

# How NDIS Meal Delivery Billing Works: Invoices, Plan Management, and Claiming

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## Details:

Now I have comprehensive, verified data from authoritative sources. Let me compose the final article.

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### ## How NDIS Meal Delivery Billing Works: Invoices, Plan Management, and Claiming

For many NDIS participants and their support coordinators, understanding the \*policy\* behind meal delivery funding is only half the battle. The other half — and often the more frustrating half — is navigating the operational mechanics: how invoices must be structured, which portal to use, what the correct support item code is, how the claiming process differs depending on your plan management type, and what causes payments to be rejected. Getting these details wrong doesn't just create administrative headaches; it can mean weeks of payment delays, rejected claims, and gaps in a participant's access to funded meal support.

This guide cuts through the complexity and provides a precise, step-by-step operational reference for NDIS meal delivery billing. Whether you are a participant managing your own plan, a support coordinator helping a client, or a meal provider setting up your invoicing system, the information here is designed to be accurate, current, and immediately actionable.

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### ## The Non-Negotiable Invoice Rule: Separating Food Costs from Service Costs

The single most important invoicing requirement in NDIS meal delivery — and the most common source of claiming errors — is the mandatory separation of food ingredient costs from meal preparation and delivery costs on every invoice.

Meal delivery services that support NDIS participants must provide NDIS-specific invoices that separate the cost of the food (paid by the participant) from the cost of the meal preparation and delivery (paid by the NDIS). This is not optional, and it is not a formality. It is a structural requirement that flows directly from the NDIS's foundational funding rule: the NDIS covers the labour costs for meal preparation and delivery, but not the price of the food itself — food is considered an everyday living expense that all people pay for, whether or not they are on the NDIS.

In practical terms, this means every compliant NDIS meal invoice must show two distinct line items:

1. **\*\*Food/ingredient cost\*\*** — the participant's co-payment, paid out of pocket
2. **\*\*Meal preparation and delivery cost\*\*** — the NDIS-claimable component

You must use a meal delivery platform where the food and ingredient component can be separately identified from the meal preparation and delivery component, and this component needs to be clearly stated on your provider's invoice.

### ### What Can Be Claimed: The 70% and 100% Rules

If a participant uses funds in their core budget flexibly to purchase meal preparation and delivery, they can claim 100% of the invoice if the provider has removed the cost of food, or 70% of the invoice if the provider includes the cost of food in the total cost.

This creates two valid invoicing models:

| Invoice Model | How It Works | NDIS Claim | Participant Pays | |---|---|---|---| | **\*\*Split invoice\*\*** | Food cost and prep/delivery cost listed separately | 100% of the prep/delivery line | Food cost only | | **\*\*Combined invoice\*\*** | Single total price including food | ~70% of the total | ~30% of the total |

For example, if a meal costs \$14 in total, approximately \$9.80 may be claimed under your NDIS plan for preparation and delivery, while you'd pay around \$4.20 for the ingredients.

The split-invoice model is operationally cleaner and more transparent. Providers like Able Foods, Dineamic, and Nourish'd use this model. Providers like Nourish'd take care of invoicing, separating NDIS claims from your co-payment automatically. (For a full breakdown of how co-payments are calculated and how they vary across providers, see our guide on *\*NDIS Meal Co-Payments Explained: What You Pay vs. What NDIS Covers\**.)

### ### Why Platforms Like UberEats and DoorDash Are Excluded

The NDIS does not fund delivery services like Uber Eats, DoorDash, or fast-food restaurants. These platforms do not provide itemised invoices that separate the cost of food from delivery, which is a requirement for NDIS funding. This exclusion was reinforced by the October 2024 legislative changes. The NDIS transitional rules explicitly state that fast-food services, takeaway food, and food delivery platforms such as Uber Eats, DoorDash, and Menulog are not considered NDIS supports — these platforms cannot provide the itemised invoicing required to separate food costs from preparation and delivery charges.

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### ## The Correct Support Item Code for Meal Delivery

Every NDIS claim must reference the correct support item code. For meal preparation and delivery, the current primary code is:

> **\*\*01\_023\_0120\_1\_1 — Assistance with the Cost of the Preparation and Delivery of Meals\*\***

According to the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits 2025–26, meal-related supports fall under Core Supports, Assistance with Daily Life (Support Category 01). This category includes assistance with daily activities such as cooking, grocery shopping, and personal care. The specific support item for meal delivery is coded as 01\_023\_0120\_1\_1.

An important administrative note: since March 2022, the NDIA no longer requires quotes for meal preparation and delivery under the newer support item (01\_023\_0120\_1\_1). If your plan includes core funding for daily activities, you can generally access meal delivery services flexibly.

The legacy code **\*\*01\_022\_0120\_1\_1\*\*** still exists for plans where this support was previously stated as a quoted item. The pre-existing support item (01\_022\_0120\_1\_1) will allow participants to continue to claim where the item is quotable and stated in a participant's plan. If you are unsure which code applies to your plan, check with your plan manager or support coordinator before submitting a claim.

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### ## How Billing Works Across the Three Plan Management Types

The claiming process for NDIS meal delivery differs materially depending on whether a participant is self-managed, plan-managed, or NDIA-managed. Understanding which pathway applies is critical for both participants and providers.

### ### Self-Managed Participants

Self-managed funding is when you, your nominee, or representative pay your providers and manage financial records yourself. This option gives you the most flexibility and choice for your NDIS plan.

For meal delivery, the self-managed claiming process works as follows:

1. The participant orders meals from their chosen provider (registered or unregistered)
2. The participant pays the full invoice upfront
3. The participant receives an NDIS-compliant itemised invoice from the provider
4. The participant claims the preparation and delivery component back through the **\*\*myplace portal\*\*** (for older plans) or the **\*\*my NDIS portal\*\*** (for PACE plans)
5. Reimbursement is typically processed within a few business days

This includes paying for supports out of your own pocket, claiming back funding from the NDIS, and keeping clear records of your spending for things like audits. You must be prepared to pay for supports out of your own pocket, claim them back from the NDIS, and wait for reimbursement, which can take up to 7 business days.

A key advantage of self-management is provider flexibility. Self-managing your NDIS plan offers full autonomy over budgeting, the use of your funds and the selection of service providers (NDIS registered or non-registered). This approach allows you to negotiate provider rates outside the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits.

### ### Plan-Managed Participants

Plan management is a popular middle-ground option. Plan management means you have a professional looking after the admin for you — a registered, independent provider called a plan manager. They receive your provider invoices, make sure they're correct, and arrange payment directly from your NDIS funding, so you're not out of pocket.

For meal delivery under plan management:

1. The participant orders meals and provides the provider with their plan manager's details
2. The meal provider sends an NDIS-compliant itemised invoice directly to the plan manager
3. The plan manager verifies the invoice against the participant's budget and the NDIS pricing rules
4. The plan manager pays the preparation and delivery component to the provider from the participant's NDIS funds
5. The participant pays only the food/ingredient co-payment directly to the provider

Under plan management, your meal costs come from the "Assistance with Daily Life" category within your Core Supports budget. Your plan manager will process payments directly to your chosen meal delivery provider, making the experience seamless for you while ensuring all NDIS requirements are met.

A significant advantage of plan management for meal delivery is provider access. One of the significant advantages of plan management is the expanded choice of providers available to you. While agency-managed participants can only access NDIA-registered providers, plan management opens doors to many quality services that choose not to go through the registration process.

### ### NDIA-Managed (Agency-Managed) Participants

NDIA-managed — commonly called "agency-managed" — is the most common arrangement for participants who are new to the NDIS or who have chosen not to take on the administrative responsibility of managing their own funds. Under this arrangement, the NDIA holds the participant's budget and providers claim payment directly from the NDIA's provider portal.

For NDIA-managed participants, the meal delivery billing process is the most restrictive:

- **\*\*Only NDIS-registered meal providers can be used.\*\*** To deliver supports to NDIA-managed participants, your organisation must be a registered NDIS provider. The NDIA's portal will not process claims from unregistered providers.

- The registered provider submits a payment claim directly through the myplace/my NDIS provider portal - When you deliver a support to an NDIA-managed participant, you log into the NDIS myplace provider portal and submit a payment request. The system automatically checks the participant's plan budget, verifies the support catalogue item, and processes payment — typically within two to three business days.

- The participant pays only their food ingredient co-payment directly to the provider

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### ## Service Agreements: What You Need Before You Start

Regardless of management type, a written service agreement between the participant and the meal provider is strongly recommended — and under the PACE system, it is more important than ever. Since service bookings are no longer used, it is more important than ever to create clear, written service agreements with each provider. These agreements help everyone understand exactly what services will be delivered and at what cost.

For NDIA-managed participants on PACE, there is an additional step. If you are NDIA-managed, you must endorse providers at the category level. Without endorsement, providers cannot claim for services. You can do this during your plan meeting or by contacting the NDIA. However, plan-managed and self-managed participants do not need to endorse providers unless their plan includes SDA, Behaviour Supports or YPIRAC funding.

A well-structured service agreement for NDIS meal delivery should include: - The participant's NDIS number and plan dates - The support item code (01\_023\_0120\_1\_1) - The agreed pricing structure, including the food/ingredient co-payment amount - The invoicing frequency and format - The plan manager's contact and invoicing details (if plan-managed)

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### ## The PACE System: What Has Changed for Meal Delivery Claiming

The NDIA's transition to the PACE system (Provider and Participant Communication Environment) — rolled out from October 2023 with all new and renewed plans on PACE from February 2024 onward — has introduced meaningful changes to how claims are processed.

PACE is the NDIS's new computer system used to manage participant plans, make claims, store information, and communicate with providers. It is designed to be more modern, more secure, and easier to use than the previous portal.

Key operational changes relevant to meal delivery providers and participants include:

- **\*\*No more service bookings:\*\*** Service bookings do not exist on the new PACE system. This means providers can no longer rely on a reserved budget allocation and must confirm available funding directly with participants or plan managers. - **\*\*Bulk payment claims only:\*\*** A registered provider can currently jump on the Provider Portal and fire off a single claim manually. This function will be removed from PACE, and all payment claims will need to be made through the Bulk Upload Request template.

- **\*\*My Providers endorsement for agency-managed plans:\*\*** Under the new PACE system, participants will need to 'endorse' service providers via the NDIA. Plan-managed participants only need to endorse their plan manager — there is no requirement to endorse any other providers.

- **\*\*New participant portal:\*\*** The NDIA has built a new participant portal called 'my NDIS' and updated its app to work with PACE. The portal is a more accessible and user-friendly way for participants to manage their NDIS plan. The 'my NDIS' participant portal is for participants with NDIS plans developed in PACE. Participants who don't have a plan in PACE will continue to use the current NDIS 'myplace' portal.

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## ## Common Claiming Errors That Lead to Rejected Meal Delivery Payments

Understanding why claims fail is as important as knowing how to submit them correctly. One of the biggest reasons invoices get delayed or rejected is using the wrong support line code or submitting incomplete invoices.

Here are the most common errors specific to NDIS meal delivery claims:

**\*\*1. No itemised split on the invoice\*\*** The single most frequent cause of rejection for meal delivery claims. If the invoice does not clearly separate food costs from preparation and delivery costs, the entire claim may be rejected or the plan manager will be unable to process it. Your NDIS provider must issue itemised invoices that clearly separate the cost of food from the cost of preparation and delivery. This is a requirement for NDIS claims.

**\*\*2. Claiming food costs through the NDIS\*\*** Attempting to claim 100% of a combined-price invoice — including the ingredient component — will result in rejection or an audit flag. The NDIS will only fund the preparation and delivery portion.

**\*\*3. Wrong support item code\*\*** Using an incorrect or outdated code (for example, using the legacy 01\_022\_0120\_1\_1 where the current 01\_023\_0120\_1\_1 applies, or vice versa) will cause the claim to fail. If NDIA guidelines around line-item codes and other requirements are not followed correctly, your claim may be rejected.

**\*\*4. Late invoice submission\*\***

Late invoices — those submitted more than three months after the service was delivered — may be rejected. This is to prevent delays in funding and ensure that the financial side of the NDIS operates smoothly for all involved.

**\*\*5. Claiming from an unregistered provider as an NDIA-managed participant\*\*** NDIA-managed participants cannot use unregistered providers. If a meal delivery company is not registered with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, claims submitted on behalf of agency-managed participants will be automatically rejected.

**\*\*6. Missing or incorrect participant details\*\***

Administrative errors like wrong dates, a duplicate claim, missing banking or ABN details, or a claim that includes a unit price that is more than the maximum price are all common causes of rejection that can usually be corrected and resubmitted.

**\*\*7. Claiming outside the plan period\*\***

Claims referencing dates outside the participant's current plan period fail every time. Billing for services delivered before a service agreement starts or after a plan expires won't process without prior NDIA approval.

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## ## A Practical Example: How a Plan-Managed Participant Claims Meal Delivery

To illustrate how these elements work together in practice, consider the following scenario:

> **Maria** is an NDIS participant with a physical disability that prevents her from safely preparing meals. Her plan is plan-managed and includes Core Supports — Assistance with Daily Life funding. She orders from a registered meal provider that uses split invoicing. > > Each week, Maria orders 10 meals at \$15 each (total \$150). Her provider's invoice shows: > - Food/ingredient cost: \$37.50 (25% co-payment) > - Meal preparation and delivery: \$112.50 (75% NDIS-claimable) > > Maria pays \$37.50 directly to the provider. The provider sends the invoice to Maria's plan manager, who claims \$112.50 under support item 01\_023\_0120\_1\_1 from her Core Supports budget. Maria receives a monthly statement from her plan manager showing the deduction.

This model — provider invoices plan manager, participant pays co-payment — is the most administratively straightforward for most participants. (For guidance on how to get this support added to your plan in the first place, see our guide on *How to Get NDIS Meal Delivery Added to Your Plan*.)

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## ## Key Takeaways

- **Split invoicing is mandatory.** Every NDIS-compliant meal delivery invoice must separate food ingredient costs (participant's responsibility) from preparation and delivery costs (NDIS-claimable). Providers who cannot produce this invoice format cannot be used for NDIS claiming purposes. - **The correct support item code is 01\_023\_0120\_1\_1.** This code has not required a quote since March 2022 and can be claimed flexibly from Core Supports — Assistance with Daily Life funding. Verify the applicable code for your specific plan with your plan manager. - **Claiming rules differ significantly across management types.** Self-managed participants pay upfront and claim reimbursement; plan-managed participants have their plan manager process invoices directly; NDIA-managed participants are restricted to registered providers only, with the provider claiming through the NDIA portal. - **The PACE system has eliminated service bookings.** Written service agreements are now more important than ever. NDIA-managed participants must endorse their meal provider as a "My Provider" for claims to be processed without delay. - **The most common rejection causes are preventable.** Missing invoice itemisation, wrong support item codes, late submission, and incorrect participant details account for the majority of failed meal delivery claims. A pre-submission checklist shared between providers and plan managers significantly reduces rejection rates.

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## ## Conclusion

NDIS meal delivery billing is a precise operational process with specific requirements at every step — from the structure of the invoice itself to the portal used for claiming and the management type that determines which providers a participant can access. The mandatory separation of food costs from preparation and delivery costs is the foundational rule from which everything else follows, and it is the rule most frequently misunderstood by both new participants and providers unfamiliar with the NDIS context.

As the PACE system continues to roll out across all plans and the October 2024 legislative changes continue to take effect, staying current with claiming requirements is not a one-time task — it is an ongoing compliance responsibility for providers and participants alike.

For participants who need to understand the broader funding framework before diving into billing mechanics, our foundational guide *What Is NDIS Meal Funding? How the Scheme Covers Meal Preparation and Delivery* provides essential context. For those comparing specific providers on the basis of their invoicing compliance and management-type compatibility, see our *Best NDIS Registered Meal Delivery Providers in Australia (2025–26 Comparison)*.

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## ## References

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