

CHAPTER 14: NEW DEAL FOR PARTNERS

CONTENTS	Paragraph Numbers
INTRODUCTION	1-3
BACKGROUND TO NDP PROGRAMME	4-5
PARTNERS CHARACTERISTICS AND BARRIERS TO WORK	6-9
REFERRAL PROCESS	10
ATTENDANCE	11-16
ACTION PLAN	17
FUNDING AND ALLOWANCES	18-19
TYPES OF PROVISION	20-22
ANNEX 1: PROVISION AVAILABLE TO VOLUNTARY NDP CUSTOMERS FROM 12 APRIL 2004	

CHAPTER 14: NEW DEAL FOR PARTNERS

Introduction

1. New Deal for Partners (NDP) is a voluntary programme offering a personal adviser service with a package of advice and support, tailored to meet the needs of partners.
2. Help to NDP customers includes finding and applying for jobs, advice on in-work benefits/incentives available; advice on childcare available locally; and advice on training courses to update skills. NDP participants have 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; 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 available even though the partner's age will not necessarily fall within the range of the particular New Deals.
3. NDP participants have day one access to training provision, the only eligibility criteria is that they are participating on the NDP programme. This does not give NDP participants access to lone parent provision which is being piloted outside of mainstream national NDLP, for example lone parent activities within new Deal Plus areas.

Background to the NDP programme

4. New Deal for Partners is available to all partners who Jobcentre Plus has confirmed as meeting the specified criteria.
5. Partners are an important part of the Government's Welfare to Work agenda. The number of households where nobody works has trebled over the last 30 years and by the mid 1990s almost 1 in 5 children lived in a 'workless' household, and a third of these were in couple households. The New Deal for Partners will help us to break this cycle. Increased participation of partners in the labour market will also help the Government to meet its commitments to reduce the level of child poverty.

Partners Characteristics and Barriers to Work

6. The majority of partners eligible for NDP will be women. Of the current NDP caseload, 70% are female. More generally, 43% of working age, workless couples have dependent children.
7. The following are examples of the types of barriers partners are likely to face;
 - ill health and disability
 - child care responsibilities
 - caring responsibilities for sick/disabled partners, elderly relatives or others
 - lack of skills/work experience
 - financial disincentives
 - access to a car / transport difficulties
 - multiple barriers within a family unit
8. Partners may have additional issues to resolve before they could start work, for example:
 - both members of the couple may need to make decisions affecting the partner working together,
 - financial barriers,
 - balancing work with caring for home/family.
9. The role of the New Deal for Partners (NDP) Adviser is to look at the best ways of helping the partner to overcome these types of barrier. 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 partners to overcome their barriers.

Referral Process

10. The referral process for NDP participants will be the same as for other New Deal participants. The Starter/Leaver form SL2JP, which already lists NDP as a New Deal type, will be used to exchange start/leave details. The main difference is likely to be that discussions will have taken place between the NDPA and the Third Party Provision Manager (TPPM) to agree the level of attendance in conjunction with the training provider to ensure the participant can realistically achieve their aims and objectives.

Attendance

11. Partners' 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 partner is able to fully benefit from the training. **NB. In all cases it would be**

anticipated that the partner would attend for at least the 16 hours guided training element.

12. It may be possible to do this by adjusting certain elements included in the normal make up of the hours. In any case, how the hours of attendance are split between training and job search should reflect the needs of the partner.
13. Although extra consideration may be given to reasons for the partner having regular absences, NDP Advisers should still 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 partner, or alternatively decide if it should be ended.
14. In addition, NDP participants may encounter emergency/domestic problems eg a breakdown in caring arrangements or illness. This may have an effect on their attendance and therefore their progress. NDP 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, NDP 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 NDP participants on their training provision, but must work with the participant, their Jobcentre Plus adviser and Third Party Provision Manager (TPPM) to resolve any issues and ensure that the NDP participant has the same equality of access to training as JSA customers.
15. Absence limits prior to dismissal should be the same as for people undertaking the provision on a mandatory basis.
16. New Deal for Partners participants will not be sanctioned for failing to take part.

Action plan

17. NDP participants complete an action plan similar to those of all other New Deal participants, with the exception they do not have a mandatory amount of job search activities to complete. Action should be taken as for other New Deals to update their NDP Adviser of progress against their action plan.

Funding and Allowances

18. Funding will fall into line with the processes for existing provisions.
19. Existing guidance allows for providers to make provision for travel and childcare costs. This may include childcare costs when undertaking approved activity partners face domestic/emergency problems

including a breakdown in caring arrangements (adult or child) – the benefit recipient may not be able to provide care to the dependents whilst the NDP participant undertakes training, eg job search (JSA recipient) or illness (customers in receipt of Incapacity/Disability Benefits). 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

20. A full list of provision which NDP participants will be allowed access to is shown at Annex 1. NDP participants are not required to comply with the requirements of the Intensive Activity Period (IAP) or Gateway but may wish to access elements of that provision.
21. For New Deal for Young People (NDYP) Options, transferring between provision should always involve the NDP Adviser. This arrangement is no different to existing instructions in the guidance relevant to each programme.
22. If waged provision is being considered, it should be made very clear that the partner or the primary benefit claimant may lose entitlement to passported benefits. It is however very unlikely that any NDP participants would choose this option in that event.

Annex 1: Provision available to voluntary NDP customers from 12 April 2004.

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
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