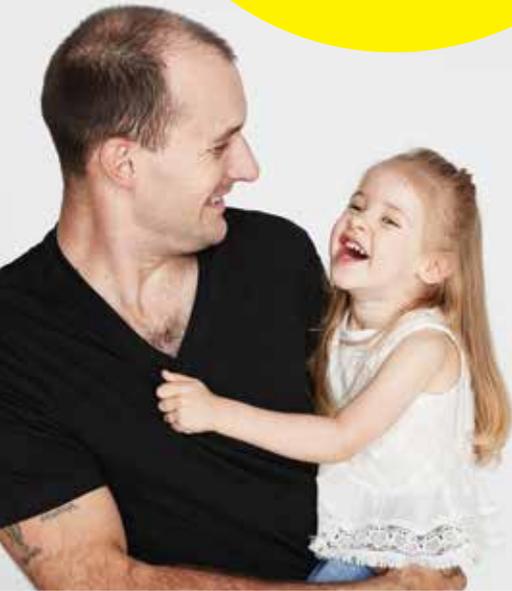


Your
NDIS
Success

Information booklet



**Vision
Australia**

Blindness. Low Vision. Opportunity.

Understanding the NDIS

What is the NDIS?

The NDIS is the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It pays for disability support and services for Australians who have permanent and significant disability.

With the NDIS, you receive a customised plan of support and services based on your situation and what you would like to achieve.

The NDIS can provide you with funding to:

- **Purchase special equipment**
eg. assistive technology like white canes, magnifiers or a Seeing Eye Dog.
- **Make modifications to your home**
eg. getting tactile labels on your cupboards.
- **Get help from another person or organisation**
eg. accessing the community with a support worker, training with a mobility specialist to help you get around your area.

Other ways in which the NDIS can help include paying for therapy and mental health support, finding a job, moving out of home, connecting you to recreational activities like blind sports or social groups, and paying for transport like taxis or ride shares.

The scheme is designed to give you more control over the things that you want to do.

The NDIS is administered by a government body known as the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

Vision Australia has a team of NDIS experts who can guide you through accessing the NDIS and our services from start to finish. If you'd like to speak to one of our specialists, call us on **1300 84 74 66**.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible, you must have a disability that is:

- permanent – it won't go away
- significant – it affects the way you live your day-to-day life.

You must be under 65 years old at the time you register for the NDIS. You must live in Australia and be a citizen or permanent resident.

People who are blind or have low vision regularly qualify for NDIS services.

The NDIS will continue with you past 65. For those over 65 without NDIS, there is disability support via My Aged Care.



Understanding the NDIS (cont.)

What if I'm already receiving services like the Disability Support Pension?

The NDIS generally does not affect the disability support pension.

Depending on your situation, you may be eligible for the NDIS or the Disability Support Pension, or both.

Centrelink and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) also don't consider your NDIS supports as income, so they won't affect your income and assets tests.

Usually the Disability Support Pension is designed to be like a wage or working salary and recipients are able to purchase things unrelated to their disability like groceries and entertainment.

The NDIS only funds supports that are directly related to a person's disability.

Blindness, low vision and the NDIS

If you are blind, have low vision, or are experiencing vision loss for the first time, there are numerous ways Vision Australia can help.

Vision Australia is a registered NDIS provider and helps more than 34,000 people who are blind or have low vision every year through a variety of services.

Even before stepping into your planning session with the NDIS, Vision Australia can help you to think about what you need to request and prepare you to get the outcome that best suits you.

We also have an 'NDIS Planning Guide' that might help you understand what specific services are available and what to ask for.

How to access the NDIS

The NDIS process

Step 1: NDIS contact, eligibility and Access Request Form

To apply for the NDIS, you need to fill out an Access Request Form. You can get one mailed to you by calling the NDIS on **1800 800 110**, or you can download it via the [NDIS website](#).

Your treating health professional or doctor will need to complete a part of the form.

If you cannot fill in the paperwork yourself, you can make a verbal access request by calling the NDIS on **1800 800 110**.

Step 2: Getting plan ready

After submitting your form, you will be contacted by the NDIS with a time and location of a planning meeting. Before your meeting, think about what you really need and want to achieve with your goals. You may wish to use Vision Australia's '[Your NDIS Planning Guide](#)'.

Vision Australia offers a free planning preparation meeting, to ensure you can articulate all the supports you need. You'll leave this meeting with an overview of your service needs linked to your goals, so you're well placed for your NDIS Planning session.

Please call Vision Australia on **1300 84 74 66** to book your free planning preparation meeting.

How to access the NDIS (cont.)

Step 3: Your NDIS planning session

You will meet with a Local Area Coordinator to develop a plan that is going to suit your situation. You will be asked to describe your disability, what life is like for you currently and what services you might need to better assist you over time.

You may want to bring the below supporting documentation as it will help the NDIS planner to understand your needs:

- Completed planning guide and materials.
- Past therapy or specialist assessments.
- Letter(s) from your doctor or therapist to talk about your needs.
- Plans and diary appointments for day programs or community activities.
- Anything else that helps to communicate what you do now and what you want to do in future.

You can take a support person to the planning session if you want to, to assist you through the process.

Step 4: Selecting your providers

After your planning meeting, the NDIA will provide you with an NDIS Plan, detailing the funding and support you can access. You can get in touch with us on **1300 84 74 66**. We can help you understand your NDIS Plan and set you up for success.

Vision Australia services

Vision Australia provides services, advice and assistive technology to people who are blind or have low vision. Our aim is to support people who are blind or have low vision to live the life they choose. That means to have access to, and fully participate in, every part of life.

Some popular services you can access with an NDIS plan:

Orthoptics

- Assess the level of your vision impairment.
- Get a recommendation on equipment and strategies to use your remaining vision, then trial them to find what works best for you.

Orientation and mobility training, and equipment

- Get support to travel and navigate safely in your local community, and equipment to build your independence. This may include mobility devices, canes or a Seeing Eye Dog.
- Receive training to ensure that you remain mobile – and safe – when you're out and about in the community (learning to navigate and catch public transport, orientate yourself in your neighbourhood).

Vision Australia services (cont.)

Assistive technology and training

- We support you by looking at the kinds of technologies that may help you with everyday tasks, such as reading, and using computers and telephones.
- Get a recommendation on specialised vision equipment for you and try before you buy.
- Get our support to determine if Braille training may be suitable.

Occupational therapy and equipment

- Get support to assess your daily life, your ability to work, and what your limitations are and work on support to make you more independent.
- Get support around the home (gardening, learning how to cook meals independently, organising items of high use and labelling cupboards with tactile buttons) or setting up a workstation (installing magnifiers etc.).

Paediatric support

- Access a wide range of support for children who are blind or have low vision. This may include speech pathology, sensory integration, motor skills support, language development, accessible library and more.
- We can help children improve their social skills and general life skills through one-on-one support or via our regular school holiday programs.

Emotional support and recreational activities

- Attend peer support groups to help with the emotions of being diagnosed with vision loss and learn from people with lived experience.
- Enrol in recreational activities like blind sports, blind woodworking, social clubs and telephone groups like crosswords, quizzes and book clubs.



NDIS client success stories

Case Study One

Kim Coleman, age 50

Kim was one of the first clients to go through the NDIS in the Barwon region. As part of her pre-planning, Vision Australia worked closely with her to help set her goals and get the best plan possible.

Our first areas of support were around orientation, mobility and public transport training.

We've also supported her independence around the home, in areas such as lighting, tactile signage and cutting board assistance. She has learnt new computer skills too, improving her work readiness and enabling her to help her daughter with her homework.

Kim likes to take challenges head on. She's developed her skills, and has worked as an admin volunteer at Vision Australia and Barwon Health.

She has also just applied to volunteer for St. John Ambulance Australia.



Case Study Two

Rhiannon Burrow, age 8

Vision Australia worked with Rhiannon and her family to help fulfil her NDIS goals around independence at school.

We supplied her with the latest portable magnifier, the Prodigy Connect 12, training her to ensure she gets the most out of it at school. She also received assistance to use scissors and write on her own.

Rhiannon is now 8 years old, and Vision Australia is helping her with orientation and mobility training. We've provided her with a new rainbow-coloured cane so she can navigate the supermarket and carparks. And now we're helping her with the next challenge: taking the school bus.



Contact details

NDIS

Phone: **1800 800 110**

Website: www.ndis.gov.au

Vision Australia

Phone: **1300 84 74 66**

(Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 8:00pm AEST)

Website: www.visionaustralia.org

visionaustralia.org



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