

s22 (out of scope)



Australian Government

Services Australia

Diagnosis of a medical condition provided by an Assessment Services Psychologist for Disability Support Pension (DSP) 008-03030020

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Background

s22 (out of scope)

This document outlines the circumstances when a customer's medical eligibility for Disability Support Pension (DSP) can be based on a provisional diagnosis of a psychological/mental health condition by an Assessment Services Psychologist because the customer is unable to be effectively assessed through the usual DSP assessment procedures.

Medical Assessment Team (MAT) + Twisty...

When a DSP claim is submitted an automatic [MAT](#) referral is generated.

DSP claims that cannot be manifestly granted or rejected as recommended by MAT, need a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA) report completed to assess medical [eligibility for DSP](#). The requirement for a JCA will be documented in the MAT recommendation / DSP Medical Eligibility Assessment Recommendation (SA479).

Assessment Services Psychologist + Twisty...

Information can be provided within a Specialist Assessment from an Assessment Services Psychologist and documented in a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA) report.

These circumstances are an exception to the general rules of:

- customers applying for DSP providing medical evidence, as set out in the Medical Evidence Checklist in their claim form or the Medical Evidence Requirements (SA473) form, to support their claim, and
- eligibility for DSP being determined based on medical conditions outlined in the medical evidence they provided with their claim

Customers for whom these procedures may be applied + Twisty...

These exceptional procedures may be applied to assist a small group of vulnerable customers with suspected mental health conditions who:

- are likely to be qualified for DSP or eligible for a significant reduction in their participation requirements, and
- are unable to be effectively assessed through normal processes because they are disengaged from the health system, or do not acknowledge the impacts of their condition on their capacity to participate in an activity or comply with requirements

This includes customers:

- living in remote communities where there is little or no access to health services,
- [s47E\(d\)](#)

Health Professional Advisory Unit (HPAU) + Twisty...

The [Health Professional Advisory Unit \(HPAU\)](#) can provide and/or facilitate medical advice and opinion for the purpose of helping to determine a customer's eligibility for DSP. Psychologists conducting these assessments are required to consult with the HPAU before submitting the Specialist Report and JCA/upgraded ESA report to make sure that all medical factors are considered. Once medical factors are excluded, the determination of vulnerability sits with the Assessor in consultation with their Assistant Director.

Impairment Table changes from 1 April 2023 + Twisty...

From 1 April 2023, a new version of Impairment Tables was introduced. The new Tables are used to assess a customer's medical eligibility for all DSP claims lodged on or after this date. See [The Impairment Tables](#).

Related links

[Medical Assessment \(MA\)](#)

[The Health Professional Advisory Unit \(HPAU\)](#)

[Medical evidence for Disability Support Pension \(DSP\)](#)

[Job Capacity Assessment \(JCA\) referral](#)

Process

This document outlines the circumstances when a customer's eligibility for Disability Support Pension (DSP) can be based on a provisional diagnosis of a psychological/mental health condition by an Assessment Services Psychologist because the customer is unable to be effectively assessed through the usual DSP assessment procedures.

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[Assessing after VCA](#)

Medical evidence requirements for DSP

Table 1: this table describes the process in assessing if a customer is medically eligible for the DSP without providing medical evidence.

Expand table

Item	Description
1	<p>Medical evidence requirements for a DSP new claim + Read more...</p> <p>A MAT recommendation must be completed for all customers claiming DSP.</p> <p>There is no variation to the usual eligibility rules for DSP, including the requirement that a medical condition must be diagnosed, reasonably treated and stabilised in order to be assigned an impairment rating (IR), which must be at least 20 points, and for the customer to have a continuing inability to work (CITW). This can be determined in a JCA report or an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt) which has been upgraded to a JCA.</p> <p>An exception to the general requirement to provide medical evidence may be applied for vulnerable customers who are unable or unwilling to obtain suitable medical evidence from any other source outside the JCA or upgraded ESAt process, and there are no practical alternative sources of medical evidence to support a DSP claim.</p>

	<p>In these cases, eligibility for DSP may be determined based on medical conditions diagnosed solely by an Assessor who is a registered Psychologist.</p> <p>As part of the decision making process the Health Professional Advisory Unit (HPAU) must also be engaged to provide and/or facilitate medical advice and opinion for the purpose of helping the Psychologist Assessor to determine a customer's eligibility for DSP.</p> <p>In all cases, the diagnosis must be provided as part of a Specialist Assessment (referred to as a Vulnerable Customer Assessment (VCA)), and documented in the customer's JCA or upgraded ESA report.</p> <p>Provisional diagnosis of a psychological condition, indicated in the VCA and JCA, can be made for DSP claimants who meet vulnerability criteria, see Background - Supporting customers experiencing vulnerability to claim Disability Support Pension (DSP).</p> <p>The Assessment Services process for completion of a Specialist Assessment - VCA is described in Table 2.</p> <p>For action required after a Specialist Assessment - VCA, see Table 3.</p>
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Completing a Specialist Assessment (Vulnerable Customer Assessment - VCA)

Table 2

Expand table

Step	Description
1	<p>Vulnerable Customer Assessment (VCA) + Read more...</p> <p>When undertaking a VCA, and prior to the VCA report being submitted, the Psychologist Assessor is required to take additional steps to determine an accurate diagnosis.</p> <p>Note: a HPAU referral is required to review the provisional diagnosis.</p>
2	<p>HPAU referral for opinion on the provisional diagnosis + Read more...</p> <p>Psychologist Assessor must refer to HPAU s47E(d)</p>

	s47E(d)
3	<p>Presence of organic conditions/s that better accounts for the condition/s + Read more... s47E(d)</p> <p>VCA and JCA to be completed and submitted. Procedure ends here.</p>
4	<p>Absence of organic condition/s and support for the provisional diagnosis + Read more... Psychologist Assessor to complete and submit VCA report.</p>

Assessing after VCA

Table 3: this table describes the process after a VCA has been completed.

Expand table

Step	Description
1	VCA outcome + Read more...

	<p>The outcome of the Specialist Assessment (referred to as a Vulnerable Customer Assessment (VCA)) will be documented in a JCA or upgraded ESAt report.</p> <p>DSP medical eligibility met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the JCA report was completed as part of a DSP claim assessment, go to Step 2 • If the customer has not lodged a DSP claim, the Assessor will ^{s47E(d)} so the customer can be invited to claim DSP <p>DSP medical eligibility not met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to Step 3
<p>2</p>	<p>Granting DSP + Read more...</p> <p>Before DSP can be granted, the customer may require a Disability Medical Assessment (DMA) to be completed by a Government Contracted Doctor (GCD). See Disability Medical Assessment (DMA) Overview.</p> <p>The customer must meet all qualification and payability requirements to be eligible for DSP.</p> <p>Procedure ends here.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Customer not qualified for DSP + Read more...</p> <p>The assessment may indicate the customer does not meet medical qualification therefore they will not be granted DSP. The customer may also not wish to claim DSP.</p> <p>If the customer is receiving a payment, such as JobSeeker Payment (JSP) with mutual obligation requirements, their requirements must be reviewed, taking into account the information in the report, particularly where the customer has a partial capacity to work or a temporary reduced work capacity.</p>

References

Policy

[Social Security Guide 1.1.J.10 Job capacity assessment \(JCA\)](#)

[Social Security Guide 3.6.2.10 Medical & Other Evidence for DSP](#)

[3Social Security Guide 3.6.3.50 Guidelines to Table 5 - Mental Health Function](#)

[Social Security Guide 1.1.C.330 Continuing inability to work \(CITW\) \(DSP\)](#)

Legislation

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

[Social Security \(Administration\) Act 1999, section 12, Deemed claim in certain cases](#)