



If you are affected by coronavirus (COVID-19)

If you need to apply for a Centrelink payment

We have made changes so it is easier for you to claim a payment. Use our payment guide to check which payment is right for you. Go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/covid19

If you already have a Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CRN), you can claim online.

If you are claiming JobSeeker Payment, you can start your claim early if you know your circumstances are changing.

You do not need to go to a service centre or call us. Go to my.gov.au to make a claim for a Centrelink payment.

If you do not have a CRN, go to my.gov.au to get one. You can establish your identity and get a CRN using your myGov account to start your claim. You do not need to visit a service centre.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/mygov

Coronavirus Supplement

The temporary **Coronavirus Supplement** ended on 31 March 2021.

JobKeeper Payment

The JobKeeper Payment ended on 28 March 2021. If you are getting a payment from us, you must still report JobKeeper as income if you get it in your pay from your employer.

Some payments have increased

From 1 April 2021, the following payments permanently increased by \$50 per fortnight:

- JobSeeker Payment
- Youth Allowance
- Disability Support Pension if you are under 21 with no dependent children
- Parenting Payment
- Austudy
- ABSTUDY Living Allowance, except for tertiary students under 16 and masters and doctorate students
- Special Benefit
- Partner Allowance
- Widow Allowance
- Farm Household Allowance
- Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS).

The increase may also apply to participants in the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme.

You do not need to do anything. It is paid automatically as a part of your normal rate.

Special Benefit

There are no changes to the residence and eligibility rules for Special Benefit.

If you cannot get any other income support payment from us, and you are in severe financial hardship you may get Special Benefit.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/specialbenefit

Crisis Payment—National Health Emergency

You or the person you are caring for may qualify for Crisis Payment if you meet all of the following:

- either of you are in quarantine or self-isolation due to COVID-19
- you meet the severe financial hardship criteria
- you meet the eligibility rules for an income support payment
- you are in Australia when you claim Crisis Payment.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/crisispayment

Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy

If your child cannot attend childcare, you should talk to your childcare service. You can get Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 absences per child each year for any reason. You should talk with your service about your options if your child cannot attend because of COVID-19. If your child attends child care in Victoria, you can access 45 extra allowable absence days. This means, you can get up to 87 allowable absence days per child for the 2020-21 financial year.

Updating your activity hours

The number of hours of Child Care Subsidy you can get each fortnight depends on the hours of activity you and your partner do. If your hours of recognised activity have changed, make sure you update this.

Temporary visa subclass holders

There are no changes to payments you can claim if you hold a temporary visa.

Temporary visa subclasses 060, 070, 309, 449, 785, 786, 790 and 820 may be eligible for:

- Child Care Subsidy
- Crisis Payment
- Dad and Partner Pay
- Double Orphan Pension
- Family Tax Benefit
- Low Income Health Care Card
- Parental Leave Pay
- Special Benefit
- Stillborn Baby Payment.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/visaholders

Waiting periods

We may apply waiting periods when you claim a payment from us.

Ordinary waiting period

You may need to wait one week for your payments to start. We call this an ordinary waiting period.

Newly arrived resident's waiting period

If you've recently arrived as a resident in Australia, you may have to wait to get payments or concession cards.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/newresidentswaiting

Liquid assets

Liquid assets are any funds you and your partner have ready to use. This includes money owned by an employer.

Seasonal Work Preclusion Period

This may apply if you submit a claim within six months of you or your partner finishing any:

- seasonal work
- contract work
- intermittent work.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/covid19

Income free area

From 1 April 2021, the income free area is changing to \$150 for:

- JobSeeker Payment
- Parenting Payment partnered
- Youth Allowance for job seekers
- Farm Household Allowance
- Widow Allowance
- Partner Allowance.

This means you can have income up to \$150 per fortnight before it affects your payment.

Partner income test

From 1 April 2021, there is a change to the partner income test for JobSeeker Payment. Your payment will reduce by 60 cents for each dollar of income your partner has over the partner income free area. If your partner is over 22 years of age, the partner income free area will be \$1,124 per fortnight.

This amount may change if your partner gets a payment that is not a pension with Pharmaceutical Allowance or Rent Assistance. If your income is less than \$150 per fortnight, your partner can earn up to \$2,079.50 before your payment reduces to zero.

For more information about how much you can get and what your income and assets limits are go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/jsp

Income reporting

When we approve your claim for income support, you must tell us your and your partner's income. We cannot make your first payment until you do.

You must also report your and your partner's income to us each fortnight even it is \$0.

This is so we can pay you the right amount.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/incomereporting

Mutual obligation requirements

There are things you must do to keep getting a payment. We call these mutual obligation or participation requirements. You may have them if you are getting one of these payments:

- JobSeeker Payment
- Parenting Payment
- Special Benefit
- Youth Allowance as a job seeker.

Go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/mutualobligation or your myGov account for updates.

Other support services that can help you

Payment and Service Finder

Use the Payment and Service Finder to find support services in your local area. This can include counselling and mental health services.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/servicefinder

Family and domestic violence

If you are affected by family and domestic violence, we can help. We provide information, support and referrals.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/domesticviolence

Social work services

Our social workers help people with short-term counselling, information and referrals to support services.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/socialwork

Financial Information Service

A free service to help you with financial matters. You do not need to be a customer to access this service.

For more information go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/fis

For more information

- Call your regular payment line and let us know if you need an interpreter. We will arrange one for free. For a list of our phone numbers, go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/phoneus
- Call **131 202** to speak with us in your language about Centrelink payments and services.

- Call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450** to speak with us in your language about Medicare and Child Support payments and services.
- Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/covid19** for more information in English.
- Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/yourlanguage** where you can read, listen to or watch information in your language.
- Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/mygovguides** for help with creating and linking online services, in some languages.

Your phone provider may charge you a fixed rate for calls from your home phone to '13' numbers. This is from anywhere in Australia and the rate may vary depending on your phone provider. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Phone providers may time your call and charge a higher rate if you call from a public or mobile phone.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is a guide to payments and services only, and is correct as of 7 April 2021. Please check our website for the most current information. It is your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment based on your particular circumstances.