









# Are you a seasonal, contract or casual (intermittent) worker?

## What is seasonal, contract or casual (intermittent) work?

**Seasonal work** is any work that is only available for a part (or parts) of the year, each year. Many fishing, agricultural and tourism jobs are seasonal.

**Contract work** is any work that is performed under a contract for a specific function and/or period including sub-contract work.

**Casual work (or intermittent work)** is work that is available from time to time, can reasonably be predicted to end or not be available for a period, is less than a year in duration and does not accrue leave entitlements.

Examples of seasonal, contract and casual work can include:

- fruit picking
- harvesting
- shearing
- fishing
- consultancy work
- work performed under a contract for a specific function and/or period, including sub-contracts
- work in an industry affected by shutdowns
- work on building sites
- work that is affected by regular shutdowns—such as work in factories that temporarily shut down for the Christmas period, or for regular maintenance
- work in the arts and entertainment industries
- work that stops and starts with regularity—such as work in the mining or oil industry
- work that is less than one year in duration and does not accrue leave entitlements
- work that is known to be temporary
- relief teaching or work in the health industry
- non-ongoing work, or work where a period of unemployment is predictable.

## What is a Seasonal Work Preclusion Period?

If you are a seasonal, contract or casual worker, you may have a Seasonal Work Preclusion Period applied to your payment. This means you may have a waiting period applied when you make a claim for a Centrelink payment. These payments include:

- Austudy
- Carer Payment
- Disability Support Pension (except customers who are permanently blind)
- Newstart Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- Partner Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Special Benefit (nominated visa holders only)
- Widow Allowance
- Youth Allowance.

If you take up any work opportunities while receiving a Centrelink payment, you must report your earnings to us.

The Seasonal Work Preclusion Period will not apply to:

- permanent employment that is expected to last more than 12 months, or
- any employment other than seasonal work, where leave entitlements have been paid.

## How long is the preclusion period?

The Seasonal Work Preclusion Period will depend on how much you earned from your work, and how long you were working for. The duration is based on how long it would take an average wage earner to earn the same amount as a person engaged in contract, seasonal or casual work.

To work out your Seasonal Work Preclusion Period, we will divide your total earnings by the Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings amount and then minus the number of weeks worked. The Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics at [abs.gov.au](http://abs.gov.au) and is updated each year.

If your earnings are above the AWOTE, you may have to wait some time before you are eligible for a Centrelink payment.

### Example

Rachel picked fruit on a farm for eight weeks. She has no more work and has lodged a claim for Newstart Allowance. Her total earnings for this period of work is \$14 435. The AWOTE for 2010 is \$1201.90. To calculate Rachel's preclusion period:

Step 1 Total earnings from work ÷ Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings amount

$$\$14\,435 \div \$1201.90 = 12.01 \text{ weeks}$$

Step 2 12.01 weeks – time Rachel worked

$$12.01 - 8 = 4.01 \text{ weeks}$$

This total is rounded down to the nearest whole number.

Rachel will need to wait four weeks from the date she finished work before she can be paid Newstart Allowance.

If you are unsure whether you would be affected by a preclusion period, or experience financial difficulties during your preclusion period, call us on **131 202** to discuss your situation.

**ARE YOU A SEASONAL, CONTRACT OR CASUAL (INTERMITTENT) WORKER?**

## What you need to provide us

We may ask for evidence of your previous employment and/or your partner's employment before you make a claim for payment. You will need to complete a form that includes information about:

- the type of work you and/or your partner did
- your employer at the time
- dates when you started and finished work
- your gross earnings for the period
- details of deductions you may be able to claim (as allowed by the Australian Taxation Office).

You will need to bring verification documents which may include payslips, invoice books, group certificates, profit and loss statements, wage books, bank statements, time sheet and a letter from your employer.

## How to find out more

Visit [humanservices.gov.au](http://humanservices.gov.au) for more information or contact us in any of the following ways.

Employment Services (Looking for work 22 and over)	<b>132 850</b>
Youth and Students (Looking for work under 22)	<b>132 490</b>
To speak to us in a language other than English	<b>131 202</b>
Feedback and Complaints	<b>Freecall™ 1800 132 468</b>
Australian Government Services Fraud Tip-off Line	<b>131 524</b>
TTY* enquiries	<b>Freecall™ 1800 810 586</b>

\*TTY is only for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment.

A TTY phone is required to use this service.

For information in languages other than English visit [humanservices.gov.au](http://humanservices.gov.au)

**Note:** calls from your home phone to '13' numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services. It is your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment and to make an application, with regard to your particular circumstances. This information is accurate as at June 2012. If you use this publication after that date, please check with us that the details are current.

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