



18 September 2020

### **Direction on return to Face-to-Face Service Delivery**

In light of easing COVID-19 related social distancing restrictions across Australia, from **28 September 2020**, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) cancels certain directions issued to Providers in the department's letters of 20 and 25 March 2020 and through the *Direction on Face-to-Face Service Delivery and Alternative Approach Advice* of 27 March 2020. Those directions were that, until further notice, Providers must only deliver Services via arrangements that do not require face-to-face contact (other than in exceptional circumstances) and that certain Activities were suspended or terminated.

The department now advises that, from **28 September 2020**, the Provider may deliver Services including all Activities (including Work for the Dole) face-to-face, provided that:

- (a) face-to-face delivery is permitted by the relevant State or Territory government;
- (b) individual Participants opt-in to engage with the Provider and participate in the Services face-to-face;
- (c) face-to-face delivery is in line with the advice provided by local health authorities; and
- (d) face-to-face delivery is otherwise consistent with the Services being carried out in a safe manner and is appropriate for the relevant Participant, the Provider's staff and others from a work health and safety perspective. In this regard, the Provider must:
  - consult guidance and information published by Safe Work Australia and the relevant work health and safety regulator;
  - have a COVID-Safe plan, in accordance with the requirements specified by the relevant state and territory government, in place for each of the Sites where face-to-face delivery will be provided;
  - ensure that face-to-face Services are delivered in accordance with the Provider's relevant COVID-Safe plan; and
  - ensure that each relevant Activity Host Organisation has a COVID-Safe plan (or similar), in accordance with the requirements specified at by the relevant state and territory government, in place for each Activity which involves face-to-face participation prior to the Provider placing a Participant into that Activity.

As Participants **must** opt-in to engage with Providers and participate in the Services face-to-face, the Provider must not compel or coerce Participants to do so. The Provider must keep a record, as specified by the department, of each Participant's agreement to opt-in.

Where all of the requirements in paragraphs (a) to (d) above are not met or the Provider otherwise decides not to deliver Services face-to-face, the department:

- (i) waives relevant obligations to deliver Services face-to-face; and
- (ii) agrees to the Provider using alternative means to deliver the relevant Services, including by phone, video and/or online.

For more information on your local COVID-19 advice, safe practices and workplace principles, please refer to [www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au), [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au), and your relevant State or Territory health authority information.

Links to enforceable government health and emergency directions and COVID Safe plans is available at: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/other-resources/covid-19-public-health-directions-and-covidsafe>