



Documentary evidence

Inclusion Support Program

This document is to assist early childhood education and care (ECEC) services meet documentary evidence requirements when applying for Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) support under the Inclusion Support Program (ISP). This information supplements Section 5.5 Provision of documentary evidence in the ISP Guidelines.

When is documentary evidence required?

The IDF Manager (IDFM) will consider documentary evidence when assessing applications for the IDF.

Services should ensure that they provide appropriate and relevant evidence to demonstrate the child's ongoing high support needs to inform the IDFM assessment. In most instances, parents or carers will have the necessary documentation from medical and/or allied health professionals. In some instances, additional information may be required, for example, where the documentation only references the disability diagnosis, but does not provide information to demonstrate the child's ongoing high support needs.

IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator and IDF Family Day Care Top Up

A service applying for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator or IDF Family Day Care (FDC) Top Up must provide current (dated within 12 months if not a permanent disability), signed, or otherwise validated documentation, by relevant professionals that confirms the child (or children) has additional and ongoing high support needs. This may include a child (or children) with a diagnosed disability (including developmental delay), or a current and ongoing assessment for disability, or other additional needs.

The Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) will identify the barriers to inclusion in the care environment for which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate solution, and how the educator team will work together to implement the strategies to address these barriers to meet the needs of all children. When applying for IDF FDC Top Up, the SIP will demonstrate that including a child with additional needs would result in the FDC educator being unable to enrol the maximum number of children allowed under the National Law.

Services that experience difficulty obtaining sufficient documentary evidence should discuss these issues with the relevant Inclusion Agency. The IDFM and/or the Department of Education (the department) may consider alternative documentary evidence on a case-by-case basis.

Note: provision of documentary evidence does not guarantee that an application will attract funding; rather eligibility is determined based on the IDFM's assessment of the overall context including the requirements of the child (or children) with additional needs, the service's capacity and capability to provide inclusive practice and the barriers to inclusion within the care environment.

IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time-Limited Support

While documentary evidence is not necessary to access the Immediate/Time-Limited Support funding stream (as per the ISP Guidelines Section 6.2.2), where available it may support services' applications for funding. Services seeking to apply for this funding may provide current documentary evidence (dated within 12 months if not a permanent disability), signed, or otherwise validated documentation, by relevant professionals to demonstrate the child's (or children's) high support needs. The IDFM may consider this information when assessing applications.

Note: The project outline required as part of the application for Immediate/Time-Limited Support will identify the barriers to inclusion and strategies the service intends to implement with the increased educator to child ratio for a time-limited period, while an alternate or more stable solution is being determined.

What should documentary evidence demonstrate?

When applying for IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator and IDF FDC Top Up, documentary evidence should outline the child's (or children's) additional and ongoing high support needs. A child (or children) with ongoing high support needs requires significant additional support from educators, which is over and above what would be expected for a child of similar age. Consideration should be given to the educator to child ratios provided under the National Regulations for that age group.

When applying for an Additional Educator and FDC Top Up, the SIP also needs to detail the current barriers to inclusion and the strategies and actions required to address these barriers, and demonstrate that an increased educator to child ratio is required in the care environment for the IDF hours requested to implement this inclusion plan.

Documentary evidence and permanent disability

Documentary evidence must be dated within 12 months (if not a permanent disability) of an application for IDF being submitted. Documentation that provides evidence of permanent disability is only required to be submitted once while the child is enrolled at the same service. The service should be guided by the Guide to Social Security Law, 1.1.R.90 Recognised Disability (CA(child)). The IDFM will confirm whether evidence of permanent disability has been provided when issuing approvals for IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator and IDF FDC Top Up.



What documentary evidence is required with changes to eligibility?

The department published refreshed ISP Guidelines on 30 March 2020, which expanded the eligibility to include children presenting with additional needs without a diagnosed disability (including for example, trauma-related behaviours) or children awaiting a disability diagnosis. This is in acknowledgement that younger children in particular, face delays seeking and obtaining disability diagnosis.

Documentary evidence may include a report or supporting documentation signed by an allied health professional or social worker or supporting documentation such as a diagnostic report signed by a qualified medical/health practitioner or registered psychologist.

Who can provide documentary evidence?

Documentary evidence can be provided by a range of relevant professionals including (but not limited to):

- registered psychologists
- allied health professionals (for example, speech pathologists, physiotherapists and audiologists or social workers and family counsellors)
- qualified medical practitioners
- registered nurses or nurse practitioners, including Maternal and Child Health nurses.

Relevant medical, health and welfare professionals should hold recognised qualifications and registration as a medical/health practitioner, or recognised qualifications and/or membership to a professional health/welfare association

Documentary evidence provided by early childhood or primary teachers or other educators is not accepted, as information required from these professionals is provided through the Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP).

While responsible for the assessment and approvals of IDF applications, the IDFM may consult with the department on a case-by-case basis where other information is provided to determine if an individual is a relevant professional for ISP purposes.

Parent or carer permission to share personal information

Parents or carers are required to sign a Permission to Share Personal Information Form to ensure adherence to the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles contained within the *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth). Documentary evidence can be shared with a different service through the Inclusion Support (IS) Portal, if this is agreed by the parent or carer. To enable this to occur the parent or carer must provide their consent by selecting the appropriate box on the Permission to Share Personal Information Form. This allows other services where the child is enrolled to view documentary evidence previously provided for the purposes of the IDF. The parent or carer may also



elect to provide the documentary evidence to a new service, and/or update the documentary evidence previously provided.

How is documentary evidence submitted?

The IS Portal requires documentary evidence to be stored on the individual child record. For applications completed on the IS Portal, this means the documentary evidence must be uploaded by the service to the appropriate child record on the SIP.

Types of documentary evidence may include but is not limited to:

Types of documentary evidence	Description
The child's health care card stating the disability code	<p>This evidence demonstrates the child has been assessed within the Australian Government system and has been diagnosed with a disability or medical condition.</p> <p>Note: This documentary evidence is preferred as it is often the easiest form for families to provide to the service for children with a diagnosed disability or medical condition.</p>
Evidence that the child is a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant under Section 28 of the NDIS Act 2013	<p>This evidence demonstrates that the child is currently an NDIS participant under section 28 of the NDIS ACT 2013. This may include a copy of the written notice certifying the child meets NDIS access criteria or a copy of the child's NDIS Plan or approval letter. (Note: 'access requests' for the NDIS alone will not be accepted.)</p>
Diagnosis by a qualified medical practitioner or registered psychologist	<p>This evidence demonstrates the child has been assessed by a qualified medical practitioner or registered psychologist and has been diagnosed with a disability or medical condition and information about the current level or impact of the disability or medical condition showing ongoing high support needs.</p>
A report or supporting documentation signed by a qualified medical practitioner, registered psychologist, an allied health professional, registered nurse or nurse practitioner, social worker/family counsellor outlining the continuing assessment of a child for the purpose of diagnosing disability, or the child's additional needs showing ongoing high support needs.	<p>This evidence may demonstrate that the child is currently undergoing assessment for the purposes of diagnosing disability and information about the current level or impact of the child's additional needs showing ongoing high support needs.</p> <p>This evidence will provide details of the child's additional needs, including information about the current level or impact of the disability or additional needs, showing ongoing high support needs.</p> <p>A current report from a Speech Pathologist could be provided showing a diagnosis of moderate to severe receptive or expressive language delay, and information about the current level or impact of the delay showing ongoing high support needs.</p>
An appointment letter or referral for an assessment by a qualified medical/health practitioner or registered psychologist.	<p>This evidence should demonstrate that the child is currently undergoing assessment for the purpose of diagnosing disability and information about the current level or impact</p>



Types of documentary evidence	Description
	of the additional needs showing ongoing high support needs.

