

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000918

Senator Paterson asked on 19 October 2016 on proof Hansard page 28

Question

JSA and jobactive risk assessment comparisons – Work for the Dole

Senator PATERSON: Do you have any documentation that would compare the two programs for us? You might have to take this on notice if it involves preparing something. But I am looking for a table which has the requirements under the old scheme shown against the requirements of the new scheme.

Ms Milliken: I will take that on notice.

Answer

The attached table outlines the key differences between the current Work for the Dole risk assessment requirements under jobactive and the previous risk assessment requirements under Job Services Australia.

Comparison of Work for the Dole Risk Assessment Requirements

jobactive	Job Services Australia
<p>A risk assessment must be conducted for each Work for the Dole activity and each job seeker being referred to the activity.</p> <p>As part of conducting the risk assessment (job seeker) the Provider must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check the risk assessment for the activity to ensure that the Work for the Dole Place is appropriate for the job seeker, taking into consideration any relevant circumstances and work restrictions, and • determine if relevant checks (for example, criminal record checks and Working with Vulnerable People Checks) have been finalised. 	<p>A risk assessment was required for each Work for the Dole activity. There was no requirement for a job seeker risk assessment.</p>
<p>All risk assessments must be conducted by a 'Competent Person'. A competent person is defined consistent with the Model Work Health and Safety Regulations.</p>	<p>There were no specific qualifications required for persons undertaking risk assessments.</p>
<p>Initial risk assessments are conducted by the Work for the Dole Coordinator or jobactive provider which sources the activity.</p>	<p>Risk assessments were conducted by the Provider.</p>
<p>Risk assessments must be monitored, reviewed and updated by the Lead Provider and must be updated if there are any proposed or actual changes to the circumstances or tasks being undertaken as part of the Work for the Dole activity.</p> <p>Any time the risk assessment (Place) is updated the Lead Provider must immediately notify other Providers with participants in the Work for the Dole Activity of the changes to the risk assessment (Place) so they can update their risk assessment (Job Seeker) and determine if the activity is still suitable for the job seeker.</p>	<p>Providers were required to review risks on a regular basis. Where a risk assessment indicated that an activity should be modified or should not go ahead, the provider was required to ensure appropriate action was taken.</p>

jobactive	Job Services Australia
<p>The requirements for risk assessments have been strengthened to include the specific type of information that <u>must</u> be captured in each risk assessment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all work health and safety issues and any other concerns at the site or premises where a job seeker will undertake the activity; • all steps and measures that will be put in place to mitigate any identified issues and concerns; • that the Host Organisation has adequate work health and safety processes in place to deliver the activity safely; • that the Host Organisation is compliant with legislative and regulatory obligations imposed on it in relation to work health and safety; • the nature, scope and duration of any training, including work health and safety training, required to be undertaken by the job seeker to conduct the activity task(s) safely at commencement and for the duration of the activity; • whether any specific personal protection equipment and clothing is required for the job seeker to participate safely in the activity; • the availability to the job seeker of appropriate facilities (such as access to drinking water and toilets) for the duration of the activity; and • supervision arrangements. <p>Where a risk assessment (Place) identifies significant work health and safety concerns that cannot be mitigated to create a safe working environment and/or cannot be adequately managed by the Provider and/or the Host Organisation, it must not be considered a suitable Work for the Dole Place.</p>	<p>The program guidelines provided broad guidance about the type of information to be <u>considered</u> when conducting risk assessments such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the environment in which the activity takes place, • nature of the risk, • cause of the risk, and • consequence of an adverse incident. <p>Providers were required to take all reasonable steps to minimise the likelihood of injury to job seekers and any other persons at the activity. Preventative actions that may be identified could include providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific safety equipment or clothing, • work health and safety or first aid training for either job seekers or personnel, or • additional insurance coverage, above the Department's purchased insurance (where relevant).
<p>Each risk assessment must include the compulsory Work for the Dole Assessment Checklist (Place) and this must be uploaded to the Department's IT system.</p>	<p>There was no such requirement.</p>

jobactive	Job Services Australia
Any time the risk assessment (Place) is updated the Lead Provider must immediately notify other Providers with participants in the Work for the Dole Activity of the changes so they can update their risk assessment (Job Seeker) and determine if the activity is still suitable for the job seeker.	There was no such requirement.