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What is the NDIS doing to help participants?

We have a number of temporary COVID-19 measures to support participants during the pandemic.

This page has information on what we are doing to help participants and is regularly updated.

Participants who have concerns about accessing their NDIS supports, should contact their service provider in the first instance.

You can also phone the NDIS Contact Centre on 1800 800 110 and select option 5 if your situation has changed due to COVID-19.

This includes if you are running out of funds in your plan.

All calls received relating to COVID-19 are prioritised.

For further health information about COVID-19 in your area, we encourage you to refer to local health orders in your state or territory.

We continue to work closely with all areas of Government to support participants with accessing their funded supports and services.

We will continue to monitor the changing situation and will update the measures listed below in due course.

General measures

We're continuing to help NDIS participants and their families receive the essential disability support they need and ensuring NDIS providers are equipped to offer these supports during the pandemic.

We've introduced new measures and enhanced existing measures to temporarily strengthen NDIS supports in response to COVID-19. You can explore these measures below.

Accessing the NDIS

- We have made [our Access Request form and Supporting Evidence form available for download](#) on our website.

Accessing supports

- Participants who have concerns about accessing their NDIS supports, should contact their service provider in the first instance. The provider may suggest different ways to deliver the support during this time.
- Participants can also contact their 'my NDIS contact' listed on their NDIS plan, or call the NDIS call centre.
- If participants are concerned that their NDIS supports and services are being withdrawn, without prior discussion or arrangements being made available by the provider, they should contact the [NDIS Commission](#) .
- The NDIS Commission has broad powers to take compliance and enforcement action when NDIS providers and their workers are found to not have met their obligations and duty of care requirements.

Assistive technology (AT)

- Participants can use their existing NDIS funds to buy low cost AT such as fitness equipment or smart devices to help access supports.
- [More information about low cost AT](#) for support continuity.

COVID-19 testing

- Eligible NDIS participants can [purchase rapid antigen tests \(RAT\)](#) with NDIS plan funding from their core budget. Your core supports budget is flexible and can be used temporarily to cover the cost of RATs.
- More than 1.2 million [RATs have been distributed](#) to providers and participants in higher-risk supported independent living settings.
- You are eligible to [receive free RATs from a participating community pharmacy](#) if you hold one of the following cards:
 - Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
 - Health Care Card
 - Low Income Health Care Card
 - Pensioner Concession Card
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold, White or Orange card.

COVID-19 vaccination

- The easiest way to access all COVID-19 vaccinations is by visiting the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#)
- The NDIA have partnered with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to make it [easier to access](#) the COVID-19 vaccine. NDIS participants can use this easy access link to [book a COVID-19 vaccine](#) .
- We are helping participants to access COVID-19 vaccinations by offering some providers [an additional payment to help you arrange your vaccinations](#). This payment is claimed directly from the NDIA and does not come out of your budget.
- All Australians must give informed consent before having the COVID-19 vaccine. If you want, you are able to have someone support you in your decision making.
- [Australian Technical Advisory Group \(ATAGI\)](#) recommends COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 6 months to <5 years with severe immunocompromise, disability, and those who have complex and/or multiple health conditions which increase the risk of severe COVID-19.
- More information for people with a disability about COVID-19 vaccines is available on the [Australian Government's Department of Health](#) website, including fact sheets providing information on how to manage needle phobia:
 - [Information for family and carers supporting a person with needle phobia](#)
 - [Information for adults with a needle phobia](#)
- COVID-19 vaccination and booster information is also available in [Easy Read](#) , [Auslan](#) and [other languages](#) .

Meal preparation and delivery

- Participants who usually have a support worker help them prepare meals at home or help with grocery shopping, can use these funds to pay for [meal preparation and delivery support](#) for a limited time.
- We made this support more flexible to help participants during COVID-19. This flexibility will now continue so you can change your arrangements for a short time.
- We recently updated [our guidelines on meal preparation](#) .

One-off deep clean

- If a participant has a support worker attending their home who later tests positive to COVID-19, then the participant will be able to access a [one-off deep clean](#).

Plans and plan reassessments

- NDIS plans may be automatically extended by up to 12 months, ensuring continuity of support.
- Face-to-face planning shifted to telephone meetings where possible.
- Increased flexibility within your budgets to purchase disability-supports.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Participants with a reasonable and necessary need for PPE when their disability worker is supporting them can use their NDIS funds to purchase PPE.
- From 1 January 2022, there has been a temporary increase in some NDIS price limits to cover the costs of support worker PPE. Providers should talk to you about what this will mean for the cost of your services.
- If you are concerned your funds are running low because of the increased costs of support worker PPE, you can call the NDIS on 1800 800 110 Monday to Friday, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. We have a dedicated option to allow you to identify if you have a COVID-19 related query.
- Visit the [health and safety page](#) for more information.

Self-managed participants

- All COVID-19 supports, temporary changes and resources are available to all participants, including those who are self-managing their plans.
- Self-managing participants should work with their providers to plan for any COVID-19 related disruptions to their supports and services. It is important that you develop and agree on options to manage disruptions with your providers. It is important for participants to make a COVID-19 plan that meets their needs. Visit the [Collaborating 4 Inclusion](#) website for further information for:
 - Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Planning for COVID-19 - For People with Disability toolkit
 - Easy Read Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Planning for COVID-19 - For People with Disability
 - My COVID-19 Plan template
- Self-managing participants can engage new registered or unregistered providers, change services or find new workers themselves at any time. Self-managing participants can get help from their family, friends, support coordinator or local area coordinator to find new providers.
- Self-managing participants can also change the way they manage their plan – talk to your NDIS contact to learn how you can move to Agency or plan management if you think that is right for you at this time.

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- We have a number of supports in place to assist all providers, registered or unregistered, when they are experiencing serious workforce disruptions. Self-managing participants can ask their providers to seek assistance from the NDIA by emailing provider.support@ndis.gov.au. More information about provider obligations and COVID-19 supports is available on the [For providers - coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) page.

Supported independent living

- To help participants in [supported independent living](#) (SIL) during COVID-19, we have introduced support items for cleaning services and higher intensity support.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) planning resource for people with disability

Collaborating 4 Inclusion has worked with the Australian Government Department of Health to develop a guide which helps people with disability to get the facts about coronavirus (COVID-19) and make a plan for how to manage the impact.

It is important Australians with disability can make a coronavirus (COVID-19) plan that meets their needs.

Visit the [Collaborating 4 Inclusion website](#) for further information.

Read our FAQs

[Your health and safety](#)

[Your plan](#)

[Using your budget](#)

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