are actually aware of that collaborate in some way with ParentsNext providers, I could take it on notice and get the list of those 100 and provide that back to you.

Senator DODSON: That would be useful. Thank you.

##### **Answer**

ParentsNext providers currently collaborate with over 100 Indigenous organisations, including:

- Aboriginal Family Support Services
- Apunipima – Cape York Health Council
- Armajun Aboriginal Health Service Aboriginal Corporation
- Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-Operative
- Bara Barang
- Birrang Enterprises
- Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre
- Booroongen Djugun
- Bungree Aboriginal Association
- Bush Mob Aboriginal Corporation
- Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation
- CAAPS Aboriginal Corporation
- Central Queensland Indigenous Development
- Children's Ground
- Coffs Harbour & District Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Central Queensland Indigenous Development
- Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Darug Custodians Aboriginal Corporation
- Darumbal Youth Services
- Deadly Choices

- Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Dieri Aboriginal Corporation Service
- First Peoples Disability Network Australia
- Five Bridges
- Ganang Little Learners Playgroup – Gudjagang Ngara li-Dhi Aboriginal Corporation
- Ganyjuu Family Support Centre
- Gidarjil
- Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative
- Glen Innes Aboriginal Land Council
- Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operative
- Goorie Galbans
- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd
- Gundoo Early Childhood Centre
- Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Gunida Gunyah Aboriginal Corporation
- Gunya Aboriginal Corporation
- Gunyah of Wellness Aboriginal Medical Service
- Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service
- Healing Waters, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Counselling and Wellbeing Service - An Initiative of the Healing Foundation
- Helem Yumba CQ Healing Centre
- Hippy Inala - Inala Indigenous Health Centre of Excellence
- Hymba Yumba Independent School Springfield
- IJC The MaraWay Community Hub
- Inala Wangarra Inc
- InComPro Aboriginal Association Incorporated
- Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network
- Indigenous Workstars
- Institute for Urban and Indigenous Health
- Jabalbina Aboriginal Corporation
- Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Jellurga Aboriginal Cultural Hub
- Jullums House - Rekindling the Spirit Health Service
- Juwarki Kapu-Lug Ltd
- Kabi Kabi Aboriginal Corporation
- Kahwun - Wooga Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Corporation for Community Development
- Kal'ang Respite Centre
- Kalwun Development Corporation
- Kambu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Health
- Kari Aboriginal Resources
- Kimberwalli
- Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation
- Koobara Kindergarten and Pre-prep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation
- Kooricare Aboriginal Corporation
- Krurungal Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Welfare, Resource and Housing
- Kumarra
- Kura Yelo
- Kurbingui Zillmere
- Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust
- Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
- Link-up (QLD) Aboriginal Corporation

- Logan District Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Aboriginal Corporation For Elders
- Lyndon Gubbi Gubbi Dance Troup
- Macleay Valley Local Education Consultative Committee
- Mallee District Aboriginal Co-Operative
- Many Rivers
- Marabisda
- Maraway Assistance HUB
- Marrin Weejali Aboriginal Corporation
- Maryborough Aboriginal Corporation for Housing and Cultural Development
- MiiMi's Aboriginal Corporation
- Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Mindle Bygul Aboriginal Corporation
- Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Women's Centre
- Muloobinba Aboriginal Corporation
- Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation Primary Health Care Service
- Nunkuwarrin Yunti
- Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation
- Pika Wiya Aboriginal Health Service
- Rainbow Crow Cultural Collective
- Refocus
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative/Football Netball Club
- SEVGEN - Deadly Espresso Cafe
- Shellharbour Aboriginal Community Youth Association
- Staying on Track
- Strong Woman Talking (Marigurim Mubi Yangi Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Corporation)
- South West Rocks Figtree Descendants Aboriginal Corporation
- Tamworth Local Aboriginal Lands Council
- Taree Indigenous Development and Employment
- Tauondi Aboriginal College
- Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation
- The Armidale & Region Cultural Centre
- Tribal Warrior Aboriginal Corporation
- Ungaroo Aboriginal Corporation
- Yoorana Gunya
- Walhallow Aboriginal Corporation
- Wandiyali Aboriginal Community and Childrens Centre
- Wan-Yaari Aboriginal Co-operative
- Warrigal Employment
- Yarn'n Aboriginal Employment Services
- Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Corporation
- Yerin Aboriginal Health Services Limited
- Yuibera Aboriginal Corporation.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000110**

Senator Patrick Dodson on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 55

***People in the remote areas***

**Question**

Ms Robertson: At the moment, it's in relation to those participants who were in the intensive program. With the changes that will come in on 1 July, the participation funding would be available to anybody who is part of the program, whether they are a compulsory participant or whether they're a voluntary—

Senator DODSON: Sure. Can you take on notice the capacity for people in the remote areas to actually access this Participation Fund? What flexibility does that give them to meet a range of disabilities that are already inherent by living in the bush?

**Answer**

ParentsNext is delivered across 51 jobactive employment regions which can be found at [lmip.gov.au](http://lmip.gov.au). ParentsNext is not delivered in remote areas.

**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000111**

Senator Patrick Dodson on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page 55

***Consultation with SNAICC***

**Question**

Senator DODSON: I have one last question. Did you consult SNAICC, the First Nations peak body that deals with First Nations children?

Ms Robertson: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator DODSON: You would think you would know if you consulted SNAICC about children's rights. Anyway, take it on notice and I look forward to your answer.

**Answer**

Refer to IQ21-000102



**Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Inquiry into ParentsNext: Examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Instrument 2021**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Date of hearing: 25 June 2021**

**Outcome: Employment**

**Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ21-000112**

Dr Anne Webster MP on 25 June 2021, Proof Hansard page

***Evaluations and participation***

**Question**

CHAIR: I have a couple more questions that you can take notice. Has there been any public evaluation since 2018? Are there any independent evaluations? What would be the effect if there was no legislative instrument specifying a class of persons as compulsory participants? I would assume that's in the intensive stream at the moment. Would this mean parents could then just participate on a voluntary basis? My understanding is that you have—

Ms O'Regan: Just to clarify, if the current class of persons instrument is disallowed then the previous instrument would then be revived. So the earlier eligibility would resume.

CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. What is the average number of activities specified in a participation plan? We have a minimum of one. We understand that. But what is the average?

**Answer**

Please refer to the department's response to IQ21-000072.

The department does not have the specific data available.

However, the department can advise that between 1 July 2018 and 31 May 2021, the average time a participant spends in the ParentsNext program is 13 months and that on average, participants have had an average of five activities in their participation plan over the course of their time in the program.