



TIPS FOR WRITING A DISABILITY SUPPORT REGISTER (DSR) APPLICATION

WHAT IS THE DISABILITY SUPPORT REGISTER

The Disability Support Register, or DSR, is a type of waiting list or register that you apply to in order to be considered for disability support funding that you need on an ongoing basis. To receive disability support funding you need to make an application to the Register. You submit your application to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and, if you meet the criteria, your name will be put on the Register. You will then be given funding when funds become available.

The application form is available in:

- soft copy on the Department of Human Services website (see page 5) or
- hard copy by calling DHS Intake and Response Team (ph: 1800 783 783).

The Department considers applications for ongoing disability supports where there is a current unmet need and where there are no other options available for you within the wider community or from family and friends.

There are two main stages in developing your application:

1. Planning, thinking about and gathering information about your current situation and support needs and
2. Writing the application to accurately reflect your current situation and support needs.

A range of people may be able to help you research for and write your application. This might include your:

- family
- case manager
- facilitator or planner
- friends
- support workers or
- other professionals or support people.

A DSR application has more chance of being put on the register if it is well planned, contains a lot of information and demonstrates that this is your “last resort” for accessing support.

TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR APPLICATION

There are some important things to keep in mind to give you the best chance of being put on the Register. Not all of these tips will apply to you but some might help you when you are preparing for and writing your application.

Talk about the things that make you who you are

This will help to give the panel an idea of you as an individual. Talk about your likes and dislikes, things that are important to you, things you are good at and your goals in life. This might include things like your family and friends, pets, interests, hobbies, wishes, goals, etc.

Think about how support will help you to overcome current barriers

What is currently preventing you from doing what you want to do? How could support help you to overcome these barriers? What makes it difficult, or impossible, for you to live a dignified, happy, individual life?

Be comprehensive

Think about all the different areas of your life including:

- independence (both physical and emotional)
- physical health and wellbeing
- mental health and wellbeing
- emotional health and wellbeing
- financial constraints
- relationships (family, friends, intimate, etc)
- sexuality
- personal development
- intellectual stimulation
- self-esteem
- happiness

Think about the present

Talk about the impact on you *right now* of not having enough support.

Talk about your needs as *immediate* and *urgent*.

Think about the future

Talk about what will happen if you do not get the support you are requesting. Talk about what will be the positive impact of getting funding and how it will change your life.

Gather evidence, e.g. support letters

Gathering evidence to support your requests is an important part of the your Disability Support Register application. A good way of showing this is by collecting support letters from important people in your life. Try to choose people who know you personally as well as people who can speak from a 'professional' perspective. Both points of view are important. This may include:

- family members
- friends
- carers
- doctors
- health professionals (e.g. physiotherapists, occupational therapists, massage therapists, etc)
- teachers
- advocate
- support workers
- other people and/or organisations that support you

If someone else is writing the Disability Support Register application for you, you might want to write a letter yourself that they can use to include your voice in the application.

You might want to include quotes from these letters in the body of the application as well as attaching copies of the letters to the end of the application.

Be clear, specific and detailed

You want to paint a very clear, detailed and specific picture of your situation. There are a number of questions that need to be answered in the application. It is important to answer each question in as much detail as possible. Try not to 'sugar coat' your circumstances, even if it is hard to write openly about your situation.

Use language that describes your emotions

Use language that clearly shows the impact of the situation on you and those around you. You might want to talk about how it makes you feel and how it makes those close to you feel.

What else have you tried?

The Department want the Disability Support Register to be your 'last resort' for accessing support. Talk about other options you have looked at and what else you have tried. Talk about who else is currently providing support to you. Is it possible for these supports to increase? If not, why is it not possible?

Ask someone else to read over your application for you

Someone else might pick up on things you haven't thought of or you might not have thought were important. They will also be able to tell you if it makes sense when it is read from another person's perspective. Choose someone who you trust and who knows you and your situation well.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS ONCE I HAVE SUBMITTED MY APPLICATION?

Once the application has been received, you should be advised of the outcome within four weeks. If you are not happy with the decision you are able to make an appeal in writing to the Department of Human Services. The details of the DSR team will be on the letter you receive about the outcome of your application.

If you have any questions about the Disability Support Register application process or about writing your application you can:

1. Talk to your Case Manager or Facilitator/Planner
2. Go online to access the Department of Human Services Disability Support Register Guidelines on their website
http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability/supports_for_people/information_planning_and_advocacy/how-we-provide-services-to-people
(Or Google “DHS DSR Guidelines”)
3. Call Intake and Response (Department of Human Services) for information and hard copies of useful information
Phone: 1800 783 783
4. Contact a Facilitator at Housing Resource and Support Service (HR&SS) to discuss anything written in this document or if you have any brief questions. Unfortunately we are not able to provide in-depth advice about your specific application but we will try to answer general questions.

Address: Suite 2.01, 2nd Floor, 60 Leicester Street Carlton 3053

Phone: (03) 9340 5100

Fax: (03) 9340 5102

Email: admin@hrss.com.au