



Social Security Agreement between Australia and Switzerland

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.

Services Australia delivers Australian social security payments to individuals.

You'll have to tell us about all of your, and in some instances, your partner's¹ 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 Switzerland, so you can meet the minimum requirements for payment.

Who can get an Australian payment?

If you live in Australia, Switzerland or another specified agreement country⁵, you can lodge a claim for the Australian Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Parenting Payment and Double Orphan 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're over the qualifying age (refer to servicessaustralia.gov.au for details), and
- the total period of time you've lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Switzerland 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're permanently blind, and
- your disability/blindness occurred while you were living in Australia, or
- the total period of time you've lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Switzerland add up to more than 10 years.

Carer Payment

You may be able to get Carer Payment if:

- you're providing full-time care for someone, and

- you've lived in Australia before.

Parenting Payment

You may be able to get Parenting Payment if:

- your partner is deceased, and
- you are caring for one or more children under 8 years of age who've been to Australia before, and
- the total period of time you've lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Switzerland add up to more than 2 years.

Double Orphan Pension

You may be able to get Double Orphan Pension if:

- you are caring for a young person, and
- the young person became an orphan while they were an Australian resident.

Note: if you live outside Australia when you claim, you generally need at least 12 months Australian Working Life Residence², of which 6 months must be continuous.

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

Who can get a Swiss payment?

Under the agreement, Australian citizens and their family members can receive Swiss Old Age Pension, Disability Pension, Widow's Pension and Orphan's Pension under the same conditions as Swiss nationals.

The Swiss pension authorities make all decisions about Swiss payments. For more information about Swiss payments, you should contact the Swiss pension authorities³.

How do I claim?

If you're in Australia, to claim:

- an Australian payment under the agreement, go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au**
- a Swiss payment, contact the agency, or
- lodge your claim at your nearest Services Australia Service Centre.

If you're in Switzerland, to claim:

- a Swiss payment, contact your local Swiss social insurance office³
- an Australian payment:
 - contact your local Swiss social insurance office
 - the agency, or
 - download the claim forms from **servicesaustralia.gov.au**

You can also lodge your claim at any local Swiss social insurance office³.

If you're in another specified agreement country⁵, to claim:

- an Australian payment contact the agency, or

- download the claim forms from servicesaustralia.gov.au

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

To get a claim for a Swiss payment, contact the Swiss social insurance office³. You'll need to lodge your claim for a Swiss payment directly with the Swiss social insurance office³.

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 don't do this your claim may not be accepted. The only exceptions will be if you're waiting for medical evidence, statements or other information from a third party.

For more information

If you'd like more detailed information you should contact us⁴ 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 April 2020. 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'll get a payment, until you lodge a claim and your circumstances are taken into account. It's 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. The only exceptions will be if you're waiting for medical evidence, statements or other information from a third party.

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

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

Notes

<p>1. Definition of a partner</p>	<p>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).</p> <p>The agency 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.</p> <p>The agency recognises all couples, opposite-sex and same-sex.</p>
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2. Australian residence	<p>'Australian residence' means periods when you were residing in Australia as an Australian citizen or Australian permanent visa holder. Australian residence at any time is used to qualify for an Australian payment.</p> <p>'Australian Working Life Residence' is period/s of Australian residence between the ages of 16 and Australian Age Pension age only.</p>	
3. Swiss social insurance contact details	<p>For Swiss old age/survivors insurance:</p> <p>Caisse Suisse de Compensation Av. Edmond-Vaucher 18 Case postale 3100 Ch-1211 Genève 2 SWITZERLAND</p> <p>Call +41 22 795 91 11 Fax +41 22 795 97 05 Email sedmaster@zas.admin.ch Website caisse-suisse.ch</p>	<p>For Swiss invalidity insurance:</p> <p>Office AI pour les assurés résidant à l'étranger (OAIE) Av. Edmond-Vaucher 18 Case postale 3100 Ch-1211 Genève 2 SWITZERLAND</p> <p>Call +41 22 795 91 11 Fax +41 22 795 99 50 Email oaie@zas.admin.ch Website oaie.ch</p>
4. Services Australia contact details	<p>Go to servicesaustralia.gov.au</p> <p>Call 131 673 from within Australia.</p> <p>Call +61 3 6222 3455 from outside Australia.</p> <p>Note: call charges apply—calls from mobile phones may be charged at a higher rate.</p>	
	<p>Fax +61 3 6222 2799</p> <p>Write to PO Box 7809, Canberra BC ACT 2610, Australia.</p>	
5. Specified agreement country	<p>Go to servicesaustralia.gov.au</p>	