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Australian Government

Services Australia

Cancellation of Disability Support Pension (DSP) 008-03130030

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Background

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This document outlines how to cancel DSP when a customer is no longer qualified or when they request cancellation. The Service Officer must make sure that cancellation is the correct action to take.

When a customer requests cancellation of their DSP

If the customer requests to cancel their DSP or submits a claim for another payment:

- Cancelling DSP can place vulnerable customers at risk
- Further actions must occur before cancelling DSP in these circumstances
- A customer-initiated request to cancel DSP is not a decision under Social Security Law, therefore once DSP is cancelled:
 - the decision will not be overturned at review, **and**
 - DSP cannot be restored on request of the customer, unless a Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA) has been completed and indicates they can be restored. See [Restoration of Disability Support Pension](#)

Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA)

When a vulnerable customer requests to cancel DSP, Assessment Services will complete a VMA. The VMA assesses all the medical evidence on the customer's record and gives a recommendation to staff about whether DSP should be cancelled or continued.

The VMA process:

- prevents vulnerable customers from cancelling their DSP when their medical condition impacts their decision-making capacity, and
- allows restoration of DSP (within 13 weeks of cancellation) when the customer is identified as vulnerable

When DSP may be cancelled

- The customer no longer meets the qualification and/or payability provisions for DSP. Once the record is updated, DSP will auto cancel. For example, a medical review based on a JCA determines the customer no longer meets DSP medical eligibility criteria:
 - DSP does not cancel immediately as a result of a DSP manual medical review or Payment Accuracy Reviews if the customer no longer meets impairment and/or CITW requirements
 - It is cancelled after 42 days from the date the JCA is accepted
- DSP was suspended for 2 years because the customer was imprisoned or in [psychiatric confinement](#) in connection with a criminal charge
- DSP was suspended for 2 years because the customer advised within the notification period a return to work or increase in income which precluded payment, and DSP has not been restored. **Note:** this is an auto cancellation
- The customer fails to comply with the notification requirement and/or customer obligations
- The customer's partner fails to take action to obtain a comparable foreign payment
- The customer has been advised that another pension or allowance is deemed more appropriate. For example, they [reach Age Pension age](#). If a DSP customer reaches Age Pension age, DSP auto cancels in most cases. Customers in the [DSP grandfathered group](#) who elect to transfer to another payment such as Carer Payment will lose their 'Grandfathered Status' if they decide to transfer back to DSP
- The customer dies
- The customer starts work of 30 hours or more per week at award wages and fails to notify within 14 days

When DSP is cancelled with a return to work reason, DSP is deemed suspended. This means payment may be restored if the customer ceases work or reduces hours of work to below 30 hours per week within 2 years.

However, if DSP is cancelled outside the notification period, before the customer notified they had started work of 30 hours a week or more, payment cannot be suspended or deemed to be suspended. It must be cancelled from the day work started.

Effect of PPL on DSP

For children born or entering care:

- from 1 October 2016, Paid Parental Leave (PPL) granted to the customer (and/or their partner) are treated as ordinary income for calculating the rate of payment for DSP
- prior to 1 October 2016, PPL was not treated as assessable income for DSP

PPL will not reduce DSP to nil rate. The customer would need to have other income for their rate to be reduced to nil and cancel. If DSP cancels due to other income, it may be reinstated depending on the customer's current circumstances. See [Restoration of Disability Support Pension](#).

Automatic and manual cancellations

Automatic cancellation will occur following reassessments when no continuing eligibility exists. For example, when a change of income or assets takes a customer over the income or assets threshold. When the income or assets are updated, the system will:

- calculate if the customer has lost eligibility and
- automatically cancel DSP due to income or assets

Payments may also be automatically cancelled when a customer is no longer eligible. For example, when a customer fails to return correspondence or provide a tax file number. In these cases, the system will set up a manual follow up (MFU) activity for action.

If a vulnerable and at risk customer remains without income support payment for a minimum of six weeks due to an automatic suspension or cancellation, the customer may be eligible for [manual intervention](#). **Note:** customers overseas permanently are not eligible for this initiative. Any MFUs generated for customers in this situation should be cancelled.

Manual cancellation is where a Service Officer makes a decision to cancel a customer's payment based on the applicable social security law and codes this as a direct cancellation.

Automatic cancellation is the preferred method. Manual cancellation of records should only occur when automatic cancellation by coding a change in circumstances is not available.

Related links

[Cancellation, suspension and rejection codes for Disability Support Pension \(DSP\)](#)

[Commencing or returning to work or self-employment Disability Support Pension \(DSP\)](#)

[Partner commencing or returning to work](#)

[Customer ceases work or reduces hours of employment within the two year suspension period for Disability Support Pension \(DSP\)](#)

[Disability Support Pension \(DSP\) customer going overseas](#)

[Restoration of Disability Support Pension \(DSP\)](#)

[Eligibility for Mobility Allowance \(MOB\) and rates](#)

[Providing services to customers with disabilities](#)

[Work Bonus and balance for pensioners of Age Pension age](#)

[Transitional rules for pension customers who were on payment at 19 September 2009](#)

[Income Test for single pension customers](#)

[Income Test for partnered pension customers](#)

[Income Test for Disability Support Pension customer who is under 21 years, with no dependent children and with affecting income at 19 September 2009](#)

[Income Test for Disability Support Pension customer who is under 21 years, with no children](#)

[Disability Support Pension \(DSP\) letters and advices](#)

[Manual review after automatic payment suspension and cancellation of vulnerable customers](#)

[Initiating and actioning a manual medical review for Disability Support Pension \(DSP\)](#)

Process

This document outlines how to cancel DSP when a customer is no longer qualified or when they request cancellation. The Service Officer must make sure that cancellation is the correct action to take.

On this page:

[Cancelling DSP](#)

[DSP cancellation and follow up action](#)

Cancelling DSP

Table 1

Step	Action
1	DSP cancellation + Read more ... When DSP is being cancelled for one of the reasons below, see Table 2 > Step 1: • The customer no longer meets the qualification and/or payability provisions for DSP • DSP was suspended for 2 years because the customer was imprisoned or in psychiatric confinement in connection with a criminal charge • DSP was suspended for 2 years because the customer advised within the notification period a return to work or increase in income which precluded payment, and DSP has not been restored • The customer failed to comply with the notification requirement and/or customer obligations • The customer's partner failed to take action to obtain a comparable foreign payment • The customer has been advised that another pension or allowance is more appropriate • The customer starts work of 30 hours or more per week at award wages and fails to notify within 14 days Check that the cancellation action is correct Check the cancellation reason with the customer. Service Officers must take care with customers that request cancellation of their payment who:

- have mental health issues, or
- may not have a confirmed mental health diagnosis but there are concerns. For example, intellectual impairment or brain injury

Service Officers can view medical information on the Medical Conditions s47)
screen on the customer's record. E(d)

Customers in the [DSP grandfathered group](#) who elect to claim another payment, for example, Carer Payment, will lose their Grandfathered Status if they decide to reclaim DSP.

If a customer with vulnerable circumstances remains without income support payment for a minimum of 6 weeks due to an automatic suspension or cancellation, they may be eligible for [manual intervention](#).

When a DSP customer/nominee requests cancellation of DSP or has claimed another payment that will result in cancellation of DSP, consider if this will place the customer at risk. For more details on identifying vulnerability and supporting people experiencing vulnerability, see [Identifying customer vulnerability and risk issues](#).

When a customer experiencing vulnerability requests cancellation of their DSP, before any action is taken, they may require a referral to a specialist officer and will have to participate in a Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA).

Note: not all customers who request cancellation of their DSP will be identified as vulnerable or at risk and require specialist support in making a decision about their own payment. Customers who do not fit these circumstances may include:

s47E(d)

Do any of the above circumstances exist?

- **Yes**, the customer does not need a referral to a specialist /VMA process, and DSP cancellation can proceed, see [Table 2 > Step 1](#)
- **No**, the customer may need a VMA, [go to Step 2](#)

2	Discuss the request to cancel DSP with the customer + Read more ... See, Providing services to customers with disabilities. Discuss the reason for cancelling DSP with the customer or their nominee. Tell them: • If the customer claims and is granted another income support payment, it will result in the cancellation of DSP. To reclaim DSP, this will require lodgement of a new claim and current medical evidence to re-test eligibility for DSP • DSP may be restored once cancelled if they participate in a VMA and the recommendation is that the customer is vulnerable Explain to the customer or nominee the following actions must occur before a decision is made to cancel DSP in these circumstances, including: • A case consultation and referral to a specialist officer will be required - (select appropriate specialist officer based on the customer's circumstances: ◦ social worker (SW) ◦ Indigenous Service Officer (ISO) ◦ Multicultural Service Officer (MSO) ◦ Personalised Services Service Officer (PSSO), or ◦ other specialist (for example, Community Engagement Officer) Note: Service Officer may consult with a team leader (if required), about which specialist officer referral will be most appropriate • If appropriate, the specialist officer may refer the customer for a VMA, before making a decision to cancel DSP. Their DSP cancellation request may take up to 28 days for an outcome. Service Officers must clearly document this discussion on the customers record. Does the customer want to continue with cancellation or claim for another income support payment? • Yes, tell them that a specialist officer (SW, ISO, MSO or PSSO) will contact them. Record clear details of the discussion on a DOC on the customer's record, go to Step 3 • No, record clear details of the discussion on a DOC on the customer's record, no further action required. Procedure ends here
3	Referral to specialised services + Read more ... See, Providing services to customers with disabilities. Further actions must occur before cancelling DSP when a customer has vulnerable circumstances.

	Service Officers must refer the customer to a suitable specialist to review their circumstances and determine if DSP cancellation is appropriate, and/or if they require a VMA. Referral to specialised services SWO, ISO, MSO or PSSO If the customer: • has a PSSO, email the PSSO with a cc to the Personalised Services Centrelink mailbox. See the Resources page for the email template to use • has an ISO (if relevant) or MSO, contact the staff member involved directly. (See the Resources page for how to find the MSO in Office Locator, see Multicultural Service Officers (MSO)) • is not connected to a specialist officer, contact a Social Worker (SW). To make a referral, email social work referrals. See the Resources page for the email template to use After completing the referral, use s47E(d) • Record the following details on the customer's record: ○ Customer has requested cancellation of DSP. Referred to specialist for possible Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA) before decision regarding DSP can be made. Per OB 008-03130030. Go to Step 4.
4	Referral to a Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA) + Read more ... Specialist officers: • Must review the customers circumstances to determine if cancellation of DSP will put them at risk • Should look into how the customer is going to support themselves financially if DSP is cancelled that is, how will they pay for their living costs • SW, ISSO, MSO or PSSO can refer for a VMA to help with decision-making • Can make a decision that a VMA is not required if there is clear evidence of the following: s47E(d)

s47E(d)

SWO, ISO, MSO or PSSO determines VMA is not required + Read more ...

If SWO, ISO, MSO or PSSO determines that VMA is not required:

- Annotate the s47E(d) **DOC** with details
- Complete coding, use s47E(d) . See [Table 2](#)
- Record the following details on the customer's record:
 - Customer requested cancellation of DSP.
Specialist has determined DSP can be cancelled OR Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA) has been completed and customer is not at risk {delete inappropriate}
Please cancel DSP for reason CLR, from date of effect: today.
Per OB 008-030130030

SWO, ISSO, MSO or PSSO determines a VMA is required + Read more ...

If SWO, ISSO, MSO or PSSO determines that a VMA is required, complete the following:

Specialist officer to make 2 [genuine attempts to contact](#) the customer and discuss the following:

- Referral to a VMA will need to occur
- If the customer does not agree to participate in a VMA, tell them their DSP cannot be cancelled
- If the customer agrees to stay on DSP, annotate the s47E(d) **DOC**. Procedure ends here
- If unable to contact the customer, or the customer still wishes to proceed with DSP cancellation, tell them a referral to a VMA **must** be made

Clearly document these attempts by annotating the s47E(d) **DOC**.

Refer for VMA

To refer for a VMA, SW, ISO, MSO or PSSO must:

- Email [Forensic Psychology Team](#) and cc in [Assessment Services National Administration Team \(ASNAT\) Support](#) referring customer for a Vulnerability Medical Assessment. CC the specialist officer's team leader into all emails about a VMA
- Document the referral on the customer's record:
SW, ISO, MSO or PSSO has discussed cancellation request with customer on DDMMYY and discussed all options. Customer is still requesting cancellation

	of DSP. Referral to Assessment Services for review and further assessment has been actioned. Reason: Vulnerable Customer DSP Cancellation Request Procedure ends here until VMA has been completed. When VMA is completed, go to Step 5.
5	Review VMA Assessment Services will place a VMA on the customer's record within 7 business days as a UNS008 on Document Tools. The assessor will notify the referrer when they have completed the VMA. Note: cc the specialist officer's team leader into all emails about a VMA. Assessment Services will 'Reply All' to ensure the work will be managed if the specialist officer is on leave. If the customer contacts when DSP cancellation CLR request has been made and the VMA has not yet been completed, contact the specialist officer handling their case, and request they call the customer. Specialist officer reviews the VMA recommendation. Does the VMA recommend the customer is vulnerable/at risk? • Yes: ○ the specialist officer (SW/ISO/MSO/PSSO) must contact the customer and tell them that DSP cannot be cancelled at this time. Record clear details of the discussion on a DOC on their record. Procedure ends here ○ Where the customer is still requesting cancellation of DSP, tell them they will need to lodge supporting medical evidence to assist in reviewing their cancellation request. Record clear details of the discussion on a DOC on their record. Go to Step 6 • No, see Table 2 > Step 1
6	Customer lodges further medical evidence + Read more ... • If the customer lodges further medical evidence to assist in their cancellation request, Service Officers must notify the specialist officer (SW,ISO, MSO or PSSO). Dependent on the medical information provided this may change the customer's vulnerability / outcome of the VMA. That is, medical condition has changed. • SW, ISO, MSO or PSSO can refer back for another VMA with a record of referral on a DOC • Email Forensic Psychology Team and cc in Assessment Services National Administration Team (ASNAT) Support referring customer for a Vulnerability Medical Assessment. CC the specialist officer's team leader into all emails about a VMA

	- Document the referral on the customer's record: - SW, ISO, MSO or PSSO has discussed cancellation request with customer on DDMMYYY and discussed all options. Customer has lodged further supporting medical evidence and is still requesting cancellation of DSP. Referral to Assessment Services for review and further assessment has been actioned. Reason: Vulnerable Customer DSP Cancellation Request When the new VMA is completed, go to Step 5.
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DSP cancellation and follow up action

Table 2

Step	Action
1	Cancellation reason + Read more ... - If the customer has advised they have started or returned to work, see Commencing or returning to work or self-employment DSP. Procedure ends here - If the customer has advised their partner has commenced work or increased hours of work, see Partner commencing or returning to work - If the cancellation is the result of updating the customer's circumstances (for example, increased income/assets above the thresholds, change in relationship status or death of the customer or partner, go to Step 2 - If the result of a DSP manual medical review or Payment Accuracy Reviews is that the customer is no longer medically qualified for DSP, go to Step 3 - If the customer requests to cancel the payment, go to Step 6 - For all other cancellations, go to Step 4
2	Record the updated information + Read more ... If the customer is to be cancelled due to a change in circumstances, Service Officers must record the new circumstances as this may affect the customer's eligibility for other payments for example Mobility Allowance (MOB). If the DSP customer is receiving the higher rate of MOB and is cancelled due to increased hours, they may continue to receive MOB at the higher rate. For more details, see Eligibility for Mobility Allowance (MOB) and rates. When a customer with employment income is: under Age Pension age, Working Credit may enable the customer to keep some of their income support payment while they are working

	• over Age Pension age and getting a pension (excluding Parenting Payment Single), they may be eligible for the Work Bonus. Note: the Work Bonus is not used in the customer's transitional rules calculation, but partners may still benefit by the reduction in total income When a customer's income reduces their fortnightly rate to nil and some is employment income, if the customer notified: • within 14 days, they may be eligible to have their payment suspended instead of cancelled. See Commencing or returning to work or self-employment DSP • outside 14 days, payment may remain current at nil rate for up to six fortnights if still eligible for DSP DSP will auto cancel when recording the change of circumstances. The Assessment Results (AR) screen shows this. • An automatic advice should generate. Check this in the ^{s47E(d)} field help on the Benefit Action (^{s47E(d)}) screen, or see if a Manual Follow-up (MFU) creates on the Activity List (^{s47E(d)} screen the next day • Check if the customer's partner is receiving a payment, and if it should be cancelled. If it should cancel but has not auto cancelled, cancel their payment using the appropriate cancellation code • Record details on a DOC Go to Step 7.
3	Record decision not to continue DSP + Read more ... Record details on a DOC that the customer is not qualified to continue receiving DSP as a result of the manual medical review update. The DSP cancellation is not to take effect until 42 days after sending the advice to the customer. Create a Future Cancellation Activity on the ^{s47E(d)} screen to submit the cancellation activity with the correct date. For DSP manual medical reviews, see Initiating and actioning a manual medical review for Disability Support Pension (DSP).
4	Is the customer partnered and/or a care receiver? + Read more ... If the customer is: • a care receiver (and carer on Carer Payment), go to Step 5 • partnered (but not a care receiver), check if their partner gets a payment which needs to be cancelled. If so, refer to the relevant procedure in Cancellation of payments. Go to Step 6

	• not partnered or a care receiver, go to Step 7
5	DSP customer is a care receiver + Read more ... When a care receiver's payment is cancelled, an Income & Asset Review activity (CRP/AAP) with review reason IAR is created on the Future Activity List ^{s47E(d)} screen on their record. When the IAR review is due, the system issues a Carer Payment - Income and assets details of the person being cared for (aged 16 years and over) (SA304(A)) form if the carer receiver is getting an income support payment from Services Australia or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). If the care receiver's DSP is suspended and is likely to remain suspended for a long time (for example, Suspended RTW), issue the SA304(A) form manually to the care receiver. If the care receiver has a partner or carer receiving Carer Payment (CP), the eligibility to remain on CP depends on the level of continuing care. The Carers Processing Service Team should investigate this. • Use ^{s47E(d)} • Select ^{s47E(d)} Include relevant information in the ^{s47E(d)} text. Advise that the care receiver's DSP has been suspended or cancelled. CP qualification will only continue if the: • care receiver still requires a qualifying level of personal care and/or supervision, and • carer still provides the equivalent of a working day of personal care over the 24 hour period
6	Customer requests to cancel the payment + Read more ... Before cancelling a payment, take care to check if the customer has lost eligibility for that payment. If a customer requests cancellation, a case consultation and referral to a social worker, ISO, MSO or PSSO or other specialist officer (for example, Community Engagement Officer) must occur, if the customer has: • mental health issues • impaired cognitive capacity, or • other impairment/vulnerability, and • cancelling the payment will place the customer at risk

	Check a Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA) has been completed that recommends that DSP can be cancelled before proceeding. See Table 1. If a customer with a physical medical condition advises their condition has improved with supporting medical evidence and requests cancellation of DSP, refer to Level 2 Policy Helpdesk. Once Level 2 Policy Helpdesk respond, contact the customer with the outcome and update their record if appropriate. Record the following details on a DOC: • any discussions with the customer about their reasons for cancelling payment • advice or action taken to ensure the customer is not placed at risk Note: for DSP cancellation CAN - CLR (Customer Request) action can only be taken by an APS4 or above. Referral to a Service Support Officer (SSO) is required to code the Benefit Action ^{s47E(d)} screen. If there is no indication that the customer is vulnerable and will not be further disadvantaged by cancellation, or a specialist officer has confirmed a VMA is not required: • Go to the ^{s47E(d)} screen • Code 'DSP' in the ^{s47E(d)} : field • Code 'CAN' in the ^{s47E(d)} : field • Code the relevant cancellation/rejection reason code in the ^{s47E(d)} field. ^{s47E(d)} • Code ^{s47E(d)} for voluntary surrender/cancel DSP when requested by customer • Code date of effect in Effect Date: field: ○ For a voluntary surrender/cancel of DSP, encourage the customer to give the reason and relevant date (for example, returned to work, increase in income, re-partnered.) so that a proper date of effect of cancellation can be determined ○ If they do not give any details of why they want DSP cancelled, code date paid to (DPT) + 1 • Record details on a DOC • Finalise activity through the Assessment Results ^{s47E(d)} screen • Advise the customer of the outcome and that there are no review and appeal rights • Check the MFU activity on ^{s47E(d)} screen the following day to see if the manual letter needs to be sent. If so, use Q134 or Q999
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7	Check that the customer and/or partner have not been overpaid + Read more ... Go to the ^{s47E(d)} screen and check for a STA debt activity. Note: if a customer has received Crisis Payment and a change has occurred, a manual reassessment of Crisis Payment may be required. For more details, see Reviewing and reassessing Crisis Payment (CrP).
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References

Policy

[Guide to Social Security Law, 3.6.1.100, continuation Variation or Termination of DSP - 30 Hour Rule](#)

Legislation

Links to the Federal Register of Legislation site go to a 'Series' page. Select the 'Latest' version.

DSP qualifications

[Social Security Act 1991, section 94, continuing inability to work](#)

Manual cancellations

[Social Security \(Administration\) Act 1999](#)

- section 80, Cancellation or suspension determination
- section 81, Cancellation or suspension for non-compliance with certain notices

Automatic cancellations

[Social Security \(Administration\) Act 1999](#)

- section 93, customer complying with subsection 68(2) notice
- section 94, customer not complying with subsection 68(2) notice
- section 95, failure to provide statement under subsection 68(2)

Resources

Contact details

[Assessment Services National Administration Team \(ASNAT\) Support](#)

- ASNAT Support, and
- Forensic Psychology Team

[Level 2 Policy Helpdesk](#)

[Personalised Services Centrelink](#)

[Social workers referrals](#)

Office Locator

[Office Locator](#) - find a Multicultural Service Officer (MSO) by:

- searching the service centre in the **Office/Town** field
- scroll to the **Teams** section
- select specialists, the MSO's name and contact number will be listed

Email template - Referral to specialised services

This table contains an email template to use when referring a customer to Social Work Services/Personalised Services for a consideration of a Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA).

Include the following in the subject line and body of the email
Subject heading: Referral to Social Work Services/Personalised Services [delete inappropriate text] for consideration of Vulnerability Medical Assessment (VMA). Hi team, The following customer/nominee has contacted and requested cancellation of their DSP. Please consider a VMA for this customer. Customer Name: CRN: Date of contact: Name of referring officer and LOGON

Note: additional information, detail the reason for the referral to SWO/PSSO. Include information obtained from the customer/nominee about their request to cancel DSP. Service Officers must also provide details about any vulnerable circumstances they have identified.

Training & Support

Add the course number to the **s47E(d)** field in the **s47E(d)** (LMS) in ESSentials:

- **s47E(d)** - Suspensions, cancellations & restoration