# Employer checklist and Easy Read template – Explaining the Supported Wage System to your employees

## Who can use this template?

**This checklist and template are for employers who choose to pay an employee** **with disability a supported wage under the Supported Wage System (SWS).** It can be used for new or existing arrangements.

It will help you explain awards, classifications, SWS assessments and pay rates to your employee. It uses an Easy Read style, simple language and pictures to help employees with disability understand the letter.

Before you get started, learn more about the SWS at [fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates)

## How to use this template

* [**Part A**](#_PART_A_–) of this template is a checklist for employers**. This section should not be provided to employees.** Complete the checklist to ensure you have all the information you need before filling out the template.
* [**Part B**](#_PART_B_–) of this template should be filled out by you, **then provided to your employee or their support person**. The template has instructions for creating an Easy Read letter and is colour-coded to help you fill it out correctly.

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| We update our templates when information changes. Make sure you’re using the latest version from [fairwork.gov.au/easy-read](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/easy-read) |

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| **Warning with solid fill Important**  This checklist and template provide general information about the Supported Wage System. Language and concepts have been simplified for education purposes. It is your responsibility to confirm your employee is eligible for the SWS and to ensure the information you include in the template is accurate for your employee’s circumstances.  This resource was last updated in March 2025. |

## Part A – Employer checklist

**Before you fill out the template in Part B, use this checklist to make sure you have all the information you need.**

#### 1 – Know which award or enterprise agreement applies to your employee

Use our Find My Award tool at [fairwork.gov.au/findmyaward](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/findmyaward)

Find an enterprise agreement at [fwc.gov.au/agreements](https://www.fwc.gov.au/agreements)

If you’re unsure, contact our Infoline on 13 13 94.

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| **If your employee is not covered by an award or enterprise agreement, you should not use this template.** Award and agreement free employees can still be eligible for the SWS, but different rules apply. Contact our Infoline or visit our Employees with disability pay rates page for more information at  [fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates) |

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| **Warning with solid fill Employees covered by the Supported Employment Services (SES) Award**  The SES Award contains certain classifications for employees with disability. Some classifications can be applied **with or without** the employee undergoing an assessment of their work capacity. Check the SES Award to see when your employee may need to have their work capacity assessed.  This template only applies to employees who are unable to perform their work at full capacity, and who are eligible to be paid a supported wage under the SWS.  **You should not use this template for any employees covered by the SES Award who are receiving the full rate of pay for their classification.**  For more information see our Supported Employment Services Award pay rates page at [fairwork.gov.au/ses-changes](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/ses-changes) |

### 2 – Confirm that your award or enterprise agreement allows you to pay a supported wage

Check the schedules at the end of your award or enterprise agreement to find the SWS provisions.

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| If your award or enterprise agreement does not contain SWS provisions, **you will need to pay your employee the full rate of pay for their classification.** |

### 3 – Confirm that your employee meets the eligibility criteria for a supported wage

To be eligible for a supported wage under an **award**, the employee must:

have a disability which impacts their capacity to perform their work

meet the impairment criteria for a disability support pension

not have a workers’ compensation or rehabilitation claim against their employer.

The eligibility requirements in **enterprise agreements** vary. Check the SWS provisions in your agreement to see what applies to your employee.

Find more information about the factors you might need to consider on our Disability pay rates page at [fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates)

Additional requirements may apply in some circumstances. Refer to the   
[SWS Handbook](https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/resource/sws-handbook-and-guidelines) for more information.

For any specific questions about your employee’s eligibility, visit the Department of Social Services’ Job Access website at [jobaccess.gov.au](https://www.jobaccess.gov.au) or call them on 1800 464 800.

### 4 – Classify your employee

You can usually find the classification definitions in the schedules at the end of your award or enterprise agreement.

For more help, visit our Award classifications page at   
[fairwork.gov.au/award-classifications](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/award-classifications)

### 5 – Confirm the type of employment (full-time, part-time or casual)

Employees get different entitlements depending on their type of employment. To find out more see our Employee types page at [fairwork.gov.au/employee-types](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-types)

If your employee is casual or part-time, check that the proposed arrangement for your employee meets the minimum hours requirements set out in the [SWS Handbook.](https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/resource/sws-handbook-and-guidelines)

### 6 – Check the applicable rates of pay

For help with award rates use our Pay Calculator at [fairwork.gov.au/pact](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pact)

If you’re covered by an enterprise agreement, check the agreement for the applicable pay rates.

### 7 – Apply for the SWS and a SWS assessment (if the employee hasn’t already been assessed)

To be able to pay a supported wage, you need to apply for the SWS and for a SWS assessment. You can do this at [jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au)

Your employee may need to work a trial period while their work capacity is being assessed. Check the SWS provisions in your award or enterprise agreement for more information.

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| **Note:** employees who have already undergone a SWS assessment may require a reassessment in some circumstances. Find more information from Job Access at [jobaccess.gov.au](https://www.jobaccess.gov.au) |

### 8 – Use the template in Part B to tell your employee about their pay and classification

Follow the instructions on [page 6](#_Part_B_–) to help you fill out the template.

Once your template is completed, provide it to your employee.

Let your employee know they can ask a support person to help them read the letter.

9 – Get help if you need it

Visit our Employees with disability pay rates page at   
[fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/disability-pay-rates)

Call 13 13 94 to speak to a Fair Work adviser.

Contact Job Access for assistance with SWS applications and assessments.

Seek advice from a trusted professional such as an employer association, union, industrial relations consultant or lawyer.

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| **Remember:** Employees with disability have the same minimum entitlements as other employees. Paying a supported wage only changes their base rate of pay.  Employees on a supported wage are still entitled to:   * the standard provisions of their award or enterprise agreement (such as meal breaks, penalty rates and allowances) * the National Employment Standards (including various types of leave, notice and redundancy) * protections against discrimination and harassment. |

## Part B – Template Easy Read letter

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| **Warning with solid fill Instructions for completing this template**   * This template letter has been colour-coded to help you to complete it. * Replace the **<red writing inside the angle brackets>** with the information relevant to your employee. When you’re done you need to remove the brackets and change the text to black. * The recommended font for Easy Read is Arial 16pt. * Instructions and explanations are included to help you. They are written in  **[purple writing inside square brackets]**.You need to delete these instructions when you are finished. * The template contains different options – you need to delete the options that do not apply to your employee. * Please keep a copy of the letter for your records. |

**Important information about your job**



**To:** <insert employee’s full name>

**Date:** <insert date>

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| <add your business logo or image of  your workplace> | This letter is from <insert business name>.  When you see the words **us** or **we** it means <insert business name>. |
| Image of a worker in a blue shirt holding a piece of paper. The paper says 'Your job'. | This letter will tell you some things about your job. |
| Image of a worker sitting on a chair. He is reading a book and scratching his head. He looks confused. | This letter has some hard words.  We write hard words in **bold**.  Then we write what that word means. |
| Image of a worker and their support person sitting at a desk. They are pointing at a letter on the desk. | You can ask a **support person** to help you read this letter. |
| Image of a lady in a wheelchair. Her support person is standing next to her with her arm around her shoulders. | A **support person** is a person you trust. It does not need to be someone from work. |
| Image of a worker and their support person sitting at a desk. They are pointing at a letter on the desk. | A support person can   * talk to us for you * talk to us with you * come to meetings with you * help you understand information * help you make decisions. |
| Image of a lady in a wheelchair. Her support person is standing next to her with her arm around her shoulders. | Your support person may be   * a family member or friend * a carer or guardian * someone from a **union**. |
| Image of 3 people. 2 of the people are in wheelchairs and one is standing up. 2 of the people are holding megaphones. | A **union** is a group of people who join together to help workers get treated fairly. |
|  | You can choose to join a union if you want to. |

**There are rules about your job**

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| Image of a rule book with a checkmark and a cross on the front cover. | Your job has something called an **<award/enterprise agreement>**.  An **<award/enterprise agreement>** is like a rule book. It tells us the rules about your job and your pay. |
| Image of a person in a suit holding a rule book that has the word 'Rules' on the front and a green tick and red cross | The <award/enterprise agreement> for your job is called the <insert award/agreement name>. |

[**This section is for full-time or part-time employees.**   
Delete this section if the employee is casual]

**Your job is permanent <full-time/part-time>**

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|  | This means   * you work <38 hours/XX hours> every week * you will usually work the same days and times each week |
|  | * you get a set amount of paid time off work each year for holidays, sick days and other special reasons |
|  | * we must give you **notice** if your job is going to end * **notice** means telling you before it happens * how much notice we give you depends on how long you have worked with us. |
| Image of a laptop computer with the screen showing the words 'Types of Employees' | There are some other rules that apply to <full-time/part-time> workers.  To find out more you can   * talk to <insert manager/contact’s name> about it * ask a support person to help you visit this web page: [fairwork.gov.au/employee-types](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-types)   The web page is not Easy Read. |

[**This section is for casual employees**.   
Delete this section if the employee is full-time or part-time]

**Your job is casual**

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|  | Thismeans   * we can ask you to work different days and times each week * you can say yes or no to work * your work could change or end without much warning |
|  | * you do not get paid when you take a sick day or go on holidays * you only get paid to take time off work for special reasons |
|  | * you get paid a **casual loading** * **casual loading** means you get paid 25% more because you don’t get paid for holidays or sick days. |
| Image of a laptop computer with the screen showing the words 'Types of Employees' | There are some other rules that apply to casual workers.  To find out more you can   * talk to <insert manager/contact’s name> about it * ask a support person to help you visit this web page:  [fairwork.gov.au/employee-types](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-types)   The web page is not Easy Read. |

**Your classification**

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| Image of 4 different workers in brightly coloured clothing. 1 is in a wheelchair and 3 others are standing around them. They are all holding different types of tools. | **Classifications** are levels of pay.  The <award/enterprise agreement> has different **classifications** for different types of jobs. |
| Image of a man looking down at a page holding a pen. The page says 'Classifications' and has a green check mark. | <Insert business name> has looked at the <award/enterprise agreement>.  We have decided your classification is <insert classification level e.g. Level 2>. |
| Image of a worker and their support person sitting at a desk. They are pointing at a letter on the desk. | You can ask a support person to help you look at the <award/agreement> and see what <insert classification> means.  The <award/agreement> is not Easy Read. |
| Image of a worker and their boss sitting at a desk. There are speech bubbles indicating that they are having a conversation. | If you think your classification is not right, you can talk to <insert manager/contact’s name> about it. |
| Image of a support person, manager and employee seated at a table discussing a document. | Your support person can also talk to <insert manager/contact’s name> with you. |

**Your pay**

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| Image with 2 different parts. Part 1 shows 4 different workers in brightly coloured clothing. 1 is in a wheelchair and 3 others are standing around them. They are all holding different types of tools. Part 2 shows a worker holding a large cardboard box. She is standing next to 1 large pile of boxes and 1 small pile of boxes. | Your pay is based on   * your classification   and   * how much work you can do. |
| Image of a worker holding a large cardboard box. She is standing next to 1 large pile of boxes and 1 small pile of boxes. | When you are paid this way it is called a **supported wage**. |
| Image of an assessor holding a clipboard. Next to the person is an image of a document with three check boxes. One of the check boxes has a green tick. | To get a **supported wage** you need to have an **assessment**. |
| Image of an assessor is standing next to a worker holding a large cardboard box. The assessor is holing a clipboard and a pen and is making notes. | An **assessment** means a person will come to watch you do your job. |
| Image of an assessor is smiling and pointing at a board showing images of the worker holding a box, a stopwatch, and a dollar sign. | This person is called an **assessor.**  The **assessor** tells us   * how fast you can work * what to pay you. |
| Image shows the Australian Government logo and the Job Access logo with the text 'Driving Disability Employment'. | The assessor works for a part of the government called **Job Access**. |

[**This section applies if an assessment has already been completed by an approved assessor using the SWS tool.**Delete this section if a new SWS assessment is required.]

**You have already had an assessment**

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| Image of a worker making a thumbs up sign with both hands. She is standing next to a large book with the word 'Assessment' on the front and a large green tick. | You had an assessment on <insert date of assessment>. |
| Image of an assessor holding a clipboard. Next to the person is an image of a document with three check boxes. One of the check boxes has a green tick. | The assessor said that you can do your job in <X amount of time>.  The assessor compared this to the time it takes other people in your job. |
| Image of a hand holding Australian bank notes. | This means your pay will be <XX%> of the pay rate for <insert classification level>.  From <date> your pay will be <$XX> an hour.  **[If casual, include the following]**  <This includes the extra pay you get for being a casual worker.> |

[**This section applies if a new SWS assessment is required.**Delete this section if an assessment has already been completed.]

**You need to have an assessment**

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| Imade of an assessor standing next to a worker holding a large cardboard box. The assessor is holing a clipboard and a pen and is making notes. | **[Option A – first time being assessed]**  You need to have an assessment to find out how much work you can do.  **[Option B – previous assessment needs to be reviewed, or reassessment is needed]**  The assessment you had on <insert date of previous assessment> is due for review. This means you need a new assessment. |
| Image of an assessor holding a clipboard and pen making notes. They are assessing a person who is sitting in a wheelchair, their support person is standing next to them. | You can choose to bring a support person with you. |
| Image of a calendar with a clock in front of it. | **[Option A – assessment date is scheduled]**  Your assessment will happen on <day, date and time>.  **[Option B – assessment not yet scheduled]**  The assessor will contact you or your support person to set a date and time that suits everyone. |
| Image of a worker and their boss shaking hands and smiling. Behind them is a piece of paper that says 'Pay' and has a large dollar sign. | After your assessment we will meet with you to tell you how much your pay will be for the work you can do. |
| Image of a lady in a wheelchair. Her support person is standing next to her with her arm around her shoulders. | You can choose to bring a support person. |
| Image of a hand with a pen signing a piece of paper. The paper has the word 'Pay' across the top with a large dollar sign. | We will write down what we tell you and you can choose to sign it.  We will give you a copy. |
| Image of a hand holding Australian bank notes. | While you wait for your assessment your pay will be <$insert pay rate> an hour.  **[If casual, include the following]**  This includes the extra pay you get for being a casual worker. |

**Other things to know about your pay**

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| Image of a rule book with a checkmark and a cross on the front cover. | The <insert award/agreement name> has rules about when you should get extra pay. |
| Image of a hand holding Australian bank notes. Next to that is an arrow pointing up. | You may get paid more if you work   * on weekends * on public holidays * at night * more than your normal hours. |
| Image of a yellow envelope with a piece of paper that says 'Pay Slip' | Every time you get paid we will give you a **pay slip.**  <Add details, for example: We will email it to you every Tuesday.>  A **pay slip** tells you how much pay you got for the work you did. |

**Who can help**

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| Image of a worker and their boss sitting at a desk. There are speech bubbles indicating that they are having a conversation. | If you have questions about this letter you can talk to <insert manager’s name>. |
| Image of a worker and their support person sitting at a desk. They are pointing at a letter on the desk. | You can also ask a support personfor help. |
| Logo for the Fair Work Ombudsman featuring the Australian Government coat of arms. | The **Fair Work Ombudsman** is a part of the government. |
| Image of a Fair Work Ombudsman adviser wearing a headset and smiling. | They can help you with questions about pay and rights at work. |
| Image of a person holding a phone to her ear | You or your support person can call the **Fair Work Ombudsman** on **13 13 94.**  Their phone line is open Monday to Friday from 8.00 am to 5.30 pm. |
| Image shows the Australian Government logo and the Job Access logo with the text 'Driving Disability Employment'. | **Job Access** is a government program.  You can talk to **Job Access** about assessments. |
| Image of a person holding a phone to her ear | You or your support person can call  Job Access on **1800 464 800**. |
| Image of three people sitting at a table signalling a 'thumbs up' approval to the camera. | You cannot get in trouble at work for   * having a support person * joining or not joining a union * contacting the Fair Work Ombudsman or Job Access. |