



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 Maintenance Agreement form. This form outlines what is covered under the maintenance agreement and the contribution amount you are required to pay to your service provider.

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.

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.

Do I have to pay the maintenance fee if I am a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant?

The annual maintenance fee for your hearing devices will be included as part of your NDIS plan, where your planner has assessed this as being [reasonable and necessary](#).

What if I lose eligibility for the Hearing Services Program?

If you lose eligibility for the program, and your current maintenance agreement has expired, you will no longer be able to access maintenance services through the program. However, if your maintenance agreement did not expire when you became ineligible for the program, you will be able to access maintenance services through the program until this maintenance agreement expires.

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

If you transfer to a new service provider and have a current maintenance agreement in place, your existing agreement will continue with your new service provider. When your existing agreement expires you can choose to enter into a new agreement with your new service provider. At this time, you may be asked to pay a new maintenance agreement co-payment. If you are using partially subsidised devices, your new provider may wish to negotiate new terms for your new agreement when the previous one expires.

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.

What is covered under a maintenance agreement?

Maintenance Agreements cover:

- Appropriate battery supply
- Adjustments and re-programming if required (including phone or accessories connectivity issues)
- Repairs to the device as well as to any other attachments necessary for the operation of the device
- Necessary components for the functioning of the device (e.g. Ear-moulds, thin tube and dome replacement)
- Hearing Aid cleaning