



# Exposure Draft of the Request for Tender for the National Panel of Assessors Program - Companion Document

The Exposure Draft is produced for the information of stakeholders and potential Respondents to allow them the opportunity to provide feedback to the Department of Social Services (the department) to inform the final Request for Tender (RFT) for the National Panel of Assessors (NPA) program.

While all questions and feedback on the Exposure Draft are welcome, the department is particularly interested in receiving responses to the questions outlined in this companion document.

Feedback should be sent to [DESConsultations@dss.gov.au](mailto:DESConsultations@dss.gov.au). All feedback or comments will need to be made **before 5.00 pm (Canberra time) on 27 September 2024**. The department may not consider feedback received after this time.

Feedback and comments will be handled in accordance with the *Public Briefing and Feedback on the Exposure Draft* information at page 6 of the Exposure Draft.

The department may not adopt all of the feedback received and will not comment on or respond directly to individual feedback.

# Number of NPA Providers

(Section 3.4 – Coverage)

The department will introduce a cap on the number of NPA providers in each Employment Services Area (ESA). This is a change from the current program, where there are no caps on the number of providers.

The change is intended to increase the financial viability of providers by ensuring they have a sufficient volume of assessment work orders. It is also important to ensure sufficient NPA service providers to meet demand for timely assessments.

## *Questions for consideration:*

- The new model will introduce a cap on the number of providers in each ESA. We are seeking views on whether the cap should be set at a lower level or a higher level i.e. 3-4 providers per ESA, or a higher cap i.e. 10 providers per ESA – and why?
- How much should this vary across urban and regional areas?
- If the number of providers were capped in each ESA, do you foresee any unintended consequences from this approach in terms of meeting the demand for assessment services?
- As a potential Respondent to the NPA RFT, is there a number of assessment services that is too few or too many to deliver per year?

# Key Performance Indicators

(Section 2.7.2 – Key Performance Indicators)

One of the Key Performance Indicators in the Exposure Draft (KPI 1.1) states that 90 per cent of Assessment Services are completed within the timeframes set out in the Deed. Consistent with the current arrangements, the Deed will likely say that within one (1) business day of receiving a work order or assessment allocation, the Provider must accept or reject the work order. This is to support timely reallocation of assessments to alternative providers and avoid delays for participants.

## *Questions for consideration:*

- Are the timeframes for accepting assessment work orders reasonable?
- Do you have any suggested changes to the timeframes that would help Providers manage caseloads more efficiently?

