



**Australian Government**  
**National Indigenous  
Australians Agency**



**NIAA**

# Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Scheme Guidelines 2025

June 2025

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# Part 1 Introduction

## 1.1 These Guidelines

These are the Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Scheme Guidelines 2025 (**Guidelines**).

These Guidelines are published by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (**NIAA**) and give Remote Community Stores (**Stores**) and organisations information about the Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Scheme (the **Scheme**) and how they can buy goods under the Scheme. Among other things, these Guidelines set out how a person operating a Remote Community Store (the **Store Owner**) can be enrolled to participate in the Scheme as a Scheme Participant.

Contact details for the NIAA are on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

In addition to these Guidelines the following documents are available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#):

- a. the Scheme Rules
- b. more information about the Scheme and the Scheme Rules
- c. the Code
- d. the Code Rules
- e. more information about the Code and the Code Rules

## 1.2 Objective of the Scheme

The objective of the Scheme is:

- (a) to reduce the cost of living for people in remote First Nations communities who often face higher living expenses than the rest of Australia and
- (b) support health, wellbeing and food security outcomes by facilitating the provision of healthy foods and essential items at a lower price to remote First Nations communities.

Scheme Participants are expected to support the NIAA in achieving the Scheme's objective by complying with these Guidelines and the Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Scheme Rules 2025 (**Scheme Rules**).

## 1.3 About the Scheme

The Scheme is a Commonwealth scheme, administered by the NIAA.

Through the Scheme, the Store Owners of up to 152 Remote Community Stores will be provided with the opportunity to order from 30 product lines made available by Outback Stores at a subsidised price (**Subsidised Items**). A product line may include different types of a product, for example, plain flour and self-raising flour. Types of a product available under a product line might change, as might the brand of products available.

The list of Subsidised Items is set by the NIAA after considering the advice of the Subsidy Scheme Advisory Group and is available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#). More information about the Subsidy Scheme Advisory Group, including its members, is available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#). The list of Subsidised Items might change over the life of the Scheme and the NIAA may seek input from Scheme Participants when making these changes.



Scheme Participants must sell Subsidised Items from Scheme Registered Stores at a price that is not higher than the Intended Maximum Price for the item that is in force at the time a Subsidised Item is purchased by a retail consumer. The Intended Maximum Price for a Subsidised Item will be determined by the NIAA and updated from time to time by reference to the price charged for those items in large supermarkets based in the City of Darwin, Northern Territory. The Intended Maximum Prices for Subsidised Items will be made publicly available on the [Outback Stores Website](#), and Outback Stores will notify Scheme Participants of changes to the Intended Maximum prices.

An applicant must apply to be enrolled as a participant in the Scheme. The NIAA may grant an application to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant if an applicant meets the Scheme Eligibility Requirements set out in these Guidelines. The Eligibility Requirements include, amongst other things, that an applicant must be enrolled as a Code Participant and have at least one Code Registered Store.

The Scheme commences on 1 July 2025 and is currently funded to continue for 4 years (ending 30 June 2029).

The NIAA intends to conduct a review of the first 3 months of Scheme operations. Based on the findings of this review process, the NIAA may seek to update or change these Guidelines.

## 1.4 Changes to these Guidelines

The NIAA can change these Guidelines at any time, by publishing the changed version at on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

However, if the NIAA does propose to change these Guidelines, it may carry out a public or targeted consultation (where appropriate) with Store Owners and other stakeholders before making the change.

## 1.5 The Commonwealth doesn't endorse Stores, goods or services

While the NIAA enrolls applicants to participate in the Scheme, the Commonwealth doesn't endorse any Store, Store Owner, Store Owner's Operations, or goods and services offered by any Store.

Scheme Participants are not agents of the NIAA. They aren't contracted by the NIAA to provide any services. The Scheme and the Code are there to help promote health and food security outcomes in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

## 1.6 NIAA doesn't regulate Stores generally

The NIAA doesn't regulate Store Owners that are enrolled as Scheme Participants except for compliance with the Scheme Rules, the National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations (**Code**), and the National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations Rules 2025 (**Code Rules**).

There are a range of other Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies that have specific roles in regulating the operations of Scheme Participants. Examples include:

- (a) the Australian Securities and Investments Commission which, for example, regulates credit products
- (b) the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission which, for example, regulates product safety and Commonwealth consumer protection law



- (c) State and territory Fair Trading agencies, which administer state and territory consumer safety and other laws
- (d) the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (**ORIC**) which administers the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*.

The NIAA will cooperate with the relevant Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies in their work. However, it won't interfere with, or direct, them as they do their work.

## 1.7 Outback Stores

While the NIAA will administer the Scheme, the NIAA has entered into arrangements with Outback Stores for the delivery of the Scheme. Outback Stores will be the point of contact for Scheme Participants in respect of the operational aspects of the Scheme, including issues regarding ordering and stock.

Outback Stores also operates as a retail entity managing remote stores. It is an Eligibility Requirement that stores agree Credit Terms with Outback Stores. Scheme Participants are not required, and should not, provide any commercially sensitive information to Outback Stores, including information about the price at which they sell Subsidised Items or other stock. Any commercially sensitive information collected by the NIAA for compliance purposes will not be shared with Outback Stores without the prior consent of a Scheme Participant, unless it is first de-identified and presented in an aggregated manner.

Access to Subsidised Items under the Scheme is limited. In delivering the Scheme, Outback Stores may prioritise ordering arrangements with certain Scheme Registered Stores, for example:

- (a) to ensure the Scheme continues to operate during periods of high demand
- (b) due to limited capacity or stock or logistics issues that cause supply to be staggered or delayed
- (c) to meet timeframes agreed in purchase orders for Subsidised Items.

The prioritisation of ordering arrangements will not be applied purely because a Scheme Registered Store has engaged Outback Stores to provide services as a store management services provider. Instead, Outback Stores will only prioritise ordering arrangements for the purpose of delivering the Scheme.

## 1.8 Power to extend times

If these Guidelines require a person to do a particular thing at a specified time or within a specified period, the NIAA can, by notice to the person, extend the period as stated in the notice. It can do so more than once, and even after the period has ended.



# Part 2 Applying to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant

## 2.1 Introduction

This Part describes the process and requirements for a person to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant, including how to apply to the NIAA for enrolment.

By lodging an application, the applicant agrees:

- (a) to comply with the requirements of this Part
- (b) that, if it does not comply with a particular requirement, the NIAA has no obligation to continue assessing the application until the applicant does comply
- (c) that the NIAA may ask the applicant to provide further information to assess and determine the application

**Note:** For the application assessment to be finalised, the applicant must provide the information in the timeframe specified by the NIAA.

- (d) that, if the applicant does not provide further information as requested by the NIAA, the application is taken to be withdrawn

**Note:** Prior to withdrawal of the application, the NIAA will follow up with the applicant seeking the requested information.

- (e) that the NIAA can reject the application for non-compliance.

An applicant may withdraw its application at any time by notifying the NIAA at [remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au](mailto:remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au).

## 2.2 What applicants should consider before applying

Before applying, an applicant should make sure that:

- (a) it understands the Scheme Rules
- (b) it can demonstrate that it satisfies the Eligibility Requirements
- (c) if relevant, it can demonstrate compliance with any existing funding agreements between the NIAA and itself and any Related Bodies Corporate (for example, that there have been no fraud or compliance issues in relation to that existing funding agreement).

## 2.3 The Application Form

A person that seeks to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant will need to apply to the NIAA by completing an Application Form.

Only one Application Form will be accepted per applicant.



The Application Form must specify each Store which the applicant is applying to have Scheme Registered. More than one Store may be included in an application, but Scheme Registration will only be granted to Stores that are owned and operated by the applicant listed on the Application Form.

Note: The Application Form can be downloaded from the [NIAA Food Security Website](#). The Application Form covers both enrolment as a Code Participant and enrolment as a Scheme Participant. An applicant will need to indicate on the Application Form, whether it is only applying for enrolment as a Code Participant, or to be enrolled as a Code Participant **and** Scheme Participant.

## 2.4 Fill out the Application Form

Fill out the Application Form, following the instructions in the Form. All fields indicated as mandatory must be completed.

Applicants will also be required to attach supporting documentation in accordance with the instructions in the Application Form. The NIAA cannot receive attachments that exceed the file size limits specified in the form.

## 2.5 Sign the Application Form

The Application Form must be properly signed by the applicant in wet ink.

The following table sets out whose signatures on the form are acceptable for the most common cases.

In other cases, the applicant should contact the NIAA to discuss its proposed method of signature.

<b>If the applicant is ...</b>	<b>the Application Form must be signed ...</b>
a Corporations Act company	by 2 directors, OR a director and the company secretary OR the sole director
a Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait) (CATSI) Act company	by 2 directors OR a director and a corporation secretary OR the sole director
a statutory corporation (including local government bodies)	by a person, or in a way, authorised by the legislation setting up the body
an incorporated association, incorporated under state or territory law	by a person, or in a way, authorised by the legislation setting up the body and the rules that govern it
a partnership	by a general partner

## 2.6 Lodge the Application Form

The signed Application Form, together with all the documents that the form says must be included, must be lodged by:

- (a) sending them as attachments to an email addressed to [remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au](mailto:remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au), or
- (b) uploading them on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

On receiving the application, the NIAA will acknowledge receipt and advise if any further information is required for assessment of the application to commence.

By lodging the Application Form, the applicant acknowledges that giving false or misleading information to the NIAA can be a serious offence.



## 2.7 Obligations

By lodging an application, the applicant agrees that:

- (a) it will comply with the Scheme Rules, its Credit Terms with Outback Stores, the Code, Code Rules and the Code Guidelines and
- (b) these Guidelines do not create any rights, express or implied, in the applicant except for:
  - (i) confidentiality rights (see **Error! Reference source not found.**), and
  - (ii) rights about complaints (see Part 4).

Information about the Code is available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

## 2.8 Enquiries about applications

Any enquiries about an application, including issues with lodging an application, should be sent in writing, to [remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au](mailto:remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au).

## 2.9 Requirements for the Application Form

Without limiting NIAA's rights, it may at any time set aside an application, and no longer consider it, if the Application Form:

- (a) is clearly incomplete
- (b) is not properly signed, or
- (c) includes a false or misleading statement.

Generally, the NIAA will notify an applicant if it sets aside an application, unless it's not able to – for example, because it can't contact the applicant using the contact details provided on the Application Form.

## 2.10 Changes in circumstances

- (a) If an applicant becomes aware, at any time before the application is decided, that any of the information provided to the NIAA in connection with the application is inaccurate or incomplete, the applicant must, as soon as practicable, notify the NIAA that the information is inaccurate or incomplete. The NIAA need not deal further with the application until the applicant corrects or completes the information and confirms to the NIAA that it has done so.
- (b) Paragraph 2.10(a) also applies to changes in the identity of the people or organisations that Control the applicant. In this case the applicant must notify the NIAA of the same details of the new controllers as are required for controllers and managers in the Application Form.



## 2.11 The Application Form contains some statements and representations

The Application Form includes a number of statements and representations that the applicant makes to the NIAA. An applicant should make sure that the statements included in its Application Form are correct. Providing false or misleading information to the NIAA can be a serious offence.

## 2.12 Conflicts of interest

Applicants will be required to declare, as part of their application:

- (a) any business or other dealings or relationships that may be considered an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest or
- (b) that, to the best of the applicant's knowledge after due inquiry, there is no conflict of interest.

If an applicant later identifies that there is an actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to its application, they must notify the NIAA in writing immediately.

Upon notification of an identified actual, perceived or potential conflict, the NIAA may direct an applicant to take such steps as it considers are reasonably necessary to address or manage the actual, potential or perceived conflict. An applicant should comply with any such direction from the NIAA.

## 2.13 NIAA can get more information about applications

To assess an application, the NIAA can:

- (a) ask for additional information relevant to the application from the applicant or other sources, including regulatory bodies, consumers and consumer groups, and take that information into account
- (b) take into account the previous activities of, and the NIAA's previous dealings with, the applicant, its predecessors, its Related Bodies Corporate and the managers of the Store or Stores specified in the application. This includes instances of non-compliance in relation to existing grant funding agreements with the NIAA, and the applicant's history of applications for enrolment in the Scheme or the Code, and
- (c) use information submitted in the Application Form in response to one requirement to assess another requirement (this will include using information submitted as part of an applicant's enrolment in the Code to assess its application for enrolment in the Scheme).

If the NIAA asks the applicant for further information about its application, the applicant must give the NIAA the information. The NIAA has no obligation to consider the application further until the information is provided.

The NIAA may ask to carry out a site visit to a Store listed in an applicant's Application Form. The applicant must arrange for the visit and cooperate with the NIAA personnel conducting the visit. This includes answering questions and providing information on request.

## 2.14 Privacy

The NIAA collects Personal Information when:



- (a) an applicant submits an Application Form, and
- (b) the applicant has a Store that is registered for the Scheme.

This is so the NIAA may:

- (a) assess applications
- (b) manage the Scheme and check if a Scheme Participant is complying with the Scheme Rules
- (c) answer any questions or complaints and
- (d) study how the Scheme is performing so improvements can be made.

### **What Personal Information does the NIAA collect?**

The NIAA collects the following Personal Information from applicants:

- name
- address
- email address
- telephone number
- signature
- job title

The NIAA may collect this information from:

- an applicant when it applies or provides the NIAA documents (e.g. compliance reports), and
- Outback Stores.

### **Who is this Personal Information disclosed to?**

The NIAA may disclose Personal Information from applicants to:

- Monash University and / or ORIC so they can contact Code Participants to assist them to comply with the Code
- an organisation engaged by the NIAA to check how well the Code works and if Code Participants are following the Code
- the Commonwealth Ombudsman to help with a complaint
- a court or tribunal if the law permits this
- other federal, state or territory government agencies (including the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission), and
- Government ministers and the parliament for accountability.

The NIAA may publish information about an applicant participating in the Scheme. This will not include Personal Information.

The NIAA will not disclose Personal Information from an applicant overseas.

### **What happens if an applicant does not provide its Personal Information?**

If an applicant does not provide its Personal Information:

- its application may not be assessed as the NIAA needs a contact person for each applicant, and



- the NIAA may not be able to respond to a question or complaint from the applicant.

### More information

The NIAA's privacy policy at [www.niaa.gov.au/privacy-policy](http://www.niaa.gov.au/privacy-policy) explains:

- what the NIAA does with Personal Information
- how an applicant can get a copy of or correct its Personal Information
- who to contact for privacy questions or complaints, and
- what the NIAA does with privacy complaints.

To find out more, an applicant can contact the NIAA's Privacy Officer:

- phone: 02 6152 3080
- email: [privacy@niaa.gov.au](mailto:privacy@niaa.gov.au)
- post: PO Box 2191 Canberra ACT 2600



## Part 3 Assessing applications

### 3.1 Eligibility Requirements

To be enrolled as a Scheme Participant, the applicant must:

- A. be a legal person, with the power to conduct its business and enter into arrangements with the NIAA and Outback Stores
- B. have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN) for each Store included in its Application Form which it is seeking to have registered as a Scheme Registered Store, or Australian Registered Business Number (ARBN)
- C. have at least one Code Registered Store (information about the Code is available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#))
- D. not have any record of non-compliance with any existing grant funding agreements or other agreements entered into by the applicant with the NIAA (if applicable)
- E. be suitable to be enrolled for the Scheme (this Eligibility Requirement will be assessed against the Evaluation Criteria at 3.3), and
- F. be assessed for, and enter into, Credit Terms with Outback Stores for the purposes of the Scheme.

### 3.2 How applications are assessed

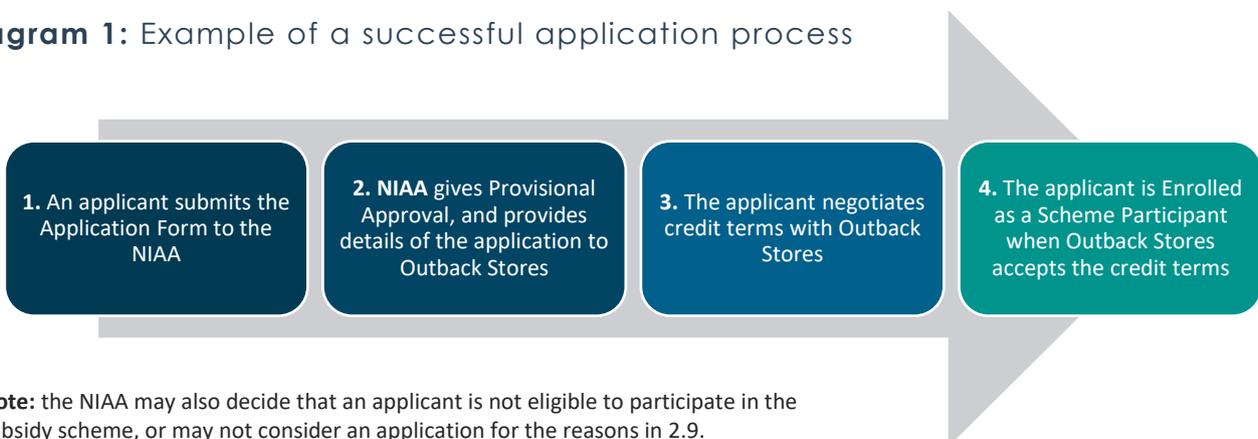
The NIAA will assess each application in accordance with this Part of these Guidelines.

An applicant must satisfy the Scheme Eligibility Requirements to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant.

Eligibility Requirements A – E will be assessed by the NIAA. If the NIAA decides that an applicant has satisfied these requirements, they will provide details of the applicant's application to Outback Stores. Outback Stores may then enter into an agreement with the applicant that sets out the terms of credit to be provided to the applicant (if any) for the purposes of its participation in the Scheme (**Credit Terms**). It is an Eligibility Requirement that Scheme Participants agree Credit Terms with Outback Stores.

More information about the application process, including Credit Terms, is also in this Part of the Guidelines.

**Diagram 1:** Example of a successful application process



**Note:** the NIAA may also decide that an applicant is not eligible to participate in the subsidy scheme, or may not consider an application for the reasons in 2.9.



### 3.3 Evaluation Criteria

In assessing whether an applicant is suitable to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant under Eligibility Requirement E, the NIAA will use the following Evaluation Criteria:

- (a) whether the applicant operates in a way that is consistent with the objectives of the Scheme (at 1.2)
- (b) whether the applicant carries on, or is likely to carry on, its operations in a way that is unethical or takes unfair advantage of its customers
- (c) whether the applicant has the financial and technical capacity to perform its obligations under the Scheme Rules, including to comply with the Code, Code Rules and Code Guidelines
- (d) whether the applicant accessing the Scheme will adversely affect, or is likely to adversely affect, the reputation of the NIAA or the Commonwealth.

### 3.4 Credit Terms

An applicant will only be enrolled as a Scheme Participant once it has agreed Credit Terms with Outback Stores (see Eligibility Requirement F above).

Outback Stores may require the applicant to take certain steps before agreeing Credit Terms, including filling out an application for credit. These steps will be notified to the applicant by Outback Stores.

After assessing an application against Eligibility Requirements A – F, the NIAA will decide whether to Provisionally Approve the application. If the application is Provisionally Approved, the NIAA will give details of the application to Outback Stores so Outback Stores can negotiate Credit Terms with the store.

If the applicant is not able to agree Credit Terms with Outback Stores, it will not be enrolled as a Scheme Participant (but this will not impact its enrolment as a Code Participant).

### 3.5 Outcomes of an application

The NIAA will do at least one of the following an application to participate in the Scheme:

- (a) Provisionally Approve the application and provide details of the application to Outback Stores so it can enter into Credit Terms with the store
- (b) Once Credit Terms have been agreed between Outback Stores and the applicant, enrol the applicant as a Scheme Participant or
- (c) reject the application.

The NIAA will notify the applicant of the outcome of the application by email or letter.

### 3.6 Limited number of Scheme Participants

A maximum of 152 Stores may be registered at any one time. Registrations will be offered on a first come, first served basis.

Applications:

- (a) received after 152 Stores have been registered as Scheme Registered Stores or



(b) received before 152 Stores have been registered as Scheme Registered Stores, but not processed (i.e. registration granted) before 152 Stores are registered as Scheme Registered Stores, will be placed on a wait list by the NIAA if the relevant applicants are assessed as meeting Eligibility Requirements A – E at the time the NIAA receives the relevant application.

If an opportunity for an applicant on the wait list to participate in the Scheme arises (for example, because a Store has been removed from the Scheme), the NIAA will notify the applicant. The relevant application will then be reassessed by the NIAA in accordance with the process set out in 3.1 to 3.5 to ensure the applicant remains able to meet the Eligibility Requirements. The NIAA may request additional information from an applicant as part of this reassessment process in accordance with 2.13. Depending on the number of Stores Registered at any one time, the NIAA may approve some but not all of the Stores included in an application for Scheme Registration.

To be clear, this cap on registrations does not apply to the Code.

**Diagram 2:** Example of a successful application process where an applicant is put on a wait list



**Note:** The NIAA may also decide that an applicant is not eligible to participate in the Scheme or may not consider an application for the reasons in 2.9.

### 3.7 Confidentiality

The NIAA must not use or disclose Confidential Information that an applicant gives it in connection with an application except:

- (a) for the purpose of assessing and dealing with the application
- (b) for the purpose of administering arrangements with the applicant, including arrangements connected with the Scheme or
- (c) with the applicant’s consent.

However, this does not prevent the NIAA from disclosing information:

- (d) to NIAA officers, employees, agents, advisers or subcontractors



- (e) to the extent required by a written law
- (f) to a Commonwealth, state or territory government agency in connection with enforcement of an applicable law
- (g) to a Minister of State for the Commonwealth, or an adviser to such a Minister
- (h) in connection with the performance of the NIAA's statutory functions or duties, and anything incidental to them
- (i) to another Commonwealth entity for any purpose of the Commonwealth, including for law enforcement purposes, public accountability reasons, and for the purposes of meeting a request by the Parliament, a committee of the Parliament or a Minister
- (j) in defending any claim or proceeding in relation to the application, the Code or the Scheme, or
- (k) that is in the public domain otherwise than due to a breach of confidence by the NIAA or the Commonwealth.

Confidentiality obligations under **Error! Reference source not found.** no longer apply if an applicant becomes a Scheme Participant, because the confidentiality obligations under the Scheme Rules will apply from that point on.

Nothing in these Guidelines or other arrangements in relation to the Scheme affects the ownership of any Intellectual Property.



## Part 4 Complaints about applications

### 4.1 Complaints

If an applicant is not satisfied with a decision the NIAA makes about dealing with its application to enrol in the Scheme, it can make a complaint to the NIAA about the matter. The complaint must be made in writing and given to the NIAA no later than 15 Business Days after the NIAA notifies the applicant of its decision. Complaints must be made to [remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au](mailto:remotefoodsecurity@niaa.gov.au).

### 4.2 Information in a complaint

A complaint must set out enough details to enable the NIAA to investigate the complaint properly. If the NIAA asks the complainant for further information relevant to the complaint, it doesn't have to deal further with the complaint until it receives the information.

### 4.3 Investigation

The NIAA will conduct an appropriate investigation of any complaint an applicant makes. It will do its best to finish the investigation within 8 Business Days after receiving the complaint or after it gets any further information it asks for under 4.2, whichever is later.

### 4.4 Proposed resolution

The NIAA will notify the complainant of the decision made in respect of the complaint, and how it proposes the complaint should be resolved (**resolution notice**). The complainant can notify the NIAA:

- (a) that it agrees with the proposed resolution or
- (b) that it doesn't agree with the proposed resolution — in which case it's open to the complainant to take the matter further.

However, if the complainant does not give the NIAA either of those notices within 10 Business Days after the resolution notice, it is taken to have agreed to the proposed resolution.

### 4.5 Complaint processes a pre-condition to other proceedings

A complainant must not take any other proceedings about the decision:

- (a) while the NIAA is investigating the complaint, but if the NIAA takes longer than 30 Business Days to give the complainant a resolution notice, this 4.5 no longer applies, or
- (b) unless it notifies the NIAA that it does not agree with the proposed resolution.

### 4.6 Review of decision to reject an application

If an applicant's application to enrol as a Scheme Participant is rejected (see 3.5), it may request for its application to be reviewed.



If an applicant requests for its application to be reviewed, a new assessor and/or delegate of the NIAA will remake the decision on the basis of:

- (a) the applicant's original application and
- (b) additional information or documentation provided by the applicant and received by the NIAA within 10 days of their request for review.

The applicant will be informed of the outcome of its request in a timely manner.



## Part 5 Compliance

A key element of the Scheme arrangements and objectives is the Scheme's compliance framework and the ability of the NIAA to check whether Scheme Participants remain compliant with the requirements of their enrolment as a Scheme Participant. Continued compliance with the Scheme Rules, Code and Code Rules is a requirement to be enrolled for the Scheme and for the Scheme Participant's Stores to be Scheme Registered Stores.

The Scheme Rules set out in detail the NIAA's powers for investigation, audit and enforcement of the Scheme Rules.

### 5.1 Stores must sell Subsidised Items at or below the Intended Maximum Price

Scheme Participants must sell all Subsidised Items at or below the Intended Maximum Price published by Outback Stores on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#). If the NIAA finds that a Store is selling Subsidised Items at a price above the Intended Maximum Price, the NIAA may terminate the relevant Scheme Participant's enrolment for the Scheme.

Community members, customers, Outback Stores and other key stakeholders may report a Scheme Participant for non-compliance:

- (a) online at <https://www.niaa.gov.au/feedback-and-complaints>
- (b) by phone at (02) 6152 3050
- (c) by email at [complaints@niaa.gov.au](mailto:complaints@niaa.gov.au) or
- (d) by sending a letter to:

Complaints

National Indigenous Australians Agency

PO Box 2191

Canberra ACT 2600

More information about the Intended Maximum Price is in the Scheme Rules.

### 5.2 Reporting

All Scheme Participants must submit an annual compliance report to the NIAA. The compliance report must meet the requirements set out in the Scheme Rules.

### 5.3 Compliance checks

Scheme Participants may also be subject to random compliance checks by the NIAA.

The NIAA can conduct a compliance check at any time (generally, on reasonable notice). A compliance check may relate to the Code Participant's compliance with any or all of the Code, the Code Rules and the Code Guidelines.



## 5.4 Stores can be removed from the Scheme

The NIAA can terminate or suspend a Scheme Participant's enrolment as set out in the Rules.

Information about what happens when Scheme Participants are removed from the Scheme, including how they must deal with Subsidised Items in their possession, is in the Scheme Rules.

A Scheme Participant removed from the Scheme may reapply to participate in the Scheme by following the process in Part 2 of these Guidelines.



## Part 6 Interpretation

### 6.1 Definitions

In these Guidelines, unless the context requires otherwise:

**Application Form** means the form so named available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

**Business Day**, in relation to something to be done on a day in a place, means a day other than a Saturday or a Sunday, or a public holiday in the place.

**Code** means the National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations.

**Note:** The Code is available at [insert address].

**Code Guidelines** means the National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations Guidelines 2025.

**Note:** The Code Guidelines are available at [insert address].

**Code Participant** means a person enrolled for the Code in accordance with the Code Rules and Code Guidelines. A person is a Code Participant even if its Code Registered Store is only Conditionally Registered or its Code enrolment is suspended.

**Code Registered Store** means a Store that is Fully Registered or Conditionally Registered.

**Code Rules** means the National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations Rules 2025.

**Note:** The Code Rules are available at [insert address].

**Conditional Registration** or **Conditionally Registered** has the meaning given in the Code Guidelines.

**Confidential Information** means information provided by an applicant to the NIAA, in connection with the Scheme, that meets all the following criteria:

- (a) it is commercially sensitive (that is, it is not generally known or ascertainable)
- (b) its disclosure would cause unreasonable detriment to the owner of the information or another person
- (c) it was provided with an express or implied understanding that it would remain confidential.

It includes Personal Information about a customer or another person. It does not include information that:

- (d) is or becomes public knowledge other than by breach of these Rules
- (e) is in the possession of a receiving party without restriction on disclosure before the date of receipt or
- (f) was independently developed or acquired by the receiving party.

**Control** of an entity includes the power to directly or indirectly:

- (a) determine the management or policies of the entity
- (b) control the membership of the board or other governing body of the entity or
- (c) control the casting of more than one half of the maximum number of votes that may be cast at a general meeting of the entity
- (d) regardless of whether the power is in writing or not, enforceable or unenforceable, express or implied, formal or informal or arises by means of trusts, agreements, arrangements, understandings, practices or otherwise.

**Credit Terms** means an agreement with Outback Stores as described at 3.4.



**Eligibility Requirements** or **Scheme Eligibility Requirements** means the requirements at 3.1 that a store must satisfy to be eligible to participate in the Scheme.

**Evaluation Criteria** means the criteria at 3.3 that the NIAA will use to assess if a store is suitable to be registered for the Scheme.

**Full Registration** or **Fully Registered** means registration of a Store under the Code on an unconditional basis.

**Guidelines** or **Scheme Guidelines** means this document, the Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Guidelines 2025.

**Intellectual Property** means all present and future rights conferred by law in any business names, business trademarks, domain names, patents, designs, copyright material, proprietary software and all other rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary and artistic fields recognised in domestic law anywhere in the world, whether registered or unregistered.

**Intended Maximum Price** means the intended maximum price at which a Subsidised Item should be sold to a retail customer, as approved by the NIAA and published by Outback Stores before being notified to Scheme Participants.

**NIAA** means the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

**ORIC** means the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations.

**Outback Stores** means Outback Stores Pty Ltd (ABN 63 120 661 234).

**Personal Information** has the meaning given to it in the *Privacy Act 1988*.

**Provisional Approval** means the initial approval that the NIAA may give an application to be enrolled as a Scheme Participant after it has been assessed against Scheme Eligibility Requirements A – E. An applicant is not fully enrolled as a Scheme Participant until it has agreed Credit Terms with Outback Stores.

**Registration** of a Store means registration of that Store, either Conditionally or Fully, in the Code.

**Related Body Corporate** has the meaning given to it in the *Corporations Act 2001*.

**Remote Area** or **Very Remote Area** means an area identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as in remote Australia or very remote Australia in accordance with the Australian Statistical Geography Standard.

**Remote Food Security Strategy** means the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (also known as the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote First Nations Communities) available at the time of publication of these Guidelines on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

**Rules** or **Scheme Rules** means the Low-Cost Essentials Scheme Rules 2025.

**Note:** At the time of publication, the Scheme Rules are available at ON the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

**Scheme** means the Commonwealth scheme known as the Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Scheme.

**Scheme Participant** means a person enrolled by the NIAA to participate in the Scheme in respect of one or more Scheme Registered Stores.

**Scheme Registered Store** means a Scheme Participant's Code Registered Store which the NIAA has approved to be a Store through which the Scheme Participant can participate in the Scheme.

**Store** or **Remote Community Store** has the meaning given in the Code.

**Store Owner** means the owner and operator of at least one Remote Community Store. To be clear, the Store Owner of a Remote Community Store does not include a person operating the Store as a store management services provider, or who is otherwise engaged by another person to operate the Store.



**Subsidised Item** means the products available from time to time for purchase by Scheme Participants from Outback Stores at a subsidised price under the Scheme. The list of Subsidised Items is available on the [NIAA Food Security Website](#).

## 6.2 Interpretation

In these Guidelines:

- (a) headings, labels and notes are for convenience only and do not affect the meaning of other provisions
- (b) the singular includes the plural and vice versa
- (c) where a word or phrase is given a particular meaning, other parts of speech and grammatical forms of that word or phrase have corresponding meanings
- (d) a reference to one gender includes a reference to other genders
- (e) a reference to a contract or agreement includes a reference to any legally enforceable arrangement between parties, whatever the form of the document recording the arrangement
  - Note:** For example, as a contract or a deed.
- (f) a reference to a contract or a document is a reference to the contract or document as varied or novated, or the document that replaces it
- (g) the meaning of general words is not limited by specific examples introduced by words such as “such as”, “including” and “for example”
- (h) a reference to “person” includes a reference to an individual, a body corporate, a partnership, a joint venture, an unincorporated association and an authority or any other entity or organisation
- (i) a reference to a particular person includes a reference to the person’s executors, administrators, successors, substitutes (including persons taking by novation) and assigns
- (j) a reference to a time of day, in relation to something to be done on a day in a place, is a reference to the legal time on that day in that place
- (k) a reference to “law” includes Commonwealth, state and territory statutes, the unwritten or common law and the principles of equity.

### Rules of interpretation

No rule of interpretation applies to the disadvantage of the NIAA merely because it prepared these Guidelines.

