



# Fact Sheet – Support for people affected by COVID-19

The Government is supporting people during the impact of COVID-19 through the social security system and through programs delivered by the Department of Social Services.

## One-Off Economic Support Payment

The Government will provide a one-off payment of \$750 to approximately 6.5 million Social Security and Veterans' income support recipients, Farm Household Allowance (FHA) recipients, Family Tax Benefit (FTB) recipients and holders of a Pensioner Concession Card, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) or Commonwealth Gold Card. This payment will help to support confidence and domestic demand in the economy.

To be eligible, you must be residing in Australia and be receiving one of the following payments or hold one of the following concession cards on 12 March 2020:

- Age Pension
- Disability Support Pension
- Carer Payment
- Parenting Payment
- Wife Pension
- Widow B Pension
- ABSTUDY (Living Allowance)
- Austudy
- Bereavement Allowance
- Newstart Allowance
- Youth Allowance
- Partner Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Widow Allowance
- Family Tax Benefit, including Double Orphan Pension

- Carer Allowance
- Pensioner Concession Card holders
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders
- Veteran Service Pension; Veteran Income Support Supplement; Veteran Compensation payments, including lump sum payments; War Widow(er) Pension; and Veteran Payment
- Veteran Gold Card holders
- Farm Household Allowance

Services Australia and the Department of Veterans' Affairs will automatically deliver the payment from 31 March 2020 (subject to the passage of legislation) with the majority of recipients receiving the payment by 17 April 2020.

Further information can be found on the Services Australia website at [\\$750 one off Economic Support Payment](#).

## Isolation Related Temporary Exemptions From Mutual Obligations

Current income support recipients who cannot meet mutual obligation requirements due to isolation should call Services Australia and can be granted a Major Personal Crisis exemption without having to provide evidence such as a medical certificate.

Students receiving Youth Allowance (student) or other study related payments who are in Australia but unable to attend studies due to Coronavirus would be taken to have a reasonable excuse for not meeting study activity requirements for their payments.

Individuals in this situation must contact [Services Australia](#) to advise them of their circumstances by calling on their regular payment line phone number. Newstart Allowance, JobSeeker Payment and Special Benefit recipients can call 132 850; Youth Allowance recipients can call 132 490; Parenting Payment Single recipients with mutual obligation requirements can call 136 150; and Disability Support Pension recipients with mutual obligation requirements can call 132 717.

## Payments

People who are aged 22 or over and under Age Pension qualification age, who are unable to attend work because they have been diagnosed with Coronavirus or who are in isolation may qualify for Sickness Allowance (or JobSeeker Payment from 20 March 2020) if they do not have any employer leave entitlements, such as sick leave, and they meet general eligibility requirements in respect of residency and income and asset tests. Individuals should call Services Australia on 132 717.

Young people under the age of 22 who are unable to attend work because they have been diagnosed with Coronavirus or who are in isolation may qualify for Youth Allowance if they do not have any employer leave entitlements, such as sick leave, and they meet general eligibility requirements in respect of residency and income and assets tests. Individuals should call Services Australia on 132 490.

Further information can be found on the Services Australia website at [Payments if you're isolated and can't work](#).

The one-week Ordinary Waiting Period for certain payments has also been waived for the duration of the Coronavirus outbreak, initially for a three month period to 12 June 2020.

## Emergency Relief

For Emergency Relief services, including food, clothing, vouchers or help with bills, people affected by COVID-19 can access services through local community organisations, which can be found by searching 'Financial Crisis and Material Aid – Emergency Relief' on the [DSS Grants Service Directory](#).

## Financial Counselling

For financial counselling, including advice on managing debt and making decisions about money, people can contact the free and confidential National Debt Helpline on [www.ndh.org.au](http://www.ndh.org.au) or by calling 1800 007 007. People can access advice on the phone or ask for a face-to-face meeting.

Local financial counselling services can be located through [Find A Financial Counsellor – National Debt Helpline](#).

## Additional Services

People on a low income can also apply for No Interest Loans and StepUP, which provides low interest loans, through Good Shepherd Microfinance. Additional Information can be found at: [Good Shepherd Microfinance](#) or call 13 NILS (13 64 57).