



Maintenance Agreements

If you have been fitted with a hearing device through the Hearing Services Program (the program), you have the option of entering into a maintenance agreement. Maintenance agreements are an easy and cost effective way to help you take care of your hearing device.

What is a maintenance agreement?

Maintaining your hearing device and buying batteries privately can be costly. Maintenance agreements are an optional agreement between you and your service provider where, for an annual fee, your service provider will supply you with batteries, and service and repair your hearing device for 12 months. If you enter into this agreement, the program will pay your service provider an additional amount towards the cost of maintaining your device.

Having a maintenance agreement in place provides you with the opportunity to receive all batteries, repairs and services you require for your hearing device at no additional cost (beyond the annual fee) for the duration of that year. It is similar to a 'safety net' for you, if for example your hearing device requires a major repair (or replacement) of an electronic part, as this could cost you several hundred dollars if you had to pay out-of-pocket.

Do I have to enter into a maintenance agreement if I have a hearing device?

It is not compulsory for you to enter into a maintenance agreement, however you should be aware that if you choose not to, the full cost of batteries, servicing and repairs will be at your own expense. These costs can add up quickly and can easily exceed the cost of the annual maintenance agreement fee. While the choice is yours, entering into a maintenance agreement is highly recommended. You can discuss this further with your service provider.

How do I enter into a maintenance agreement?

If you would like to enter into a maintenance agreement you should speak with your service provider. They will advise you how much your maintenance agreement will cost. In most cases, your service provider will request payment of the maintenance agreement fee at your first follow up appointment, and annually thereafter. If you have elected not to enter into a maintenance agreement at this stage, you can still choose to do so at a later date.

If you decide to enter into a maintenance agreement, your service provider will ask you to sign a claim form. This form outlines your contribution to the agreement, and the amount the program will also contribute to your service provider to fund the full cost of your annual maintenance agreement.

How much does a maintenance agreement cost?

If you enter into a maintenance agreement you will be required to pay an annual fee to your service provider. You should speak with your service provider to discuss the fees associated with your maintenance agreement. If you have been fitted with a fully subsidised device, you will be asked to make a standard contribution towards your maintenance, which is indexed annually.

The annual fee for partially subsidised devices is generally more than that charged for a fully subsidised device, and will vary between service providers. If you have a partially subsidised device you should negotiate the annual fee with your service provider.

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Do I have to pay the maintenance fee if I am a veteran?

If you hold a DVA Gold or White (hearing specific) card and have chosen a fully subsidised device, you are exempt from paying the annual maintenance agreement fee, as DVA will pay this for you.

You should be aware that this exemption **does not** apply to partially subsidised devices. If you have chosen a partially subsidised device, you will be expected to contribute to the cost of your annual maintenance agreement, and DVA will not reimburse this amount. You can discuss these costs with your service provider.

What if I lose eligibility for the Hearing Services Program?

If you have previously been fitted with a hearing device through the program, you can access minor maintenance services for this device even if you lose your eligibility for the program. Minor maintenance includes cleaning, replacement of minor parts (such as tubing for your ear mould) and repair to or replacement of your ear mould. This will be provided free of charge for a period of five years, commencing on the date that you lost your eligibility.

Services such as repairs to the electronic parts of your device, replacement of major electronic components within your device and the provision of batteries for your device are not included as part of minor maintenance, and are not covered through the program if you lose your eligibility.

If I change my service provider, do I need to enter into a new maintenance agreement?

If you change to a new service provider and you have a current maintenance agreement in place, your existing agreement will continue with your new service provider. You will not be required to enter into a new maintenance agreement or pay another fee until the anniversary date you changed to the new hearing services provider. At this time you can choose to enter into a new maintenance agreement with your new service provider.

I am unable to visit my service provider, what can I do?

If you are unable to visit your service provider it may be possible to enter into a maintenance agreement with postal options. For example, you may be able to post your hearing device to your service provider for repairs or maintenance. You may also be able to organise for your service provider to post batteries to you on a regular basis or on request.

These options should be discussed directly with your service provider, as providers will have different policies around this issue.

Alternatively a friend or relative may be able to access batteries and maintenance on your behalf.

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