



Department of
**Jobs, Tourism, Science
and Innovation**

Native Forest Transition: Workforce Transition Programs

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



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Workforce Transition Programs

1. What are the Workforce Transition Programs?

The purpose of the Workforce Transition Programs is to support native forestry workers who are transitioning out of the industry. The programs will help workers that are made redundant or choose to leave as a result of the State Government's decision to end native forest logging from the end of 2023.

2. What type of Worker Transition Payments are there?

There are two programs associated with the Workforce Transition Programs (WTP). The objectives of the program are to ensure all eligible native forestry workers are supported to transition out of the industry.

Program 1 – Workforce Transition Payment

- » **Program 1A:** One off Transition Payment of \$10,000 available to workers who voluntarily exit the industry.
- » **Program 1B:** Base payment of \$30,000 plus Variable payment of \$1,000 per full year of service to maximum of \$15,000 (up to 15 years). Available to workers who are made redundant or where ongoing casual employment has ended.

Program 2 – Reskilling, Retraining and New Employment

- » **Program 2A:** Training support (up to \$2,500)
 - › A private Registered Training Organisation (up to **\$2,500** per worker), or
 - › Training support from TAFE or government contracted RTOs (up to \$2,500 per worker)
- » **Program 2B:** Resume preparation (up to \$500)
 - › Support to help workers to prepare a resume in preparation for seeking employment.
- » **Program 2C:** New employment support (up to \$5,000)
 - › To assist with purchasing new work attire, a new uniform, PPE, tools, training or services (e.g. medical examination, eye tests for heavy haulage license) to engage new employment.
 - › To support relocation for workers to relocate for new employment within the native forest timber regions (refer to map in Step-by-step Guide).

Eligibility

3. Who can apply?

To be eligible for the Workforce Transition Programs you must:

1. be directly employed by a sawmill, haulage or harvesting business based in Western Australia which is party to a valid, native forest timber production contract with FPC for sawlog or other bole volume
2. work primarily (75%+) on native forest timber activities within their employment.
3. harvest and haulage workers who work less than 75% in native forestry can apply for Payment 1B if the business can demonstrate there is insufficient work to support the worker as a result of the closure of the native forestry industry.
4. directly employed by an eligible business on 8 September 2021; or for casuals worked in native forestry for at least one year before 8 September 2021.

5. made redundant from an eligible native forestry business, received no shifts for six weeks (casual workers), or left voluntarily.

Or you must:

1. be a worker who has filled a vacant position after 8 September 2021 and who remains employed in native forestry for a year. In this case, you are only eligible for **Program 2A**.
2. be a casual worker registered with an eligible business as at 8 September 2021, that has been provided regular ongoing work by that business for at least one year prior to date of redundancy will be eligible for **Program 2A**.

4. If the business I work for stays open, but I am made redundant, am I still eligible for help?

Yes. If you work for an eligible business that can no longer support your employment, or if you are a casual worker who has not received a shift in six weeks, you would be eligible for financial support if you also meet the other eligibility criteria.

5. I started after 8 September 2021, am I eligible for anything?

If you started after 8 September 2021 and have worked in the job for 12 months, you can apply for **Program 2A**. You are not eligible for Program **1A**, **1B**, **2B** or **2C**.

6. I have already left the native forestry industry, but after 8 September 2021. Am I eligible for any support?

Yes. You are eligible for **Program 1A** and **Program 2** if you meet relevant eligibility criteria.

7. I am an owner operator of a native forestry business. Can I apply for the workforce programs?

Owner/operators, including those registered as directors of the company, are not eligible for Workforce Transition Programs. Support in those instances, can be sought through the Business Transition Programs.

Application Process

8. How can I apply?

Applications from workers must be submitted online using the Native Forestry Transition online portal at www.wa.gov.au/nft.

JTSI has developed [Workforce Transition Step by Step Application Guide](#) to help you apply for financial and training support.

9. Can I still apply if I don't have an email, access to a computer or internet?

If you do not have an email or access to a computer, we recommend that you get in touch with your local Community Resource Centre, the South West Development Commission or the NFT team so we can assist you.

10. Who do I contact if I'm having trouble using or submitting an application form?

If you require help or support in using and/or submitting the online application form, please email nft@jtsi.wa.gov.au or phone (08) 6186 6976.

11. What documents do I need to provide?

JTSI has developed the [Workforce Transition Step by Step Application Guide](#). This guide includes a list of documents that can be used as evidence to show you meet the eligibility criteria. We recommend that you collect all the relevant information to support your application before starting the online application process.

12. What is an Employment Separation Certificate?

It contains most of the information required about your previous employment. Without this document, you may need to provide additional information which could delay assessment of your application.

13. What happens if I can't find the evidence I need?

To process your application, we require evidence that you work for an eligible business or employed on 8 September 2021. Please refer to the [Workforce Transition Step by Step Application Guide](#) for accepted forms of evidence. If you have any questions, please contact the NFT team.

Assessment Process

14. How long will it take to process my application?

We expect it will take 6 – 8 weeks to process your application and deposit the money into your nominated bank account provided your application is complete and we have all the relevant information required.

15. How are applications assessed?

The application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria set out in the [Workforce Transition Step by Step Application Guide](#).

As part of the assessment process, we will contact you if your form is incomplete or we need any additional information to support your application.

Once you submit your application, we suggest you regularly check your email for updates or contact JTSI to track the progress of your application.

16. If I am eligible for Program 1: Worker Transition Payment, am I eligible for Program 2: Retraining, Reskilling and New Employment?

Yes. If you are eligible for **Program 1** you are automatically eligible for **Program 2**. You will not be required to resubmit your eligibility evidence to access **Program 2**. You will be asked to submit evidence for reimbursement (invoices and receipts) at the time of applying for **Program 2**.

17. Do I need to apply for Program 1 and Program 2 at the same time?

No. Once you have applied through the online portal and we have assessed your eligibility, you will be sent a link to upload reimbursement evidence for **Program 2**. If you are only eligible for **Program 2**, you will still apply via the online portal.

You will have up until the end of 2024 to access **Program 2** and submit your reimbursement evidence.

18. Can I appeal the decision in relation to the outcome of the assessment?

No. Payments will be at the discretion of the Department. Decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

Workforce Eligibility Criteria FAQs

19. How can I find out if the business I work for is eligible?

Your current or previous employer will know if they meet the Business Eligibility Criteria. If you do not feel comfortable requesting this information via the workplace, please contact the NFT team.

The team can confirm if your workplace or previous place of employment meets the Business Eligibility Criteria.

20. What does continual service mean?

Continuous Employment is defined as continuous service in the native forestry industry with a gap of no more than 12 months between native forestry jobs, unless in extraordinary circumstances, which will be considered by the Department on a case-by-case basis.

Examples:

1. If you previously worked for a native forestry business, left and went into mining, and have since returned to native forestry, this would not be regarded as continuous service. You would only be eligible for a payment based on the period you worked in native forestry once you return.
2. If you left the native forestry industry voluntarily after 8 September 2021, later returned and was made redundant, the period after voluntary exit would not be regarded as continuous service. In this instance you would be eligible for **Program 1A** and **Program 2**.

Any period of work for which a redundancy was previously paid ends your continuous service. If you worked for a mill for 10 years, were made redundant and then took a job at another mill for 2 years, you would only be eligible for 2 years of continuous service.

21. If I have been made redundant before in the timber industry, can I still claim the Workforce Transition Programs?

Yes. You are eligible for Workforce Transition Programs if you meet the eligibility criteria. You would receive the \$30,000 base payment, or its proportional equivalent, but you cannot back-date the continual service calculation. It will not be paid for periods where you have received a previous redundancy.

22. If I leave voluntarily from one native forestry business and begin working at another timber industry business, can I claim both Workforce Transition Payments?

No. You can only claim either the Workforce Transition **Payment 1A** (leaves voluntary) or **Payment 1B** (made redundant). You cannot claim **1A** at one business, move to another business and claim **1B**.

23. I work part-time but have been made redundant. Am I eligible for under Payment 1A and 1B?

Yes. But it is important to note that only redundant workers averaging 22.5 hours or more will receive a base payment of \$30,000 and the \$1,000 per full year of service variable payment.

If you work casual and/or part-time your base and variable payments will be based on the number of hours worked on a proportional basis:

- » 0 – 10 hours a week would receive 33% of the **WTP**
- » >10 – 22.5 hours would receive 66% of the **WTP**
- » 22.5+ hours receive full amount (100%) of **WTP**

Program 2: Reskilling, Re-training and New Employment**24. How much money can I access as part of Program 2A Native Forest Transition Reskilling Support?**

If you are eligible, you will be able to access up to \$2,500 for training support.

It can be used for either:

- » A private Registered Training Organisation, or
- » TAFE or government contracted **private** Registered Training Organisations.

25. If I choose a course that only costs \$1,000, can I do another valued at \$1,500.

If you are eligible, the training support is to the value of \$2,500. You could do a course that costs \$2,500 or you could do five short courses to the value of \$500.

26. What is a Registered Training Organisation?

A registered training organisation (RTO) is a provider registered by Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) to deliver nationally recognised Vocational Education Training and qualifications.

There are currently around 4,000 RTOs in Australia. For a full list of RTOs, please visit www.training.gov.au.

27. Where can I get support to help me make a decision about the best training for me?

South Regional TAFE and the Jobs and Skills Centre are offering a combined service to support you with your transition and training needs.

A dedicated team has been established to provide support on training opportunities and skills development.

South Regional TAFE can be contacted on:

P: 1800 621 445

E: training@srtafe.wa.edu.au

W: www.southregionaltafe.wa.edu.au

28. How would I know if the course I want to do is eligible?

The South Regional TAFE team offers a range of services and training for you to access. The team will work with you on an individual basis to assess your current skills, organise for recognition of current skills (RPL), develop a training plan tailored to your needs aimed at supporting you to achieve your goals. The team will assist you to source training providers and opportunities most suitable for you.

29. When I decided on a course how do I pay for it?

For a RTO course, you must pay for your course up front and then claim a re-reimbursement for the cost via the Native Forestry Transition online portal. Please ensure your course is eligible before enrolling if you intend to seek a reimbursement.

For South Regional TAFE courses please upload proof of enrolment as evidence.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, contact the NFT Team to discuss payment options.

30. Can I claim reimbursement for travel costs incurred when attending a training course that is not offered locally?

A rate of up to \$250 can be claimed under Program 2A for each day of training when attending a course not offered locally. Proof of enrolment and receipts for travel costs must be submitted to support your claim.

The training venue must be at least 100 kilometres from the applicant's residential address to be eligible to claim.

31. Where can I get support to update my resume?

[TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres](#) which are located in Bunbury, Mandurah or Albany can provide this service for free. If you would prefer to get your resume updated locally, you can claim a \$500 reimbursement. For more information visit jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/skillsready.

Please note the provider must be within your local region or town and you must pay upfront and then seek reimbursement.

32. Outside of Program 2, what additional support is available to help me get a new job?

A worker can access additional support from TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres located in Bunbury, Mandurah and Albany. You can access free professional advice on training and employment opportunities including career advice, apprenticeship and training information. The centres also provide online job board, to connect jobseekers with employment opportunities.

33. How do I access the money for Program 2C - New Employment Support?

To access up to \$5,000 for New Employment Support you will need to submit an application through the online portal.

We recommend seeking advice on eligibility first to ensure your costs are covered by the program before buying anything or making any payments.

34. What can I spend the money on?

The New Employment Support (up to \$5,000) enables the eligible worker to purchase the following:

- » New work attire, a new uniform, PPE, tools, training or services (e.g. medical examination, eye tests for heavy haulage license) to engage in new employment.
- » Relocation expenses for new employment within the Native Forest timber region. The worker can seek reimbursement for relocation expenses, such as, costs of moving and storing furniture.
- » Financial support will not be reimbursed for rent or mortgage payments or anything other than the above.

Important payment information

35. How will I receive my payments?

Payments will be made directly into your nominated bank account. It is your responsibility to ensure that the correct information has been provided. JTSI does not accept responsibility for incorrect bank account details.

36. Will I need to pay tax on WTP payments?

Subject to an applicant's specific circumstances, the receipt of funding from this program may be treated as assessable income for tax purposes.

It is strongly recommended that potential applicants seek independent advice about the possible income tax implications from a qualified tax agent/advisor, or the Australian Taxation Office, prior to applying.

37. Will I need to pay tax on Payment 1A (left voluntarily) or Payment 1B (made redundant)?

Yes. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has advised that **Payment 1A** and **1B** are to be taxed as an Eligible Termination Payment. JTSI will seek an independent tax calculation on each application and where required, tax will be withheld from the payment amount.

The amount of tax withheld will depend on your individual circumstances such as your age, year-to-date income and any other redundancy payments paid by your employer.

38. How do I report Payment 1A or 1B in my tax return?

Please refer to the [Tax Information and Guidance](#) document that contains instructions from the ATO on how report this correctly in your tax return.



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