

Australian Pension News



centrelink

Have your bank account details changed?

While most Centrelink payments are directly deposited into your bank account every four weeks, you might not receive yours if you don't tell us about changes to your bank account details.

Your bank won't tell us about changes to your bank details.

To make sure you receive your payments on time, let us know as soon as possible if there are changes to your bank account number or International Bank Account Number (IBAN), for example:

- you close an account and open a new one—either with your current bank or a new one
- your bank merges with another financial institution, or
- your bank branch closes or merges with another one.

If your bank account details change, use the forms at humanservices.gov.au/customer/forms/aus178 to tell Centrelink International Services about your new bank details.

Frequently asked questions

Q: How does my non-Australian income affect my Australian pension rate?

A: We usually assess income from outside of Australia, including non-Australian pensions, when working out your rate of Australian pension. We use the gross amount and convert the income to Australian dollars. For more information, visit humanservices.gov.au/income

If you're paid an Australian pension under an international social security agreement, different assessment rules may apply. For more information about international social security agreements, visit humanservices.gov.au/international

Q: If Australia has a social security agreement with the country I receive a pension from, do I still need to report changes?

A: You must still notify us of any changes to your circumstances, to ensure you're receiving the correct amount of payment from Australia.

Q: Can I receive an advance payment when I'm not in Australia?

A: No. You must be physically present in Australia, either permanently or temporarily, to qualify for an advance payment.

Q: Can I nominate a person or organisation to act on my behalf?

A: Yes. You'll need to complete the *Authorising a person or organisation to enquire or act on your behalf* form, available at humanservices.gov.au/customer/forms/ss313

Q: Is the *Australian Pension News* available in my language?

A: It is available in Arabic, Croatian, Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Serbian, Spanish and Turkish. You can find these on our website at humanservices.gov.au/yourlanguage



Rates

Outside Australia pension rates and thresholds are reassessed in January, March, July and September each year.

Rates and thresholds

These Australian dollar (A\$) figures are a guide only and are effective from 20 September 2015 unless otherwise stated.

Outside Australia pension rates and thresholds	SINGLE	COUPLE both eligible	COUPLE one eligible partner	COUPLE separated due to ill health
How much pension^{1,2,3}	Per year	Per year	Per year	Per year each
Maximum basic rate	A\$ 20,498.40	A\$ 30,903.60	A\$ 15,451.80	A\$ 20,498.40
Basic Pension Supplement	A\$ 585.00	A\$ 967.20	A\$ 483.60	A\$ 585.00
Total	A\$ 21,083.40	A\$ 31,870.80	A\$ 15,935.40	A\$ 21,083.40
Allowable Income⁴	Per year	Combined	Combined	Combined
Full pension	up to A\$ 4,212.00	up to A\$ 7,488.00	up to A\$ 7,488.00	up to A\$ 7,488.00
Part pension	less than A\$ 46,378.80	less than A\$ 71,229.60	less than A\$ 71,229.60	less than A\$ 91,821.60
Allowable Assets⁵	Single	Combined	Combined	Combined
Full pension— Homeowner	A\$ 205,500.00	A\$ 291,500.00	A\$ 291,500.00	A\$ 291,500.00
Full pension— Non-homeowner	A\$ 354,500.00	A\$ 440,500.00	A\$ 440,500.00	A\$ 440,500.00
Part pension— Homeowner	less than A\$ 746,250.00	less than A\$ 1,109,000.00	less than A\$ 1,109,000.00	less than A\$ 1,373,000.00
Part pension— Non-homeowner	less than A\$ 895,250.00	less than A\$ 1,258,000.00	less than A\$ 1,258,000.00	less than A\$ 1,522,000.00
Deeming rates and thresholds	Single	Combined	Combined	Combined
Threshold	A\$ 48,600.00	A\$ 80,600.00	A\$ 80,600.00	A\$ 80,600.00
Rate below threshold	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%
Rate above threshold	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%

These rates apply to customers who are permanently outside Australia or absent from Australia for longer than six weeks.

1. The rate of payment is calculated under both the income and assets tests. The test that results in the lower rate or nil rate is applied. Some assets are deemed to earn income and there are special rules for other types of income. There is no income or assets test for customers who are permanently blind.
2. Some customers may receive a transitional rate of pension based on the pre 20 September 2009 income test rules and payment rates.
3. Some customers may receive a reduced rate of pension based on how long they were an Australian resident.
4. Every two weeks, the Work Bonus disregards up to A\$250 of employment income earned by eligible pensioners over age pension age unless you receive Parenting Payment Single. If your employment income is less than A\$250, the unused Work Bonus is banked up to a maximum amount of A\$6,500. If you are eligible for a transitional rate, we will compare the transitional rate which has no Work Bonus to the new rate which has the Work Bonus. The transitional rate is paid whenever it pays the higher rate.
5. Single and combined couple rates are reduced by A\$1.50 per two weeks for every A\$1,000 of additional assets above the allowable assets limit. Certain assets are not included in the assets test.

Information about your payments

You will receive 13 regular four-weekly payments each year.

Four-weekly pension payment calendar—October 2015 to April 2016

Your payment will be issued on:	Direct deposit customers should receive payment by:	Cheque customers should receive payment by:	Payment covers the period:
1 Oct 2015	7 Oct 2015	21 Oct 2015	3 Sep to 30 Sep 2015
29 Oct 2015	5 Nov 2015	19 Nov 2015	1 Oct to 28 Oct 2015
26 Nov 2015	2 Dec 2015	16 Dec 2015	29 Oct to 25 Nov 2015
17 Dec 2015	23 Dec 2015	6 Jan 2016	26 Nov to 23 Dec 2015
21 Jan 2016	27 Jan 2016	10 Feb 2016	24 Dec 2015 to 20 Jan 2016
18 Feb 2016	24 Feb 2016	9 Mar 2016	21 Jan to 17 Feb 2016
17 Mar 2016	23 Mar 2016	6 Apr 2016	18 Feb to 16 Mar 2016
14 Apr 2016	20 Apr 2016	4 May 2016	17 Mar to 13 Apr 2016

Cheques may be delivered later than these dates due to delays in mail delivery.

Direct deposit payments

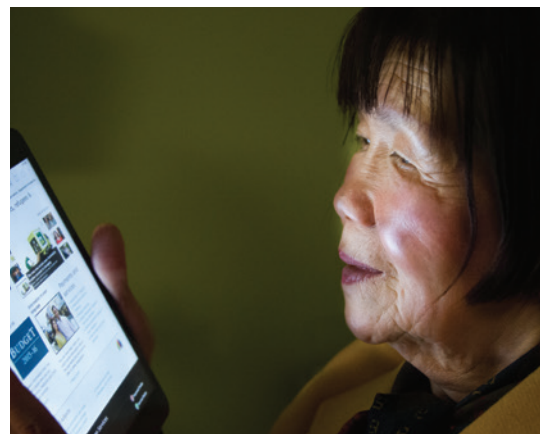
In most countries we pay pensions directly into bank accounts. We encourage this method of payment as it is safe, quick and reliable.

If you receive your payment by direct deposit into your bank account it will be available within two to six days after issue. If your payment hasn't arrived within 10 days of being issued, check with your local bank before contacting us.

Keep up-to-date on the latest pension payment rates and dates

Visit humanservices.gov.au and search for 'Outside Australia Pension Rates' to get the latest information about pension rates and payment dates outside Australia. Pension rates, and income and asset thresholds are updated on our website whenever there's a change.

This newsletter is also available on our website at humanservices.gov.au/customer/publications/int001



International Services closure dates

International Services will be closed on:

- Christmas Day—25 December 2015
- Boxing Day public holiday—28 December 2015
- New Year's Day—1 January 2016
- Australia Day—26 January 2016
- Eight Hour Day—14 March 2016
- Good Friday—25 March 2016
- Easter Monday—28 March 2016

What you must tell us

Our lives are always changing and some of these changes affect how much money we give you. It's important you tell us within 28 days of changes to your personal circumstances.

These changes may be to your or your partner's:

- income or assets where the change is more than \$2000
- financial investments and bank accounts
- personal circumstances, including changes to your address, marital status or your school age dependants
- international travel plans, and
- compensation claims.

You must also tell us if you or your partner:

- is imprisoned
- makes any gifts to family, friends or charities, or
- receives an inheritance.

If you don't tell us about these changes, you may be paid the wrong amount and you'll have to pay the money back.

If you're unsure about whether to tell us about a change in your life that might affect your pension, please contact us on one of the phone numbers below.

How to contact us

Visit humanservices.gov.au to find out information about your payment as well as our other payments and services.

Call us Monday to Friday, between 8.00 am–5.00 pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).

Phone calls from the following countries are Freecall™. Dial the number shown without any international or country codes before it.

Austria	Freecall™ 0800 295 165	Poland	Freecall™ 00 800 6111 220
Canada	Freecall™ 1888 2557 493	Portugal	Freecall™ 800 861 122
China (North)*	Freecall™ 10 800 6100 427	Singapore	Freecall™ 800 6167 015
China (South)*	Freecall™ 10 800 2611 309	Spain	Freecall™ 900 951 547
Denmark	Freecall™ 8088 3556	Thailand	Freecall™ 001 800 611 4136
Germany	Freecall™ 0800 180 2482	Turkey	Freecall™ 00 800 6190 5703
Greece	Freecall™ 0080 0611 26209	United Arab Emirates	Freecall™ 800 061 04319
India	Freecall™ 000 800 61 01098	United Kingdom	Freecall™ 0800 169 5865
Indonesia	Freecall™ 001 803 61 035	USA	Freecall™ 1866 3433 086
Italy	Freecall™ 800 781 977		
Korea Republic	Freecall™ 003 081 32326		
Netherlands	Freecall™ 0800 0224 364		
New Zealand	Freecall™ 0800 441 248		
Philippines	Freecall™ 1800 1611 0046		

*China (North) includes the provinces of Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Jilin, Shandong and Henan. All other provinces are considered as China (South) for this purpose.

Note: a Freecall™ may not be available from every location within the country and may not be free from mobile or public phones. If using a pay telephone, you'll need to insert coins or a card as for a local call and this may not be refunded at the end of the call.

If you're in a country that's not listed, or if you're not able to use the Freecall™ number listed above, please contact us on **+61 3 6222 3455**.

You can fax us on **+61 3 6222 2799**, or write to us at **PO Box 7809, Canberra BC, ACT 2610, Australia**.

Please include your name, Centrelink Customer Reference Number, and your telephone number in your query.

Disclaimer: The Commonwealth of Australia has attempted to ensure the information in this publication is accurate. However, the Commonwealth does not warrant that the information is accurate or complete nor will it be liable for any loss suffered by any person because they rely on it in any way. You should contact the Australian Government Department of Human Services for full details of any entitlements and services to which you may be eligible or how any pending changes in legislation, programs or services may affect you.