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Step 1: Understand your responsibilities

You must manage vacancies to reduce the time a room is unoccupied if you provide specialist disability accommodation (SDA). This includes:

- telling us within 5 days of a vacancy in an enrolled SDA home
- telling us when a participant moves in
- promoting the vacancy, including listing it on the NDIS SDA finder
- keeping the property in a good state of repair and making sure it's safe, clean and ready for a new resident
- preparing the home for a new resident including consulting with existing tenants about potential new housemates. You must respect their right to choose where they live and who they live with.

You must also meet the NDIS Practice Standards which has quality standards for tenancy management. This includes advertising and filling vacancies allowing for notice periods. Information about notice periods should be outlined in service agreements.

You should use advance notice periods to re-market the home and reduce the time a room is vacant.

Step 2: Check if you're eligible for specialist disability accommodation (SDA) vacancy payment

Not everyone will be eligible for an SDA vacancy payment. The NDIS (Specialist Disability Accommodation) Rules 2020 outline the very limited circumstances where SDA payments may continue after a participant leaves a shared home.

All the following conditions must apply:

- The home is enrolled to house 2 to 5 residents.
- The eligible participant either:

  - dies
  - gives notice they'll vacate the home
  - is given a notice to leave the home because of behaviours that might be a risk to other residents, staff or the participant.
- The room is available for another SDA-eligible participant.
- We've been notified.

The participant is treated as still living in the home in these situations until either:

- the vacancy is filled
- up to 60 days have passed for homes enrolled for 2 to 3 residents
- up to 90 days have passed for homes enrolled for 4 to 5 residents.

Step 3: Let us know if you have a specialist disability accommodation (SDA) vacancy

You must tell us within 5 business days if you have an SDA vacancy.

Send an email to sdaenrolment@ndis.gov.au with the vacancy date and dwelling address. Include your ABN, the number of vacancies and number of residents in the home.

You must also complete the SDA vacancy online form . You can also use the form to let us know if your vacancy is no longer available and you don't want it listed.

We'll confirm your vacancy will be added to the SDA finder within 5 days.

Step 4: Claim vacancy payment, if eligible

You may claim the SDA vacancy payment if the participant has moved out and a room is available. The vacancy payment only applies to the remaining eligible days after the participant physically moves out of the home.

We expect you to use the time between the notice to vacate and the vacancy itself to search for a new resident. This helps reduce the number of days the room is empty.

You must provide evidence of the notice to vacate to claim a vacancy payment. This can be either a notice from yourself or the resident.

You can't claim vacancy payments for newly built SDA homes that have never had a participant living in them.

Submit your evidence

You must submit your evidence and invoice for the relevant period via a payment enquiry in the my NDIS provider portal. Use the subject line ‘Participant vacancy payment’.

Evidence must include the:

- auto-reply email you received (as an attachment) when you emailed sdaenrolment@ndis.gov.au to notify us of the vacancy
- notice to vacate, such as a notice to vacate letter or email from the participant providing notice. Include behavioural risk evidence where you’re providing notice to the participant
- terminated service agreement, signed and dated by the participant. The service agreement will need to include the last date the participant resided in the SDA.

You’ll need to include evidence if a participant hasn’t provided a signed termination and has moved out of the home. We may then contact the participant or their representative to confirm the end of residency date. This isn’t needed if the participant has died.

The ‘SDA vacancy - person-specific adjustment’ line item ‘06_432_0131_2_2’ in the SDA pricing arrangements is used for vacancy payments.

You can only use this line item if:

- the home is enrolled to house 2 to 5 residents
- the participant left under one of the circumstances in the rules for vacancy payments
- the room was available to be filled by another SDA-eligible resident
- we were notified
- all required evidence to support the claim is provided.

You must tell us straight away when a new participant moves in

Vacancy payment requests can only be submitted in arrears once the period of 60 to 90 days has lapsed.

You must tell us straight away when a new participant moves in through the my NDIS provider portal. This is because the start of new SDA funding terminates any eligible vacancy claim period.

You’ll be in breach of your provider responsibilities if you don’t provide timely notification of a participant’s move-in date while claiming vacancy payment.

Step 5: Check the specialist disability accommodation (SDA) vacancy finder

Your home will be shown on our SDA finder after you've submitted the SDA vacancy form.

You can submit an enquiry through the my NDIS provider portal if you have a question or need help with your SDA vacancy.

Related information

Guide to providing specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

How to enrol a home as specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

Find specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

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