



Guide Dogs Hearing Services & The JobAccess Employment Assistance Fund

What is the Employment Assistance Fund?

The Employment Assistance Fund (EAF) is part of the Australian Government JobAccess program. The EAF provides support for people living with a disability, such as hearing loss, to access support and equipment for use in their workplace. The fund assists those currently employed, actively seeking employment, self-employed or about to start a new job.

The EAF is a reimbursement scheme. This means that if your application is approved the Australian Government will reimburse the cost of any services or equipment, including installation and training, so that neither you nor your employer will have to bear the costs. You can read more about the EAF at www.jobaccess.gov.au.

How can the EAF help me?

If you:

- have a hearing loss (regardless of whether you use hearing aids or a cochlear implant or currently don't use any technology); and
- are employed, self-employed, seeking employment or starting a new job; and
- are having difficulty hearing in particular situations in your workplace (such as using the phone or hearing other people talking in meetings or presentations)

Then Guide Dogs Hearing Services can support you to apply for assistance through the EAF.

Any devices obtained through EAF are intended for use in your workplace, not in your home. If you change workplaces you are entitled to take the device to your new workplace.

What EAF services do Guide Dogs Hearing Services provide?

We provide a tailored, individualised and solution-focused service. We understand there is no "one size fits all" approach when it comes to work issues, and we will respect your confidentiality and personal information in accordance with Guide Dogs SA/NT privacy principles. We have previously assisted many clients with their hearing and communication needs in the workplace, and understand how important maximising hearing at work can be in helping to create and maintain an inclusive work environment.

One of our experienced Hearing Rehabilitation Coordinators will consult with you to assess the benefits of an assistive listening or alerting device, and can also provide workplace training where requested. Examples of devices which may assist you include:

- amplified telephones (landline and mobile) and telephone headsets
- paging and visual alerting systems
- personal communication devices suitable for use in meetings or group presentations.

What's the first step?

- In the first instance, Hearing Services usually receives a request for support from either an employee or, in some instances, an employer who wishes to provide additional support for their employee.
- The employee then attends an initial, obligation-free appointment with a Hearing Rehabilitation Coordinator (HRC) to discuss their needs. This appointment can be held in the workplace, or privately at the Guide Dogs SA/NT office.
- During the appointment, the HRC will clarify any hearing issues in the workplace and explain the EAF process. The employee can also trial a range of assistive technology which may help them in the workplace.
- At the conclusion of the appointment, if the employee elects to proceed with an EAF application, the HRC can provide any supporting documentation required for the application in addition to any guidance required to undertake this process. The HRC can also provide strategies to assist with talking with an employer about the EAF and disclosure of hearing loss in the workplace.

How do I apply for the EAF?

1. If you have never applied for EAF before, you must firstly create an EAF account by registering via the Australian Government's secure JobAccess website. You can do this by visiting <https://ecsn.gov.au/JOBACCESSSECURE/JAS/Security/Register> or you can go to www.jobaccess.gov.au and select the "Access for People with Disability" link. Then click on the "Available Support" link in blue writing followed by the "Your Workplace" link. Scroll down to the "Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)" and click on this link. To complete your application you will need to click on the EAF application link. You will then be provided with a log-in ID to use when completing your application.
2. The JobAccess website offers step-by-step instructions to assist you. If you need additional help with the application process you can contact a JobAccess Adviser on 1800 464 800 or use the JobAccess Online Enquiry Form. After submitting an application, you will receive a confirmation message.
3. A JobAccess Assessor will then usually contact you to discuss your application. In some instances they may need to visit your workplace to discuss your needs. A JobAccess Assessor may also contact your Guide Dogs Hearing Services HRC to arrange for a trial of suitable devices in your workplace.
4. Your application will then be processed by JobAccess, and they will contact you to advise you of the outcome.
5. If your application is approved, you should then contact your Guide Dogs Hearing Services HRC to notify them that your application has been approved, and to arrange for the purchase of your device by either yourself or your employer. **Please note that JobAccess does not notify your HRC if your application is approved, so you must contact your HRC yourself to arrange for the device to be purchased.**
6. Where required, your HRC will then visit your workplace to install or set up your device, and provide training in its use.
7. You or your employer can then arrange for the cost of the device to be fully reimbursed by following the process outlined on the JobAccess website.

For workplace assistance, please contact Guide Dogs Hearing Services

Telephone: (08) 8203 8394

Email: hearing@guidedogs.org.au

Online: www.guidedogs.org.au/contact_forms