



How to provide irregular work hours for the Activity Test

What does 'irregular work hours' mean?

For the activity test, 'irregular work hours' means the number of hours you work changes from one fortnight to the next. This could be because you are a casual employee, or in another situation where your work hours vary, such as being self-employed.

How do I provide my work hours if they are always changing?

There are three simple steps to follow if you have irregular work hours:

1. **Estimate** the highest number of hours you expect to work in any one fortnight in a three month period.
2. **Provide** the number of hours to Centrelink (via [myGov](#)) and tick the box to indicate you are in 'casual employment'.
3. **Update** this information if things change, for example, if you stop working, start full-time work (see more examples below).

For example, you might expect that some fortnights you will only work 10 hours, while other fortnights you will work up to 40 hours. In this case, you should provide an estimate of 40 hours per fortnight.

Centrelink will use your **estimate** to work out how many hours of Child Care Subsidy you can receive each fortnight, based on the activity test steps.

Note: *this method only applies to hours of paid work, not other types of activity such as study.*

What if I have more hours of Child Care Subsidy than I need in some fortnights?

You don't have to use all your hours of Child Care Subsidy each fortnight, although you may find it easier to pick up an extra shift if you want to, knowing you already have the subsidy to help cover the cost of child care.

You can ask your child care service whether they have any flexible arrangements to help families with irregular work hours, such as casual bookings.

What if my work situation changes?

While you do not have to update your work hours each fortnight as long as your estimate is still correct, some changes to your work situation will mean you do need to provide new information to Centrelink. For example, you might:

- increase or decrease your highest number of hours for any one fortnight in a three month period (while still having irregular work hours)
- go from casual to regular part time hours
- start working full-time
- stop working completely

If one of these or any other change means your estimate is no longer correct you need to provide updated information to Centrelink.

You can do this through your Centrelink online account via myGov. There is no limit to the number of times you can update your information.

Example:

Suzie works at a supermarket. Her shifts change from fortnight to fortnight. She **estimates** that, over a three-month period, her hours can vary from 15 hours to a maximum of 45 hours per fortnight.

Suzie provides an estimate based on her maximum of 45 hours per fortnight. Based on her estimate of 45 hours per fortnight, Suzie has up to 72 hours of subsidised child care per fortnight (step 2 of the activity test).

Some months later, Suzie has begun to work more shifts at the supermarket on weekends. While her hours still change from fortnight to fortnight, she now estimates she is working up to 60 hours in her busiest fortnight, based on a three-month period. Suzie updates her circumstances with Centrelink, changing her fortnightly estimate from 45 hours to 60 hours per fortnight. Her estimate of 60 hours per fortnight means that Suzie can now have up to 100 hours of subsidised child care per fortnight (step 3 of the activity test).

Step	Hours of activity (per fortnight)	Maximum number of hours of subsidy (per fortnight)
1	8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
2	More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
3	More than 48 hours	100 hours