

CHAPTER 13: NEW DEAL FOR LONE PARENTS

CONTENTS	Paragraph Numbers
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND TO THE NDLP PROGRAMME	2-3
BARRIERS TO WORK	4-5
REFERRAL PROCESS	6
ATTENDANCE	7-10
ACTION PLAN	11
FUNDING AND ALLOWANCES	12-13
TYPES OF PROVISION AVAILABLE	14-16
ANNEX 1: PROVISION AVAILABLE TO VOLUNTARY NDLP CUSTOMERS FROM 3 NOVEMBER 2003	

CHAPTER 13: NEW DEAL FOR LONE PARENTS

Introduction

1. New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) is a voluntary programme offering a personal adviser service with a package of advice and support, tailored to meet the needs of each lone parent. This includes providing advice on job vacancies; pre and in-work benefits; incentives; childcare; training to update skills; guiding the lone parent in the process of finding work and providing an in-work support service to help them make the transition from benefit into employment. Lone parents participating on the NDLP programme have day one access to training provision available via Work Based Learning for Adults/Training for Work (WBLA)/(TfW) (except for employed status WBLA/TfW); Jobcentre Plus programmes; training courses which have been approved as part of the process to purchase one-off provision; training where a Service Level Agreement is in place at both national and local levels; Work Trials and periods of work experience (as part of an approved training course). In addition, provided they are not mandated to join a New Deal as a Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) recipient they are also eligible to access other New Deal training options and specialist provisions.

Background to the NDLP programme

2. NDLP is part of the Government's Welfare to Work initiative with the following operational objectives:
 - To help and encourage lone parents to improve their prospects and living standards; and
 - To improve the job readiness of lone parents to increase their employment opportunities.
3. Research has shown that the majority of lone parents want to work, but many need extra support to overcome the barriers they face to achieve their chosen job goal.

Barriers to Work

4. Because of their personal circumstances, lone parents are likely to face additional barriers to entering work, compared to other New Deal participants. The following are examples of the types of barriers they are likely to face;
 - Lack of confidence as may have been out of the workforce for some time;
 - Concerns about leaving the security of benefits and their wider financial position;
 - Unsure about taking on the responsibility of working and raising a family;
 - Concern about in-work childcare issues;
 - A need to update skills, particularly if they have had a number of years outside the labour market; and
 - Fear they have little to offer employers in terms of experience and job skills – unaware of transferable skills.
5. Allowing access to the provisions available through the other New Deals will help to increase the range of help and advice that can be made available to lone parents to overcome their barriers.

Referral Process

6. The referral process for NDLP participants will be the same as for other New Deal participants via form REF2JP. The Starter/Leaver form SL2JP, which already lists NDLP as a New Deal type, will be used to exchange start/leave and change of circumstances details.

Attendance

7. Lone parents' individual circumstances may make it difficult for them to attend for up to 30 hours per week. However, every effort should be made to agree a level of attendance, which will ensure that the lone parent is able to fully benefit from the training. **NB. In most cases it would be anticipated that the lone parent would attend for at least the 16 hours guided training element.**

8. Although extra consideration should be given to reasons for the lone parent having regular absences, NDLPAs must be kept informed if there are frequent absences or if the participant is failing to meet the attendance standards. This will allow Advisers to consider whether the provision is still proving effective for the lone parent, or alternatively decide if it should be ended.
9. In addition, lone parents may encounter emergency/domestic problems e.g. a breakdown in childcare arrangements or illness, not faced at the same level as 2 parent families. This may have an effect on their attendance and therefore their progress. NDLP participants are not subject to the same attendance and participation requirements as JSA customers, therefore, they cannot be sanctioned for failing to attend training provision. Nor can they be mandated or sanctioned for failing to apply for or take up a job opportunity, which may be notified, to them by a training provider. However, NDLP participants should be willing to consider job search activity as part of their Learning and Development Plan, although the job search activity may need to be adapted to suit their attendance patterns. Providers should not refuse to accept NDLP participants on their training provision, but must work with the lone parent, NDLPA and Third Party Provision Manager (TPPM) to resolve any issues and ensure that the NDLP participant has the same equality of access to training as JSA customers.
10. Absence limits prior to dismissal should be the same as for people undertaking the provision on a mandatory basis.

Action plan

11. NDLP participants complete an action plan similar to those of all other New Deal participants. Action should be taken as for other New Deals to update their NDLPA of progress against their action plan.

Funding and Allowances

12. Funding will fall into line with the processes for existing provisions.
13. Existing guidance allows for providers to make provision for travel and childcare costs. However, providers should be aware that it is likely the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser may have already taken separate steps to arrange for payment of any Training Premium.

Types of provision available

14. A full list of provision which NDLP participants will be allowed access to is shown at Annex 1.
15. For New Deal for Young People (NDYP) Options, transferring between provision should always involve the NDLP Adviser. This arrangement is no different to existing instructions in the guidance relevant to each programme.
16. If a waged provision is being considered, it should be made very clear that the lone parent may lose entitlement to passported benefits. It is however very unlikely that any NDLP participants would choose this option in that event.

Annex 1**Provision available to voluntary NDLP customers from 3 November 2003.**

Opportunity Type Title
NDYP Full Time Education and Training
NDYP Environmental Task Force
NDYP Voluntary Sector Option
ND for Musicians Music Industry Provider
ND Intensive Activity Period Education & Training
ND Job search
ND Careers Advice
ND Training, Key Skills
ND Training, IT
ND Training, Motivation
ND Training, Vocational
ND Basic Skills (non-Short Intensive Basic Skills)
ND Self Employment Stage 1
ND Self Employment Stage 2
ND Self Employment Stage 3 (test trading).
ND Specialist, Homeless
ND Specialist, Drugs
ND Specialist, Alcohol
ND Specialist, Debt
ND Specialist, Others
ND Training Other