



# Instructions for medical officers

You have been requested to examine an individual in connection with their application for a partial invalidity pension (PIP). The person you are examining is a member of the Public Sector Superannuation (PSS) scheme of which Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) is the trustee and administrator. Members of PSS may be eligible for a PIP if they have suffered a permanent decrease in pay because of physical or mental incapacity. Following your examination, please provide a report to the individual's employer answering the questions on the report checklist at the end of this document. This document will further explain what a PIP is, and what CSC needs from you in your report.

## General information

### What is a PIP?

A PIP is a payment made to an eligible PSS member who has incurred a permanent decrease in salary attributable to physical or mental incapacity. A loss of recognised allowances for medical reasons may also attract a PIP.

### Who is entitled to a PIP?

An individual may be eligible for a PIP if their salary has been permanently decreased because they have been redeployed to a lower position or have reduced their hours, or a combination of both, due to a medical condition.

### What is paid?

The amount of a PIP is calculated as a portion of the difference between the individual's previous higher salary and their decreased salary. The PIP is not equivalent to the whole amount of the salary loss.

### Graduated return to work (GRTW)

A PIP is generally not payable to an individual on a GRTW program until their modified situation becomes permanent. However, if the individual had not been able to progress their return to work beyond a certain point while undertaking the GRTW program, a PIP may be considered from that time.

### Start date for PIPs

A PIP will be granted from the date we are satisfied that the individual began to incur a permanent loss of salary due to a medical condition. For example, this may be the date of effect of the person's part-time contract which establishes a permanent pattern of hours. For individuals who do not sign part-time contracts, the start date for PIP may be the day after all sick leave credits have been exhausted and the person begins a permanent pattern of part-time hours. For people who are redeployed, the start date for PIP may be the date of redeployment at a reduced level.



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Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) ABN: 48 882 817 243, AFSL: 238069, RSEL: L0001397

Defence Force  
Retirement and Death  
Benefits Scheme  
ABN: 39 798 362 763

Australian Defence  
Force Superannuation  
ABN: 90 302 247 344  
RSE: R1077063

Commonwealth  
Superannuation Scheme  
ABN: 19 415 776 361  
RSE: R1004649

Public Sector  
Superannuation  
accumulation plan  
ABN: 65 127 917 725  
RSE: R1004601

Military Superannuation  
and Benefits Scheme  
ABN: 50 925 523 120  
RSE: R1000306

Australian Defence  
Force Cover  
ABN: 64 250 674 722

Public Sector  
Superannuation Scheme  
ABN: 74 172 177 893  
RSE: R1004595

1922 Scheme  
DFRB Scheme  
PNG Scheme  
DFSPB  
CSC retirement income

# Responsibilities of the examining medical officer

## Pre-application strategies

It is expected that the person's employer would have encouraged all other avenues of management to retain the individual in their usual role prior to applying for a PIP. Strategies could include:

- appropriate leave to allow adequate recovery time
- health assessments by appropriate specialists
- any treatment or strategy recommended by those specialists
- workplace and daily living assessments
- functional capacity and vocational assessments
- neurological or psychological testing
- counselling or employee assistance programs
- pain management programs
- work conditioning and retraining
- graduated return to work programs.

If any strategies have been attempted, you should comment on their level of success and suggest any other strategies that would be appropriate for the individual.

## Background information

You should ensure your report takes into account all relevant background information, including any previously obtained medical reports, a report from the person's treating practitioner and/or specialist that is not more than six months old, and the results of any rehabilitation or retraining attempts. Your report is your opportunity to provide your opinion of the reports and any positive or negative results.

## Your report

The medical examination for PIP applications must be conducted by an independent specialist who is not the individual's specialist, and who is suitably qualified in the relevant medical field. There is no official medical reporting form for a PIP, rather your report should address the questions on the report checklist at the end of this document.

Your role is to document the individual's medical condition and its effect on their ability to work. You are responsible for providing a recommendation about the most suitable level of duties, and/or the most suitable number of working hours and the spread of those hours over the working fortnight. You must give an opinion about whether these work modifications are due to the medical condition, and whether the modifications are permanent. If there are other factors impacting the person's ability to work their regular hours and duties, you should also note this within your report. It is important that you also set a date for a medical review at the end of your report. You should not comment on whether or not the PIP should be approved as this is a decision made by CSC after reviewing all medical information, including your report.

## Further information

If you require any further information in relation to the matters discussed in this document, please contact CSC via the details on the last page.

## Medical officer's report checklist

This checklist should be used by a doctor in preparing a report on an individual undergoing a medical assessment as part of their application for a partial invalidity pension (PIP). Please address and elaborate on all of the following points in your report:

### What is the history of the condition(s)?

- What was the date of the first consultation?
- What is the history as per the medical notes?

### What are the current symptoms/signs?

- What has been described by the individual?
- What has been observed by you at presentation?

### What is the diagnosis?

- What is the severity of the condition?
- Is the condition transitory or long-term?

### What treatment has the individual had?

- Is the individual using any current medications or undertaking any physical therapy or psychotherapy?
- Do you think they are effective?
- Please comment on the results of any tests conducted.
- Are there any additional treatments you would recommend? What is your opinion on the likely results of those treatments?

### What is the prognosis?

- What is the normal course of the condition(s)?
- What is the expected outcome for the individual?

### What are the effects of the condition(s) on the individual's ability to work?

- Is the individual capable of performing the duties of their usual occupation?
- Could the individual perform their usual occupation if they modify their duties or if they reduce their working hours?
  - if so, what suitable duties or working hours do you recommend and what should be the spread of those hours over a working fortnight (e.g. Mon, Wed, Fri, or 5 hours per day, 3 days per week)?
  - is this modified situation likely to be permanent?

### Is there any additional information that you believe to be relevant to this individual's application?

- In your opinion, is the individual's medical condition the only reason that their working conditions need modification? Please provide reasons.
- To what degree do any other factors impact on their work capacity (%)?
- What is the date you believe these modified working arrangements became permanent?
- When should the individual have their next medical review?



**Email**  
employer.service@csc.gov.au



**Phone**  
1300 338 240



**Fax**  
(02) 6275 7010



**Post**  
Employer Service  
GPO Box 2252  
Canberra ACT 2601



**Web**  
csc.gov.au



**Overseas Callers**  
+61 2 6275 7000