

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000137

Senator Siewert provided in writing.

Question

Work for the Dole requirements for single parents

Are jobactive providers able to require single parents to undertake work for the dole despite their caring commitments? Is a client able to defer work for the dole during periods of caring responsibility, such as during school holidays?

Answer

Principal carer parents have part-time mutual obligation requirements of 30 hours per fortnight and participation in activities are typically scheduled during school hours (that is, generally between 9.00 am and 3.00 pm during school terms) unless it is otherwise agreed to by the parent.

Principal carer parents may choose to undertake Work for the Dole or other approved activities to meet their Annual Activity Requirement. In addition to Work for the Dole, other approved activities that will enable a principal carer parent to meet their Annual Activity Requirement include:

- part-time employment
- National Work Experience Programme placements
- voluntary work
- part-time study / training at :
 - Certificate III level or higher if commenced after a job seeker becomes subject to this activity requirement
 - Certificate I or II level if commenced prior to a job seeker becoming subject to this activity requirement
- the Skills for Education and Employment programme, Adult Migrant English Programme or other accredited language, literacy and numeracy courses
- other government programmes
- work-focused non-government programmes approved by the Department for the purposes of the Annual Activity Requirement.

During the long school holiday period, in recognition of their caring responsibilities at this time, principal carer parents are not required to participate in Work for the Dole or other activities during the fortnight in which the Christmas public holiday falls.

Principal carer parents do need to continue to meet their part-time requirements at all other times including during school holidays. However, if a principal carer parent is unable to obtain suitable child care, they will have a valid reason or reasonable excuse to not undertake that activity.