

Points Based Activation System

Information provided by the Targeted Employment Policy Branch of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations on 04-07-22

1. Family and domestic violence:

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations have made a commitment to explore why exemptions are low for both Workforce Australia and ParentsNext, why Services Australia does not grant exemptions. NCSMC has asked for longer period of exemption, and ways to prevent women from re-telling their experience. NCSMC has sought a meeting with personnel from Services Australia, Workforce Australia, ParentsNext and the DV team due to the systemic issues. NCSMC will present this as an issue in our formal submission.

2. Points System: Application (5 points)

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations does not have a remedy to grade applications. NCSMC will present this as an issue in our formal submission.

3. Study

Full-time study will be enough to meet the points requirement. NCSMC has sought clarification on how long school holidays and semester break will be treated. NCSMC has requested that full time study be for the full calendar year (standby for more information). Also see school holidays (No.9).
Reminder to review study assistance.

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/payments-you-can-get-for-higher-education?context=60078>

4. Transition and Exemptions

All existing exemptions will carry over to Workforce Australia.

5. Voluntary work

- a. 55 to 59 years can meet their obligations with a completed 15 hours of paid work and 15 hours are voluntary work per fortnight or through the other points system.
- b. After 12 months on payment, can undertake 30 hours per fortnight using any combination of voluntary and or paid work
- c. 60 plus years - 30 hours per fortnight using any combination of voluntary and or paid work or through the other points system

National Council for Single Mothers and their Children Inc.

Eliminate and respond to violence, hardship and inequality for single mothers and their children

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6. IT Concerns

Legislation covers privacy and we know that this will be considered inadequate for women who are concerned about a digital ID. NCSMC will present this as an issue in our formal submission and include the problematic nature of access, codes ect.

7. School Holidays

There is an arrangement whereby parents do not need to meet requirements at Christmas, outlined here: <https://guides.dss.gov.au/social-security-guide/3/11/8>. However more broadly than that, requirements must be tailored around individual circumstances. Family and caring responsibilities are specifically listed in social security law as factors that must be taken into account in determining requirements (in section 40F(e)).

8. The other job: single parenting

Single mothers who are principal carers have a maximum of 60 per month.

9. Regional & Rural needs

The minimum points allowed is 20. Factors to reduce it from the 60 to 20 includes an inability to gain childcare, no transport, poor labour market & health issues.

10. Foster Care exemption

Foster Care exemptions are available.

11. Intersection of DSP, with the high threshold, health care and single parenting

Medical needs can reduce the points from 60.

12. Other

13. No demerit points for the first 30 days of the new system.

14. If there is a “valid reason” for not making the points, presenting the valid reason, the subsequent connection can restore demerit points.

15. Lack of availability of childcare would be considered a valid reason/reasonable excuse for not meeting the points. <https://guides.dss.gov.au/social-security-guide/3/11/15> However, generally to be considered a valid reason/reasonable excuse, a person should give prior notice of an inability to meet requirements, provided it is reasonable to do so.

16. All Jobseekers commenced the new employment services system with a clean slate (no demerit points)

17. There are fuel vouchers available – always ask.

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