



## How do I use the NDIS for Boccia?

### Questions and Answers

#### How do I use my NDIS funding for boccia?

To use your NDIS money for boccia, it is very important that you make sure boccia is written in your goals and aspirations.

With boccia written into your NDIS goals and aspirations, you can claim some of your boccia costs, like your club and Boccia Australia (BA) membership fees, a support worker to help you go to boccia training, or even some cost of going to a competition.

The NDIS is designed around what is “**reasonable and necessary**” for you and your needs. Your needs depend on the goals you set.

That is why it is very important to be specific and clear when choosing your goals. Make sure they are actually things **you** really want to do (and not something other people think you should do). Also, make sure the goals you set are realistic. For example, many of us want to play boccia at the Paralympics, but only some people can achieve that. Set your goals gradually – maybe aim to start attending boccia competitions. As your skills improve, you can then re-set your goals in your NDIS plans (they get updated regularly) and add more competitions, or overseas competitions if your boccia coach selects you for the team.



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## Can you give me some examples of words to use for my boccia goals when making my plan?

You can say, for example:

- I want to *engage recreationally in sport*
- I want to *engage competitively in sport*
- I want to *engage socially with my peers and community*
- I want to *build my capacity for my interaction with peers*
- I want to *continue to develop my social and communication skills*
- I want to *continue to have access to participate in boccia, receive training and attend competitions.*
- *I would like to continue to participate in social and sporting activities*

Boccia training sessions are important social events. At boccia, you socialise with your peers (other boccia players and their friends and family, other wheelchair users) from your local area. You make friends there and may go do things together in the local community before or after training, like have lunch or coffee with them at the shops.

You can use the same words to get some funding to go to competitions where you meet boccia players who are an important part of your friendship group. One of the few times you get to physically meet them is at competitions – both during the actual games and after, when people have dinner and drinks together for example.

You will not get everything paid for but you should get some things paid for.



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## Does the NDIS pay for *all* my boccia stuff?

The NDIS will not pay for everything.

The NDIS will not normally pay for you to play a sport or go to a competition. Non-disabled people don't get money from the government to play sports or go to competitions.

The NDIS will pay for the **extra** costs you have because of your disability. For example, the NDIS will pay for your support worker to come with you if you need one, because that is an extra cost you have because of your disability that a non-disabled person does not have.

If you are a competitive boccia player, make sure your goals list some of the competitions you are planning to go to (if you get selected by your coach). This can include State Titles in other states, the National Titles or even international competitions if you are selected.

The NDIS may then be able to pay for your support worker/sports assistant during the competition and may even pay for your support worker's airfare and accommodation. It all depends on what is in your goals and how you can justify that this expense is reasonable and necessary for you to achieve your goals.

## Why do some people get more money from the NDIS for boccia than others?

You may hear that a boccia player with about the same type or level of disability as you received a much higher NDIS package than you have.

Because someone you know got NDIS money to pay for something, does not necessarily mean that you get that too. On the other hand, you may have a friend who did not get something funded – but it may be that you do, if it is reasonable and necessary for you and your goals.

This probably happened because their goals have been written and set differently from yours. They may have more competitions in their goal, or they may have other needs you are not aware of. It could be because they have a (higher) international ranking and have set as their goals that they want to go to certain international competitions like the Paralympics, which are much more expensive.



Try not to compare other people's NDIS funding with yours.

Just make sure your goals are truly your goals – the things you want to do or achieve with boccia. The NDIS is quite flexible in which goals you can set, so don't let anyone else influence what your goals should be.

Only use other people's stories as inspiration - and do your own thing.

## **I'm being told the NDIS doesn't cover what I am asking for. What do I do?**

It may well be that the NDIS does not cover what you are asking for.

If the NDIS does fund the thing you are asking for, they will only do so if what you asked for is reasonable and necessary thing to achieve your goals. If you can't "fit" what you ask for in your goals, they will not fund it for you.

But it may also be that the person helping you design a plan (or even our planner) doesn't what to include. The NDIS is still new, and the Local Area Coordinators or Planners don't always understand what boccia is or how you can include it in your plan.

There is no list of things that get funded by the NDIS and things that do not. Every item that is funded by the NDIS is evaluated on its merits, based on your goals and whether that item is a reasonable and necessary for someone to achieve their goals.

Have a look at the categories and the line items the NDIS uses to allocate funding. It will help you use the words and terminology to fit your goals into your plan in a way that makes it easy for the planners to use. If you like, it will help you "translate" your goals into "NDIS speak".

## **Is there a list of things the NDIS funds?**

There is no list of items the NDIS will pay for – because what they fund is based on what you need to reach your goals.

There is an NDIS Price Guide, which gives you an idea of the sorts of things the NDIS funds by looking at the line items.



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You can find the NDIS Price Guide here:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/price-guides-and-information#ndis-price-guide-2019-2020>.

You may need to use slightly different line items depending on your support ratio. We have assumed a 1:1 ratio but if you share a support worker with another player for your personal care, the line item may be different (look for 1:2). A line item may also be different depending on whether a service is used during the day or at night, or during weekdays, weekends or public holidays.

Remember, just because a line item exists doesn't mean the NDIS will give you money for it. What you get from the NDIS depends on what your goals are, and whether an item is "reasonable and necessary" for you (and only you) to reach your goals.

## **How do I put boccia in my plan if I am Agency managed?**

If your NDIS plan is Agency managed (NDIA managed) you have to use NDIA registered providers. This means your support worker and travel provider have to be registered if you want to add them to your NDIS plan. It also means your club or coach/trainer should be an NDIS registered provider if you want to add membership to your plan.

The NDIS regularly updates its list of registered providers. You can find it here: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/working-providers/find-registered-provider>.

The list is very long – you may prefer to have a look at the IDEAS NSW website, which allows you to filter types of service providers. You can find it here: <https://www.ideas.org.au/search.html?dirid=481:3358&hasSubSects=yes&q=NDIS%20Providers&location=Sydney%20NSW%202000&s=2000&l=Sydney>.

At the moment, we don't think there are any boccia clubs that are NDIS registered boccia providers. There are, however, bigger disability service providers that offer boccia as part of their community inclusion and recreation offers. If you are Agency managed, the only boccia you can currently access is via those big service providers such as CPL in Queensland or CPA in NSW who run the Sydney Singles, the CPA Juniors training on Friday, and the SW Sydney CPA Sports Club for example.



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Do ask your service provider if they offer boccia. Get your friends to ask too. Even if your service providers does not offer boccia at the moment, if lots of people start asking for boccia, your service provider may think about offering boccia training.

## **What if I am Plan or Self managed?**

If your NDIS is Plan managed or Self managed, your boccia club or coach does not need to be a registered provider. The main difference between Self managed (where you manage everything yourself, like bookings and payment and 'reclaiming' money) and Plan managed (where a company does all your management for a small fee) is that people who Self manage do not need to adhere to the NDIS price cap. Can pay anything you agree on (you can pay less, if you find someone willing to provide the service for less, but you can also pay more).

Some Plan managers may be quite cautious and may not yet entirely understand the full flexibility of the scheme. If they are unsure if you can add something to your plan, have a look at the NDIS price guide and show them the support categories and line items and refer back to your plan and its goals.

(Self managed people, don't worry too much about the line item. You won't need it to claim your money; all you need to know is which category you claim in. But it's good to know a line item exists if you need to argue your case that yes, the NDIS can provide the item you ask for).

If you want to claim for boccia events such as the State Titles and you want it to directly come out of your plan rather than claiming a reimbursement, it is easier (especially if you are Plan Managed) to ask for an invoice to send directly to you or to your Plan Manager.

## **Can I put boccia club membership in my NDIS plan?**

If you are a recreational player (that means, you play for fun but don't want to do competition) you can use the NDIS to pay for the Boccia Australia (BA) membership fee, your club fee, a support worker to attend the sessions and travel to attend club sessions, and some basic boccia equipment.

You can claim your annual BA memberships under the Community Social and Recreational Activities support item (line item 04\_115\_0125\_6\_1). You can use the same for your club fees.



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## **I need a support worker to go to boccia (club and competitions). Can I add that?**

You can pay a support worker from your normal budget for personal care in the support area of Core Supports under *“Assistance with Daily Life”* that fits your needs, such as *“Assistance with Self-Care Activities”* depending of the intensity level of support you need (levels 1- 3), whether you need a weekday or weekend, and daytime or night-time. These are the line items from 01\_300 to 01\_505 in the NDIS price guide.

You can also pay a support worker from your budget for participation in the Community, Social and Civic Activities under *“Provision of support to enable a participant to engage in community, social and/or recreational activities”* depending on the level of support you require and the days you need. You will find these line items from 04\_102 to 04\_106.

If your support worker is also your sports assistant, you may be able to claim their cost under *“Access Community, Social And Recreational Activities”* - Level 2 (line items 04\_400) or Level 3 for more skilled or experienced sports assistants (such as a ramp assistant for a BC3 athlete) in line items 04\_500 onwards.

## **Can I put competition costs in my NDIS plan?**

If attending competitions is in your NDIS goals, you may be able to also claim training cost (to pay for boccia coaching sessions), competition entry fees, and your support worker during the competition. You may be able to find a support worker who lives near the competition (for example if the competition is somewhere in Australia) that you can employ through a local agency. If you want to bring your own support worker (for example, to an international competition, or because your support worker is also your sports assistant), you may be able to claim travel costs and accommodation costs for the support worker.

You may be able to claim your competition fee under the support item Community Participation Activities such as camps and Groups Building Skills. If you want to get one on one boccia coaching, for support 1:1 ratio (support worker) the line items are 04\_160\_0136\_6\_1 (weekday hours), 04\_162\_0136\_6\_1 (Saturdays) and 04\_163\_0136\_6\_1 (Sundays).



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## Will the NDIS give me money for boccia equipment?

Your boccia club should provide for recreational boccia playing. They will have sufficient ball sets, some ramps for you to use, and referee kits.

Non-disabled people do not get money from the government to buy sporting equipment, so it is not guaranteed that you can get boccia equipment from the NDIS. However, it may be possible depending on your goals and how you are going to achieve them.

If you play regularly and would like to buy your own kit, you may be able to get decent basic boccia equipment funded. You will have to make sure boccia is in your plan and the equipment you ask for must be reasonable and necessary (do not request money for super expensive top end boccia balls or ramp for example, it will be rejected).

If you want your own (more expensive) equipment to play competitive boccia, this can be part of your NDIS plan. Make sure the equipment you ask for is reasonable and necessary to increase your chances of receiving funding. You probably want to include a good middle range ramp rather than an expensive top-level ramp used by Paralympians – unless you are ranked in the top 20 BC3 players internationally of course.

Remember that equipment can include modifications to equipment you already have. For example, you may include a modification to your wheelchair to attach a boccia ball basket/tray or a strap to keep limbs strapped to your chair while playing. Always remember that boccia must be in your NDIS goals for this money to be allocated. If you are Agency of Self managed, you may be able to justify small modifications in your core funding.

There are other avenues to obtain equipment, especially from dedicated sports funding.





## **I can't afford to travel to competitions. Can the NDIS help?**

Your NDIS budget will have an allocation for transport costs. This money will regularly arrive into your bank account. You can use this money to come to boccia club training or private coaching, or even (local) competitions. You can use your own car or use a taxi.

The transport costs for the support worker are included in the budget for participation in the Community. Depending on how your goals are stated, you may even be able to argue that this includes airfares for your support worker to travel with you to interstate and international competitions. Some people have managed to justify this – but again, it needs to be reasonable and necessary to achieve your goal, boccia has to be a very important goal in your plan – and of course, your State coach must support you in this and select you to go to competitions.

## **What about accommodation?**

If you go to a boccia event that is further away, you will need to organise and pay for your own accommodation. But if it is reasonable and necessary for you to bring your support worker with you, you may be able to claim the accommodation for your support worker under the category in your plan entitled *“Short Term Accommodation and Assistance, 1:1 Weekdays”*, line item 01\_058\_0115\_1\_1 or the weekend under line items 01\_059\_0115\_1\_1 for Saturdays and 01\_060\_0115\_1\_1 for Sundays.

## **What happens if I don't agree with what I have been given in my plan?**

Always, always remember that you will need to state your case. The NDIS will fund the things that are considered reasonable and necessary for you to achieve your goals.

If you are Plan managed it may be that people from the NDIS or your plan manager question your request. Remind them that the item you want funding for is part of your goals as set out in your NDIS Plan, and if you did not have a disability, you would obviously not need that particular support.



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If you are Self managed you can claim the money if you are certain in yourself that it is reasonable and necessary. Remember that you may be audited at any time, and make sure that if you were asked in an audit, you can justify every expense - otherwise you will have to pay the money back and may face fines.

## **I just haven't received the plan I really need. Can I appeal?**

It is quite possible your planner will refuse your goals and or things you wanted to have in your plan.

If you are unhappy with the decision the NDIA made, have a look if your decision is on the list of "reviewable decisions" in section 99 of the NDIS legislation. If it is, you have three months to ask for an internal review (known internally as a "section 100 internal review"). The internal review will be done by a person who was not involved in the original decision. You can request an internal review by writing to: Chief Executive Officer, National Disability Insurance Agency, GPO Box 700, Canberra, ACT 2601. You can also ring 1800 800 110 and talk to someone from the NDIA office to ask for a review, or email [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au)

You can find more information here:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/operational-guidelines/review-decisions-operational-guideline/review-decisions-operational-guideline-which-decisions-can-be-reviewed>

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programs-services/for-people-with-disability/ndis-appeals>

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/how-review-planning-decision>

There will be information about how to ask for an internal review on the letter you get from the NDIA with the decision they made. You can use a form to request a review – you don't need to use that particular form, but it can be quite useful to help you describe why you want a review. You can download it from this website:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/how-review-planning-decision>

When you ask for a review, make sure you clearly explain why you think the original decision was not right and your request was reasonable and necessary given the goals you set in your plan.



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You will have to ask for review through the NDIS (and may need to make a complaint via feedback at [NDIS dot gov dot au](https://www.ndis.gov.au) Aim to resolve feedback within 21 days but may take longer (and generally does). You can check on your internal review via emailing [Internal.review.team@NDIS.gov.au](mailto:Internal.review.team@NDIS.gov.au)

If that doesn't work, you need to ask for a "review of a reviewable decision"

### **What is a "review of a reviewable decision" I hear about?**

If you are still not happy after the internal review, you can ask for a review of a reviewable decision. This means you will have to apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). This is a tribunal outside the NDIA. It works a bit like a court (although it has a slightly different status). You have to have tried an internal review before you go to the AAT, you can't just head there straight up.

To find out how to go to the AAT, you can ring 1800 228 333 or look at the information on the AAT website, which you can find here:

<https://www.aat.gov.au/apply-for-a-review/national-disability-insurance-scheme-ndis-/how-to-apply>

If you are still not happy, either about the decision or the way you have been treated by the NDIA, you can make a complaint by filling in a complaint form and sending it to the NDIA. The complaint form is found here:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints>

You can mail it to NDIA, GPO Box 700, Canberra, ACT 2601, drop it off at any NDIS office or email it to [feedback@ndis.gov.au](mailto:feedback@ndis.gov.au)

You can also make a complaint to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. You can call them on 1300 362 072 or visit their website [[Ombudsman.gov.au](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au)]. There is a special button for NDIS complaints: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/australian-government-agencies-and-services/national-disability-insurance-agency>].



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## Where can I get help with getting boccia in my NDIS?

If you have a support coordinator (and there is sufficient funding in your plan) they will guide and support you through this process, or even do it for you. Strictly speaking, a support coordinator is not an advocate, and if you are really stuck, we recommend you contact and advocate.

Here are some websites that can help you find an advocate.

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programs-services/for-people-with-disability/ndis-appeals>

<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

<https://da.org.au/>

<https://www.afdo.org.au/resource-disability-advocacy-organisations/>

We are not NDIS experts, but BNSW is happy to help you with initial questions or point you towards people who can help you. You can email us on [NDIShelp@Boccia.com.au](mailto:NDIShelp@Boccia.com.au)

Please email us your questions. We want to know what difficulties you have – we will have a look at them and find the answers and send out updates to you all.

If you have found something new that works, please also let us know so we can tell others.