



JobAccess

Boosts Employment of People with Disability and Mental Health Conditions

- Passes 100,000 Assisted Enquiry Milestone -

27 September 2011

The Australian Government's JobAccess service today revealed growing demand had pushed it past the "100,000 assisted" enquiry milestone as employers and people with disability and mental health conditions use it to help gain and sustain employment.

JobAccess is a free-of-charge service that provides expert advice and other assistance that connects people with disability, employers and other job support services. JobAccess is delivered by WorkFocus Australia under Government contract.

Minister for Employment Participation and Child Care, Kate Ellis congratulated JobAccess on achieving this significant milestone.

"Opening the workplace up to people with disability makes good business sense in terms of productivity, safety outcomes and profits and it allows employers to tap into a workforce they may not have considered before." Ms Ellis said.

"The importance of the work JobAccess is doing is critical to promoting the contribution that people with disability make to our economy and increasing their ability to participate in the job market and broader Australian society."

WorkFocus Australia Chief Executive Mr Robert Gordon said: "Our task is to keep growing awareness and use of JobAccess to assist better job outcomes for people with disability and mental health conditions. JobAccess is at the frontline of a range of services to assist employers and people with disability. We are proud to have reached the 100,000 enquiry milestone with the Government."

"Australia is facing serious skills shortages, however the wider community often underestimates the contribution that people with disability can make and the quality and quantity of services that are there to help."

Minister Ellis, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, WorkFocus Australia, JobAccess service users, other disability employment service organisations and disability representative groups recognised the JobAccess 100,000 enquiry landmark at an event in Melbourne today.

Further information:

- Office of Minister Kate Ellis: Jamila Rizvi 0438 644 603
- WorkFocus Australia: Justine Vari (03) 9469 3044, jvari.ndrc@workfocus.com
- www.jobaccess.gov.au and www.workfocus.com

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About JobAccess:

JobAccess is an information and advice service funded by the Australian Government which is provided under contract by WorkFocus Australia. It offers help and workplace solutions for people with disability and their employers. It is an initiative of the Australian Government to support the employment of people with disability, including mental health conditions.

JobAccess includes a comprehensive, easy to use website and a free telephone information and advice service where you can access confidential, expert advice on the employment of people with disability.

For job seekers and people already in work:

Are you a person with disability looking for work, or an employee with disability looking for some support or assistance with your work?

JobAccess provides advice on every stage of the employment process—preparing to look for work, how to look for jobs and, if you need it, support in the workplace once you've found a job.

For employers:

People with disability bring a range of skills, abilities and qualifications to the workplace. Many businesses already employ workers with disability because it makes good business sense:

- People with disability can have fewer accidents at work—the workers compensation costs for people with disability can be as low as four per cent of the workers compensation costs of other employees.
- People with disability can have lower absenteeism and often take less sick leave than other employees
- The costs of hiring people with disability can be significantly lower than hiring other employees—as low as 13 per cent of the cost of other employees.
- Employing people with disability can build staff morale, raise management awareness of workplace practices and conditions, and increase customer and staff loyalty.

JobAccess has assisted employment of people with conditions including:

Amputation; Asperger's Syndrome; Autism; Back Injury; Bipolar Disorder; Blindness and Vision Impairment; Cerebral Palsy; Deafness and Hard of Hearing ; Depression; Down Syndrome; Mental Illness; Paraplegia and Quadriplegia.

For example, JobAccess and WorkFocus work with the deafness services innovator Ai-Media and its Ai-Live™ internet captioning service to assist people with deafness and hearing loss to participate easily in regular office meetings, access conferences, and function more effectively in the day-to-day workplace.

The Employment Assistance Fund:

The Employment Assistance Fund helps people with disability and mental health condition by providing financial assistance to purchase a range of work related modifications and services.

Assistance is available for people who are about to start a job or who are currently working, as well as those who require assistance to find and prepare for work.

The Fund may reimburse the cost of work related modifications and services including, but not limited to:

- The cost of modifications to the physical work environment
- Modifications to work vehicles
- Adaptive equipment for the workplace
- Information and communication devices
- Auslan interpreting
- Specialist services for employees with specific learning disorders and mental health conditions
- Disability awareness training
- Deafness awareness training, and
- Mental health awareness training

Recruitment agencies may also apply for reimbursement of Auslan interpreting that they provide for a job interview.

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