



Joint Connections Interviews Fact Sheet

From 1 July 2012, eligible job seekers who have had difficulty in meeting –their participation requirements will be able to attend joint interviews, called Connections Interviews, with their Job Services Australia (JSA) provider and the Department of Human Services (DHS) (Centrelink) representatives.

Connections Interviews will be used to:

- increase attendance rates for difficult to engage job seekers
- identify barriers that may be contributing to non-compliance and make appropriate referrals and linkages to services
- increase employment outcomes for difficult to engage job seekers; and
- ensure agreed and coordinated approaches by JSA and Centrelink when dealing with these job seekers.

Job seekers who will be eligible for Connections Interviews are those job seekers who have been unemployed for 12 months or more, who have had five or more Participation Reports submitted within the previous 12 months and since the last, if any, Comprehensive Compliance Assessment and are commenced in Job Services Australia. JSA provider's participation in the initiative would be on a voluntary basis. Job seekers who are to participate in Connections Interviews will receive on average 3 in-depth appointments.

Connections Interviews will use a strengths-based approach to identify undisclosed barriers that job seekers may have, identify and resolve discrepancies in information provided by the job seeker to DHS (Centrelink) or their JSA provider and help to reach shared understandings of the individual job seekers circumstances. Connections Interviews will be conducted on DHS (Centrelink) premises, however in some cases, if there is mutual agreement between the JSA provider and DHS (Centrelink), they may be conducted on JSA premises.

JSA providers can choose to opt in under this initiative; that is, their participation will be voluntary in nature. The benefits of Connections Interviews for JSA providers will be:

- increased attendance and engagement by non compliant job seekers;
- better disclosure of job seeker barriers;
- better understanding of the information that the job seeker is giving to DHS (Centrelink);
- better understanding of DHS (Centrelink) decision making processes; and
- Building better local level relationships between JSA providers and DHS (Centrelink).

Connection Interviews are Job Services Australia regular Contacts, delivered jointly with Centrelink. They therefore count towards the contacts which JSA providers are required to give to their job seekers under the Employment Services Deed 2012-15.

Attendance at Connections Interviews will be compulsory for job seekers and they will be subject to normal compliance action should they fail to attend.