



# Budget 2024-25

This information is accurate as of 14 May 2024.

## First Nations prison to employment program

This measure will introduce a new program designed to achieve stronger prison to work transitions for First Nations people. It will replace the Time to Work Employment Service (TWES) from 1 July 2025.

TWES will be extended in remote areas to 30 June 2025, in line with arrangements for the Community Development Program. TWES won't be extended in non-remote areas.

To address the servicing gap until the new program is implemented:

- eligibility for the Pre-Release Prisoner Initiative will be expanded, including the existing specialist youth service, Workforce Australia – Transition to Work
- flexibility will be introduced for all providers to deliver in-prison support in jurisdictions that don't allow day release, such as Queensland.

Changes to the Pre-Release Prisoner Initiative will take effect this year.

On 1 July 2025, the new program will start in 27 select prisons and juvenile justice facilities, in every state and territory.

From 1 July 2026, it will be expanded to all prisons and juvenile justice facilities, across both remote and non-remote areas. It's estimated that over time, more than 6,000 First Nations people will participate in the program each year.

Under the new program, First Nations people who get income support with mutual obligation requirements won't be referred to employment services until 12 months after their release. During this period they will be considered 'Centrelink managed' and will fully meet their mutual obligation requirements by participating in the new program.

Services Australia will get \$16.5 million over 4 years through to 2027–28 to support participants in the program.

The measure is led by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

This measure isn't subject to legislation passing.

## Who this measure affects

This affects First Nations people who meet all of the following:

- have been incarcerated with a known release date, or on remand
- aged 15 and over, including those in juvenile corrections centres
- volunteer to participate in the new program.

## **When this starts and finishes**

The new program will be phased in from 1 July 2025 and be ongoing.

The current TWES program will stop:

- on 30 June 2024 in non-remote areas
- on 30 June 2025 in remote areas.