

How Do I Get Disability Support Pension?

You may be able to get Disability Support Pension if your health stops you from working. The rules are strict so it's important to get the right medical evidence to show Centrelink why you can't work.

What are the rules?

You will need to show Centrelink that:

- Your doctor has tried everything to improve your health. This is called having your condition "diagnosed, reasonably treated and stabilised".
- Your doctor thinks your health won't improve for at least 2 years. If your doctor thinks treatment may help, they'll need to explain to Centrelink that you still won't be able to work much even after you've started the new treatment.

Get your medical evidence

Collect medical evidence for all of your medical conditions. That includes things that are relatively minor but still limit your day-to-day activities like cooking, cleaning, washing and shopping.

The type of medical evidence you need will depend on your condition/s. Most people need medical evidence from their doctor and a specialist or other health professional. It can be time consuming and frustrating to wait for appointments but it's important to get the best evidence you can to support your claim.

If you check on [our website](#), you will find some resources that can help you get good medical evidence:

- [Introductory letter](#) to your doctor explaining the evidence you will need.
- [Template letters](#) your doctor can use so it's quicker to provide medical evidence to Centrelink.
- [Impairment Tables](#) used by Centrelink when they look at your medical evidence. It's useful if your doctor or health worker understands the Impairment Tables so that their medical evidence fits Centrelink's rules.

You can also find Centrelink's information for doctors – from the Services Australia site at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/disability-support-pension-information-for-health-professionals



Lodge your claim

You can lodge a claim for Disability Support Pension through your MyGov account or by filling out a paper form. You can find the form at www.servicessaustralia.gov.au/sa466

Are you still dealing with Job Network or Disability Employment Services?

If you're dealing with JobNetwork or Disability Employment Services but you're not well, you may be able to get a medical certificate so you don't have to look for work. You can get a medical certificate for up to 13 weeks, and you may be able to get it a second time if you're still unwell.

BUT, if you're thinking of getting a medical certificate it's important to know that it can slow down your claim for Disability Support Pension if you are required to do a [program of support](#). Any time you're exempted from a program of support with a medical certificate, it is not counted towards the 18-month program of support requirement.

Need to know more? Please [contact us for advice](#).

What if my claim is rejected?

If your Disability Support Pension claim is knocked back, you can appeal. Appealing is free. If you appeal within 13 weeks of your claim being rejected, and your appeal is successful, you can get back-pay to the date you put in your claim form.

If your claim is rejected, it's important to ask Centrelink why – including if there was any problem with the medical evidence.

You can also lodge a new claim, even if you also do an appeal. This is sometimes the fastest way to get things sorted, particularly if your health is worse than when you put in your first claim.

Claiming DSP is complicated. If you can't work out what has gone wrong, contact us and we can provide free advice.

You can find out more about Disability Support Pension at:

- <https://www.ejaustralia.org.au/fact-sheets/>
- www.servicessaustralia.gov.au/disability-support-pension

**You can contact us for free advice through our website at www.welfarerights.org.au
Or call us on 02 9211 5300 or 1800 226 028 - Monday or Wednesday, 9:30am to 12:30pm**

Welfare Rights Centre is a community legal centre that helps people who have a problem with Centrelink. We specialise in social security law and family assistance law, including the intersection of child support and social security payments.

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