



People with diabetes are protected by

- the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW);
- the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth);
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth);
- Section 772 & Section 65 (1A)(c) of the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) (subject to further criteria).



Call the Infoline on

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or email us at

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or visit

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Rights and responsibilities

for people living with diabetes



As members of the Australian community, we all have certain rights and responsibilities.

As a person with diabetes, you have additional rights and responsibilities.

You have rights to professional treatment, education and support, and a responsibility to lead your own diabetes care.

Your rights

As a person with diabetes, you have rights to:

- access professional health services and treatment, including a diabetes educator, dietitian, podiatrist, diabetes specialist, eye specialist, renal specialist, psychologist and exercise physiologist, if necessary;
- appropriate medical supplies, including free needles and syringes, pens and pen needles, as well as subsidised blood glucose testing strips through the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS)*;
- access educational information and support via Diabetes NSW;
- be treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner – at school, in the workplace and in the wider community;
- access equitable life and health insurance cover;
- most civil licences and permits;
- a clear explanation of your condition and treatment;
- access an interpreter service, if required;
- a second medical opinion about your diabetes, if you desire;
- accept or refuse recommended treatment;
- become a member of Diabetes NSW for additional support, access to health professionals, *Circle* quarterly magazine; monthly e-newsletters; and joining a community of 45,000 people living with diabetes.

Rights in the workplace

People qualified for a job should not be denied employment simply because they have diabetes and as such should be eligible for employment in any occupation for which they are qualified. They have a right to be assessed for specific duties on their merits, based on reasonable standards, applied consistently.

However, there may be some restrictions for those interested in joining the defence forces, fire brigade, police force and aviation industry, or careers that involve high risk activities eg at heights, underwater or solo in nature. Applications for these careers must be decided on a case by case basis.

People with diabetes should be able to get reasonable access to certain facilities, eg a suitable place to inject insulin or test blood glucose levels (BGLs), in order to look after their health while working. Minor changes to routine should be permitted to allow for needs such as time to check BGLs or have a snack to treat a hypo.

A person with diabetes may request to change his or her work arrangements (ie location or hours of work).

Legislation passed in Australia makes discrimination based on disability against the law. In general, all people have the right to apply for – and be fairly considered for – jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships on the basis of merit.

An employer is not allowed to refuse employment because of a person's disability or health condition.

Your responsibilities

As a person with diabetes, you have responsibilities to:

- manage your diabetes with the assistance and advice of your health care team, including regular checks and follow-up visits with your GP or endocrinologist and other healthcare professionals;
- register with the NDSS in order to access free needles, syringes and pen needles, and blood glucose test strips, at subsidised prices*;
- declare your diabetes to your employer. While not compulsory, if you fail to do so, you may not be eligible for workers' compensation;
- carry identification on you at all times, stating that you have diabetes;
- dispose of sharps in a safe and acceptable manner. To locate your nearest community sharps disposal facility, visit safesharps.org.au or call Diabetes NSW on 1300 136 588 or your local council;
- find out about any airline regulations/guidelines regarding travelling (especially international), prior to the date of travel;
- meet the driving standards as set out by Austroads and to declare your diabetes to the Roads and Maritime Services NSW. Ensure you are fit to drive by checking your blood glucose level is above 5 mmol/L, before driving and every 2 hours during driving;
- declare your diabetes to your car and health insurance companies.

*only available to those living in Australia who have, or are eligible to hold, a Medicare card.