

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Social Services Portfolio

Department of Social Services

2025-26 Supplementary Budget Estimates

Topic: Partial Capacity to Work

Question reference number: DSS SQ25-000785

Question asked by: Penny Allman-Payne

Outcome Number: 1 - Social Security

Type of Question: Written **Hansard Page/s:** N/A

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 29 January 2026

Question:

Provide the number of people in Disability Employment Services who have been assessed as having a partial capacity to work and received a participation suspension, including deferred and immediate suspensions, from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, broken down by the following cohorts:

- Acquired brain impairment
- Amputation
- Cancer/Tumour
- Congenital Abnormalities
- Chronic Pain
- Circulatory System
- Endocrine & Immune System
- Gastro-intestinal system
- Infectious diseases
- Inherited disorders
- Intellectual/Learning
- Musculo-Skeletal & Connective Tissue
- Nervous System
- Psychological/Psychiatric
- Reproductive System
- Respiratory System
- Skin disorder and burns
- Sense organs
- Urogenital system
- Visceral disorder

Answer:

During the 2024-25 financial year, 69,208 Disability Employment Services (DES) participants with a partial capacity to work had a total of 166,306 payment suspensions. Payment suspension refers to instances where participants do not re-engage within two business days and a suspension transaction is sent to Services Australia, resulting in subsequent suspension. A payment suspension does not necessarily result in a financial penalty. Further DES data, including definitions is available at <https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/disability-employment-services-targeted-compliance-framework>.

Note - as DES participants often have multiple disabilities there is a substantial duplication effect when counting the number of participation suspensions by disability type.

The categories of disabilities and illnesses are based on the current structure of reporting of disabilities and illnesses for DES.

Table 1: All disability records - A participant may fit into more than one category

Acquired brain injury	2,714
Autism	3,945
Deafblind	36
Hearing	2,220
Intellectual	1,182
Neurological	11,266
Physical	94,289
Psychiatric	120,848
Specific Learning	8,289
Speech	238
Vision	2,996

Table 2: Primary disability record - One record per TCF event

Acquired brain injury	1,369
Autism	2,827
Deafblind	26
Hearing	829
Intellectual	670
Neurological	5,278
Physical	62,326
Psychiatric	87,861
Specific Learning	3,880
Speech	79
Vision	1,161
Total	166,306