



# Social Security Agreement between Australia and Belgium

## Australia's social security system

Australia's social security system is different to most other developed countries. Each person's pension is paid by the Australian Government out of general funds, rather than through contributions paid by individuals and employers into a social insurance fund. For this reason, Australian pensions are income and asset tested.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) delivers Australian social security payments to individuals.

You will have to tell us about all of your, and in some instances, your partner's<sup>1</sup> income and assets if you want to claim an Australian pension.

## How does the agreement help you?

The agreement generally allows you to lodge a claim for payment from either country. It also allows you to add together your periods of residence in Australia and periods of social security coverage in Belgium, so you can meet the minimum requirements for payment.

## Who can get an Australian payment?

If you live in Australia, Belgium or another specified agreement country<sup>5</sup>, you can lodge a claim for the Australian Age Pension and Disability Support Pension in any of those countries.

To qualify under the agreement, you need to meet the following basic requirements\*:

### Age Pension

You may be able to get Age Pension if:

- you are over the qualifying age (refer to [humanservices.gov.au](http://humanservices.gov.au) for details), and
- the total period of time you have lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Belgium add up to more than 10 years.

## Disability Support Pension

You may be able to get Disability Support Pension if:

- you have a disability, or
- you are permanently blind, and
- your disability/blindness occurred while you were living in Australia, or
- the total period of time you have lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Belgium add up to more than 10 years.

**Note:** if you live outside Australia when you claim, you generally need at least 12 months Australian Working Life Residence<sup>2</sup>, of which six months must be continuous.

\* There may be additional requirements you need to meet before you can be paid.

## Who can get a Belgian payment?

Under the agreement, you can add periods of Australian Working Life Residence<sup>2</sup> to your periods of coverage in Belgium to meet the minimum requirement for the Belgian Old Age Pension and Survivors Pension.

The Belgian pension authorities make all decisions about Belgian payments. For more information about Belgian payments, you should contact the Belgian pension authorities<sup>3</sup>.

## How do I claim?

If you are in Australia, to claim:

- an Australian payment under the agreement, go to **humanservices.gov.au**
- a Belgian payment, contact the department<sup>4</sup>, or
- lodge your claim at your nearest DHS Service Centre.

If you are in Belgium, to claim:

- a Belgian payment, contact your local Belgian social insurance office
- an Australian payment:
  - contact your local Belgian social insurance office
  - the department, or
  - download the claim forms from **humanservices.gov.au**

You can also lodge your claim at any local Belgian social insurance office.

If you are in another specified agreement country<sup>5</sup>, to claim:

- an Australian payment contact the department, or
- download the claim forms from **humanservices.gov.au**

You can also lodge your claim at any local social insurance office in that third country.

To get a claim for a Belgian payment, contact the Belgian pension authorities<sup>3</sup>. You will need to lodge your claim for a Belgian payment directly with the Belgian pension authorities.

SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND BELGIUM

Claims for Australian payments can be lodged up to 13 weeks early. You must lodge your claim and all supporting documents at the same time. If you do not do this your claim may not be accepted.

## For more information

If you would like more detailed information you should contact us<sup>4</sup> for free help and advice.

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services available.

The information in this factsheet is accurate as at July 2019. If you use this publication after that date, please check with us that the details are up to date.

### Should I lodge a claim?

We can't be sure if you will get a payment, until you lodge a claim and your circumstances are taken into account. It is your responsibility to decide whether you lodge a claim for payment or not.

### From what date are the payments available?

Most government payments are paid from, or after the date on which the application is made so the sooner you lodge your application, the quicker you may be paid.

For Australian payments, you must lodge your claim and all supporting documents at the same time. If you don't your claim may not be accepted.

### What do you need to do when dealing with a third party?

You may deal with a third party who is not a member of our staff. If you do so, please remember that we have not authorised any third parties to provide information or advice to you about payments.

## Notes

<b>1. Definition of a partner</b>	For our purposes, a person is considered to be your partner if you and the person are living together, or usually live together; are married, in a registered relationship (opposite or same-sex), or in a de facto relationship (opposite or same-sex).  The department considers a person to be in a de facto relationship from the time they start living with another person as a member of a couple.  The department recognises all couples, opposite-sex and same-sex.
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<b>2. Australian residence</b>	<p>‘Australian residence’ means periods when you were residing in Australia as an Australian citizen or Australian permanent visa holder.</p> <p>Australian residence at any time is used to qualify for an Australian payment.</p> <p>‘Working Life Residence’ is period/s of Australian residence between the ages of 16 and Australian age pension age only.</p>	
<b>3. Belgian social insurance contact details</b>	<b>Salaried persons</b>	
	<p><b>Dutch</b></p> <p>Federale Pensioendienst Zuidertoren B-1060 BRUSSEL BELGIUM</p> <p>Call <b>+32 2 529 3002</b> Email <b>info@rvponp.fgov.be</b></p>	<p><b>French</b></p> <p>Service Fédéral des Pensions Tour du Midi B-1060 BRUXELLES BELGIUM</p> <p>Call <b>+32 2 529 3001</b> Email <b>info@rvponp.fgov.be</b></p>
	<b>Self-employed persons</b>	
	<p><b>Dutch</b></p> <p>Rijksinstituut voor de Sociale Verzekeringen der Zelfstandigen Jan Jacobsplein 6 1000 BRUSSEL BELGIUM</p> <p>Call <b>+32 2 546 4522</b> Email <b>mailcnh@rsvzinasti.fgov.be</b></p>	<p><b>French</b></p> <p>Institut National d’Assurances Sociales pour les Travailleurs Indépendants Place Jan Jacobs 6 1000 BRUXELLES BELGIUM</p> <p>Call <b>+32 2 546 4521</b> Email <b>mailcnh@rsvzinasti.fgov.be</b></p>
	<p><b>Civil service employees are not covered by the agreement. If you worked in the civil service in Belgium you will need to contact the authorities below separately.</b></p>	
<p><b>Dutch</b></p> <p>Administratie der Pensioenen Victor Hortaplein 40—bus 30 1060 BRUSSEL</p> <p>Call <b>+32 2 558 6000</b> Email <b>info@ap.fgov.be</b></p>	<p><b>French</b></p> <p>Administration des Pensions Place Victor Horta 40—boîte 30 1060 BRUXELLES</p> <p>Call <b>+32 2 558 6000</b> Email <b>info@ap.fgov.be</b></p>	

<p><b>4. Department of Human Services contact details</b></p>	<p>Go to <b>humanservices.gov.au</b></p> <p>Call <b>131 673</b> from within Australia.</p> <p>Call <b>+61 3 6222 3455</b> from outside Australia.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> call charges apply—calls from mobile phones may be charged at a higher rate.</p> <p>Fax <b>+61 3 6222 2799</b></p> <p>Write to PO Box 7809, Canberra BC ACT 2610, Australia.</p>
<p><b>5. Specified agreement country</b></p>	<p>Go to <b>humanservices.gov.au</b></p>