



**Special Needs Assistance
Booklet**



Defence Special Needs Support Group Ltd.

PO Box 31 Deakin West, ACT 2600

1800 037 674

Email: Board@dsnsg.org.au

Website: www.dsnsg.org.au

Welcome to the Special Needs Assistance Booklet

Mid-2017 the Defence Special Needs Support Group Ltd. (DSNSG) saw a need for an information booklet which outlines the assistance available for Special Needs Families in the Defence Force.

This information booklet covers:

- Who DSNSG are
- What DSNSG does
- How to become a member of DSNSG
- The programs available

This booklet also covers the Support and Assistance provided by:

- Defence Member and Family Support Branch (DMFS)
- Defence Housing Australia (DHA)
- TOLL Government and Defence
- APS Benefits Group (APSBG)

DSNSG has been actively and successfully raising awareness of the difficulties faced by mobile families in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) at a State and Federal level.

Whilst it is never easy being moved around, many organisations and service providers are now aware of the additional needs required for families with Special Needs in the ADF.

The result of this consultation/collaboration and being actively involved in the ADF policy development has resulted in the implementation of a range of measures to assist families with Special Needs on posting to a new locality.

DSNSG provides this booklet in which we hope will help families understand the processes, assistance and support available for our Special Needs families.

Defence Special Needs Support Group

DSNSG is a well-respected national organisation with many local groups, supporting families located both around Australia and overseas.

DSNSG provide information, assistance, and advocacy for all ADF families currently serving and ex-serving with a dependant (child, spouse, or other dependant) with Special Needs.

DSNSG Co-Patrons

The Chief of the Defence Force and the Minister for Veterans Affairs and Defence Personnel.

DSNSG Ambassador

DSNSG also welcomes the guidance and assistance of the DSNSG Ambassador who provides an integral link between ADF and DSNSG.

What we do

DSNSG supports ADF families with Special Needs dependants by:

- Providing a National Network of ongoing peer support to all families regardless of the Disability/Special Need
- Linking families together with similar circumstances
- Liaising with Defence, Federal and State departments regarding the issues families with Special Needs face
- Raising public awareness to the difficulties concerning Defence Families with Special Needs
- Aiding in access to disability services/equipment and information
- Providing a coordinated approach through the local and national network in obtaining disability information

Becoming a member of DSNSG

To become a member of DSNSG, a membership form needs to be completed. Membership forms can be obtained by going to our website www.dsnsng.org.au or sending an email to the Memberships and Communications Officer, memberships@dsnsng.org.au. Once completed return via email.

If assistance is needed with the completion of the form, please contact DSNSG National Office on 1800 037 674, or contact your Local Coordinator.

Note: Families aren't required to be recognised by DMFS, Families with Special Needs to access DSNSG services and support.

The Local Coordinators, The Board or National Administration Liaison Officer (NALO) can help with the Defence Recognition process.

Once you are a member of DSNSG you can access DSNSG programs.

Supporting Partners

DSNSG have several Supporting Partners

These are:

- ❖ Defence Member and Family Support
- ❖ APS Benefits Group
- ❖ Defence Health
- ❖ Navy Health
- ❖ Defence Housing Authority
- ❖ Toll Transitions
- ❖ Defence Bank
- ❖ Australian Military bank



Australian Government
Defence

Defence Member and Family Helpline

Providing support, advice or someone
to talk to at anytime.

1800 624 608

24/7/365



Australian Government
Defence

Programs Available from DSNSG

Computer for Kids

Computer 4 Kids(C4K) is a program aiding with the purchase of an iPad for families to use to support their child and/or children with Special Needs.

Assisting with their education and everyday living skills. An iPad is the best, as it is portable, lightweight, can be taken everywhere and takes up minimal space.

Families can download great applications for the iPad suitable for the individual needs of their child.

There are many applications to assist with behaviour, motor skills, learning, literacy, and can be essential for communication.

Criteria required:

- A member of DSNSG for a minimum of 6 months and all details up to date
- Supply supporting documentation from treating specialist, stating the iPad is required to help assist the child with Special Needs

Note: There is a contribution fee payable to DSNSG from the families who access this program. This is a once off assistance to help provide the initial iPad. You can only apply for one iPad per child in the family.

To find out more,

Email computer4kids@dsnsg.org.au

Proudly Sponsored by: Defence Health.

Drive Safe

Our Drive Safe Program is primarily to assist and help members of our DSNSG families with ASD and ADHD, to gain confidence and self-esteem when learning to drive.

This program was developed as DSNSG saw a need for teenagers with special needs requiring specialised training and assistance to gain their driving licence.

Criteria required:

- Dependent needs to be over the age of 16 years and hold a current learner's permit. (Other ages and special needs may be considered, at the discretion of the appointed Board)
- Supply supporting documentation of diagnoses
- DSNSG Membership details are up to date

Note: There is a contribution fee payable to DSNSG from the families who access this program. This is a once off assistance to help provide the initial lessons. You can apply for driving lessons, one per child in the family.

To find out more, Email drivesafe@dsnsg.org.au
Proudly Supported by: Australian Military Bank.

Family Events

Your local area coordinator has the responsibility of organising these events. Details will be forwarded via local newsletters, emails and in the DSNSG Facebook group.

Some examples of family events are:

- Locally based coffee catch ups
- Family fun days
- Movie nights and more!

For more information, please contact your local area coordinator or Email: board@dsnsg.org.au

For Your Information

The For Your information (FYI) is a DSNSG Program assisting families to network and develops support structures.

The program provides financial support and the opportunity for families to attend workshops, seminars, webinars, and order resource books.

These may include:

- Behavioral support
- Additional information for parents and carers about the Special Needs of the dependant
- Other workshops/webinars available to help aid the dependant

DSNSG gather information relating to various workshops/webinars which are happening around Australia but sometimes it is hard to keep up to date.

Information from families is appreciated regarding any education sessions, seminars, and workshops which are happening in your area.

As much notice and information as possible is required to ensure adequate time for information to be provided to families for booking, purchasing and payments of tickets.

Note: There is a contribution fee payable to DSNSG from the families who access this program.

To find out more, Email fyi@dsnsg.org.au

Access to Grants

APS Benefits Group (APSBG) is an Australian mutual (owned by over 25,000 members) which offers simple financial services to help you stay on top of your money.

APSBG is proud to offer financial assistance of up to \$4000 to cover the expenses to obtain equipment or other particular requirements relating to the person with special needs.

Criteria required:

- APSBG will only consider applications from families who have a dependant with special needs
- At least one member of the family must be a current paid member of the APS Benefits Group (**for at least 12 months**) to be eligible for consideration
- Quotes and or receipts of the equipment /other items to be provided

Approved funds are benevolent grants and do not require repayment.

To find out more about membership of APSBG go to
www.apsbenefitsgroup.com.au

To apply for a Grant please
email: Board@dsnsg.org.au

Proudly Supported by: APS Benefits Group (APSBG)

Please note, programs shut down for EOFY and Christmas periods



Families with Special Needs

Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) provides practical assistance to Defence families who have a family member with special needs. This assistance focuses on reducing the impact of a relocation and aims to assist with minimising interruptions to specialist services.

The assistance available is not intended to duplicate services which are readily available in your new locality; but aims to provide interim assistance to ensure continuity of care where your family member would otherwise be placed on a waiting list until government supported services can be accessed.

The definition of special needs includes any Defence recognised family member who is listed on Defence's HR system, PMKeyS, and considers a wide spectrum of cases including physical, intellectual, sensory, learning or behavioural difficulties, mental health conditions, illnesses or disorders. It also includes academically gifted.

Recognition of families with special needs

To apply for support services available, you will first need to have your family member recognised as a 'family member with special needs' by Defence, which can be completed at any time by submitting an **AC832** form available on the Defence intranet.

The completed form must be submitted with the following supporting documentation:

- A document from a specialist medical practitioner which clearly identifies the diagnosed condition
- A statement from the ADF member which provides a summary of the condition, the current situation affecting the family member, as well as any relevant Defence assistance your family may be seeking

Once recognised as a family with special needs you will be advised via a Defence Minute, and you may then be eligible to receive assistance in the event of a posting.

Assistance available from DMFS

Special Needs Pre-posting visit

When the ADF member has received a posting order, it may be necessary for the dependant with special needs to visit the new location before your removal. DMFS can assist with accommodation and travel costs.

This is only available in instances where it's not possible to make arrangements for support from the old location; or there's a definite requirement for face-to-face contact with a department or institution in the new location to set-up those supports prior to your relocation.

Accessing services and equipment

When families are posted they may encounter difficulties accessing similar services they had in the previous posting location as waiting periods may apply.

DMFS may provide short-term funding toward services and/or equipment hire until the state or territory government agencies can deliver the service. DMFS can assist with respite care, personal care, therapy services and equipment hire.

Valet unpacking service

During a removal at Commonwealth expense, you may apply for a valet unpacking service to help with the unpacking of your new home.

Once you have been approved for this assistance, you can make arrangements through your Toll Transitions case manager before the move.

Other assistance available

Special housing needs

Defence may provide housing assistance to help accommodate your family member's medical condition. The decision maker for this special provision is the Directorate of Relocations and Housing (DRH).

To apply for special housing consideration, you would require:

- A copy of the family member with special needs recognition Minute
- Medical documentation to assist with assessing a reasonable housing solution. It should also detail the specific housing elements required to support your family's needs
- A member statement outlining your housing requirements (related to the special need)
- Any other supporting documents which may be relevant

Please speak with your local Defence Relocations and Housing Manager (DRHM) to find out more about special housing consideration.

During your travel to a new posting location

For families who have special accommodation requirements, require an alternant travel plan, or wish to seek help with the costs of child-care during your removal, please contact your Toll Transitions case manager for further advice.

If your family requires additional travel time, you may be eligible to travel at a shorter distance each day when traveling. Please speak with your Unit administrative staff for further advice.

Education assistance scheme (EAS)

You may access funding assistance for programs or services that your child requires which are not available from the new school or other government agencies.

This may include:

- Funding for a therapy service, or tuition not provided at the school but critical to educational progress
- An assessment of need, towards the development of an educational program
- Reimbursement of private schooling costs, where a necessary special program is only available at a private school

To access the EAS linked to special needs specific requirements a **AF170** form will need to be completed.

A **AD301** form is required for tutoring assistance (not limited to children with special needs).

Once completed these can be forwarded to:
education.supportprograms@defence.gov.au

Specialised staff, including DMFS Education Liaison Officers (EDLO), and Defence School Mentors (DSM) can also assist you with educational advice and support in each region.

More information

For more information about support for your family member with special needs, contact the Families with Special Needs Program via email specialneeds.families@defence.gov.au or feel free to call the all-hours Defence Member and Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.



Defence Housing Australia

Defence Housing Australia (DHA) understands some Defence families have family members with special needs. When these needs affect your housing requirements, DHA takes them into consideration to assist you in finding your housing solution.

Defence Member and Family Support Branch will refer your application to the Directorate of Relocations and Housing (DRH) who will assess your requirement against the Defence Pay and Conditions Manual (PACMAN) and supporting medical evidence.

All special housing needs must be supported by medical evidence from a specialist, or they cannot be approved. You will receive email advice on DRH's decision. A copy of the email will be sent to DHA and the regional Defence Relocations and Housing Manager to assist you with your housing needs.

Special housing considerations can be forwarded directly to DRH at SEG.DRHM@defence.gov.au once you have a **AC832** recognition Minute.

Please contact the FWSN team at: specialneeds.families@defence.gov.au for Recognition of Families with Special Needs or for assistance in contacting DRH and what is required.

Once DHA have received the email from DRH, the Regional Housing Specialist will be in contact with you to discuss housing options. Your housing entitlement will be determined by your assessment of assistance.

These may include:

- house hunting trips
- house accessibility i.e., ramps, lighting, size of or automatic door entry
- amenities or room sizes to accommodate large families
- housing in close proximity to education facilities (for special/ advanced education needs)
- housing in close proximity to healthcare or respite facilities (for special healthcare needs)
- consideration of environmental factors (heating, cooling, or lighting).

DHA will negotiate with DRH to approve the modifications, and DHA will implement the required changes.

DRH Contact list for each region can be found at the link below:

[Contact us \(dha.gov.au\)](https://dha.gov.au)



Toll Transitions' Relocation Service

Toll Transitions provides Defence members and their families, including those with a dependent who has special needs, with a comprehensive relocation service.

In addition to organising relocation requirements as outlined below, Toll Transitions notifies Defence Housing Australia (DHA) of a member's relocation, so they can assist with the housing solution.

Toll Case Managers

A relocating Defence member is appointed a Toll Transitions Case Manager as their point of contact to assist with their relocation. Case Managers assist Defence families with questions about their relocation and provide the appropriate support to facilitate their relocation.

Case Managers will:

- highlight the need for a pre-removal visit (PRV) where required
- arrange the pack/uptift/delivery/unpack of furniture and effects, and assess and organise any long-term or short-term storage requirements for furniture and effects
- book travel and temporary accommodation (losing and gaining locations) required during the relocation
- calculate and arrange payment of relocation allowances
- approve payment of relocation expense reimbursements.

Attendance at Pre-Removal Visits (PRVs) or Removal Service Visits (RSVs)

Toll Transitions removals specialists known as Transitions Consultants (TCs) are highly trained in all aspects of both domestic and international removals, with many years' experience in the removals industry. TC's physically visit a significant proportion of Defence member's homes and conduct PRVs, and RSVs.

The PRV enables TCs to assess a Defence family's removal requirements to determine the scope of the relocation, to assess the volume of furniture and effects and to ensure that any special service requirements are identified. TCs may also conduct RSVs at Defence families' losing and gaining locations. The TCs attend whilst the removalists are onsite, enabling Toll Transitions to ensure that the removals are conducted according to Defence requirements and Toll's stringent quality procedures.

The attendance of TCs for a PRV and/or RSV, provides Defence families with additional on the ground support, and the TCs can assist with any questions or concerns Defence families may have regarding their removal on the day.

Full or Partial Unpack at Delivery

Once Toll Transitions has received the member's Application for Relocation (AFR) and inventory, Case Managers will explain the unpack options available so that Defence families can select the option (full unpack or partial unpack) which works best for them.

If a full unpack is elected the removalist will unpack all cartons, other than those containing clothing, onto a flat surface.

If a partial unpack is elected, the removalist will only unpack those cartons containing breakable items (as agreed with the Defence member at uplift). All other personal effects will be unpacked by the Defence family including clothing packed by Defence families and cartons that had been packed by the removalists (non-breakables) at the uplift location.

The Defence member/partner can change the election up to and including the time the removal is delivered. However please note that changing from a partial to a full unpack late in the process may mean that the removalist may have to return to complete the unpack on another day.

Warranty

Toll's warranty extends to cover the contents of cartons unpacked by Defence members (excluding breakables and PBO items). PBO items are not covered by warranty, except in the case of loss or of obvious damage to the carton caused by the removalist. Members should ensure that any carton with obvious damage is unpacked by the removalist in the Defence member's presence and any damage noted on the electronic inventory condition report (EICR).

Toll's Warranty Scheme allows for new replacement cover to be applied to items which fall within predefined categories and age limits (refer to the age-based item inclusions table in Toll's Your Defence Relocation Guide). In cases where more than minor damage to an item has occurred, members will be supplied with a new replacement item if Toll Transitions determines that repair of the old item is not economical, and the item is eligible for replacement in accordance with the table of age-based item inclusions.

Like-for-like replacement or compensation cover applies to items which fall outside the specified age limits.

Not every item that sustains damage will be replaced with a new item or compensation paid at new value. In the first instance damaged items will be repaired where practicable and compensation paid for minor damage.

For full details of the Toll Warranty Scheme read Toll's "Your Defence Relocation Guide" and FAQs available at

<https://tws.defenceuniform.movemaestro.com/>

Move Plan App

The Move Plan App gives Defence families easy access to the details of their relocation itinerary that they will need to know as they progress through their relocation.

The app provides members with up-to-date details about their relocation including removal dates, allowances, travel dates including airfare information (where applicable) and accommodation details. The

information in the app mirrors the information available in the member's current Move Plan Letter.

The app is available for both Android and Apple iOS mobile phones. It can be downloaded from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes App store by searching for Toll Move Plan. Defence members can logon to the Toll Move Plan App using the same valid username and password they use to access Toll Transitions' website
<https://tw.defenceuniform.movemaestro.com/>

Your Defence Relocation Guide

Refer to Toll Transitions "Your Defence Relocation Guide" for full details of Toll Transitions comprehensive relocation service.

The guide is available at

<https://tw.defenceuniform.movemaestro.com/>

If you require any assistance, please call Toll Transitions on Free call number 1800 819 167.

Useful Contacts

In some states there may be an application for transferring of state-based schedule 8 (S8) medications, before posting into a new location it would be of benefit to contact your gaining location to find the processes relating to the medications.

The relevant State or Territory authority on medications should be contacted for further information.

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Health, Pharmaceutical Services

Phone: (02) 5124 9208 /

Email: hps@act.gov.au

New South Wales

Department of Health, Pharmaceutical Services

Phone: (02) 9391 9944

(option 1) / Email: MOH-PharmaceuticalServices@health.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory

Medicines and Poisons Control

Phone: (08) 8922 7341 /

Email:

poisonscontrol@nt.gov.au

Queensland

Queensland Health, Drugs of Dependence Unit

Phone: (07) 3708 5264 /

Email:

HARU@health.qld.gov.au

Tasmania

Department of Health and Human Services,

Pharmaceutical Services Branch

Phone: (03) 6166 0400

Victoria

Department of Health, Drugs and Poisons Unit

Phone: 1300 364 545

Western Australia

Department of Health, Pharmaceutical Services

Phone: (08) 9222 6883

South Australia

Department for Health and Wellbeing, Medicines

Labelling and scheduling.

Phone: (08) 8204 1944/ Email:

Health.MTPP@sa.gov.au or healthcontrolledsubstances@sa.gov.au

Other useful contacts

Defence Family Helpline -
1800 624 608
24/7 support and
information for ADF
members and their
families.

All-Hours Support line
– 1800 628 036

**Health Support Line
(for ADF member) –**
1800 IM SICK (1800
467 425)

Lifeline -
13 11 14 or text line
0477 131 114
24/7 Crisis counselling,
support groups and
suicide prevention
service.

Toll Transitions –
1800 819 167

**Defence Housing
Authority (DHA) –**
13 93 42

Veterans Affairs –
13 32 54

Defence Health –
1800 335 425

ADF Health Benefits –
1300 306 425

Translator Services –
13 14 50

**Defence Families
Australia –**
1800 100 509

**Defence Housing
Authority (DHA) -**
139 342

NDIS –
1800 800 110

Carer Gateway –
1800 422 737

For any further assistance email your local coordinator.

Details can be found on the website www.dsnsng.org.au or by contacting our National Office on **1800 037 674**

DSNSG President

President@dsnsng.org.au

DSNSG Board

Board@dsnsng.org.au

DSNSG Memberships Officer

memberships@dsnsng.org.au

DSNSG National Administration and Liaison Officer

nalo@dsnsng.org.au

Checklist

- ✓ Have you updated your circumstances with DMFS?
- ✓ If you've had changes or updates in diagnoses in the past few years, it's best to keep these details up to date
- ✓ Have you notified NDIA of change of circumstances?
- ✓ Do you require assistance with housing and modifications?
- ✓ Is your specialist letter less than two years old?
- ✓ Have you linked into support groups in your gaining location?
- ✓ Have you checked with your specialists if the medication script can be filled in your gaining location?

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure complete and accurate information, DSNSG cannot under any circumstance accept any responsibility for any errors or omissions.