



Australian Government
Services Australia

How we're helping people affected by coronavirus (COVID-19)

Easy Read version



How to use this document



Services Australia wrote this document.
When you see the word 'we', it means
Services Australia.



Services Australia includes:

- Centrelink
- Medicare
- Child support.



We've written this information in an easy
to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



We've written some words in **bold**.

We explain what these words mean.

There's a list of these words on page 29.



You can ask for help to read this document.
A friend, family member or support person
may be able to help you.

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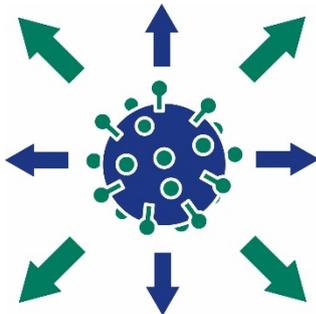
What's coronavirus?



Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a **virus** that's affected many people around the world.



A virus is an illness or disease that can spread easily from one person to another person.



Coronavirus is spreading quickly.



Coronavirus has been called a **pandemic**.

A virus becomes a pandemic when it spreads quickly to lots of countries around the world.

How is coronavirus affecting the community?



We all need to help stop coronavirus from spreading.



There are new rules that are affecting the community.

These rules mean that many businesses have had to:



- change how they work



- cut back the hours their staff work



- shut down.



A lot of people in Australia:

- are working less hours
- have lost their jobs.

What help can you get if you're affected by coronavirus?



We're offering support payments to people whose work or job have been affected by the new rules.

You can apply for our support payments if you:



- can't work



- have lost your job



- have lost **income** – the money you earn from working



- must care for children



- are in hospital



- must **self-isolate**.



If you self-isolate, you don't:

- leave your house
- see other people.



You must self-isolate because you've:

- just come back from overseas
- been close to someone who has coronavirus.

You might be **eligible** for support payments like:



- JobSeeker Payment



- Parenting Payment



- Youth Allowance.



If you're eligible, you meet our rules about who can get support payments.

Making it easier for you



We want to make it easier for people who need support payments.



We've changed things so people don't have to wait to get a payment.



People who are approved will now get their payments quicker.

We've also:



- changed who can get support payments



- made it easier to apply for support payments.



We have rules about who can get support payments.

This includes rules about:



- where you live



- how much money you earn.



You can find information about these rules on our website www.servicessaustralia.gov.au/covid19

When you apply for a payment, we might ask you:



- about your work



- if you're still working as much as you usually do.



We might also ask if you can get
JobKeeper Payment from your employer.



A JobKeeper Payment is money that the government
gives to employers to help them pay their workers
during coronavirus.



Ask your employer if they have applied for the
JobKeeper Payment for you.

How can you apply for a support payment?

There are 4 steps to apply for support payments:

1

1. Check what payment you can get.



If you can't get the JobKeeper Payment, you can apply for a different payment.



We have a tool on our website to help you work out which payment is right for you.



Visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/covid19

Select 'If you need a payment from us'.

2

2. Get ready to apply.



After you've worked out what payment you can apply for, you can go online and use your myGov account to apply.



You don't have to visit a service centre.



If you don't have a myGov account, you can set one up at www.my.gov.au



You can ask someone you know to help you.

After you set up your myGov account online, you can use your account to:

- give us information that tells us who you are, like your:
 - Australian passport or visa
 - birth certificate
 - driver licence
- get your Centrelink Customer Reference Number
- link your Centrelink account to your myGov account.



You'll need to visit a service centre in the future to confirm that you are who you say you are. We'll let you know when you need to do this.

3

3. Apply for a payment.

To apply for a payment, you need to:



- sign in to your myGov account



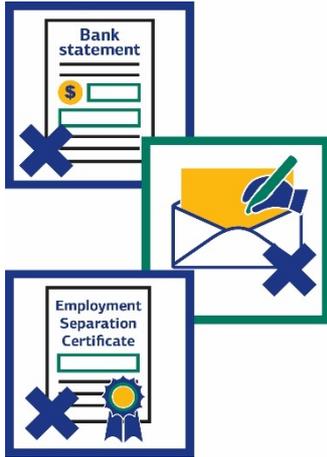
- select the Centrelink button



- check that your contact details are up-to-date

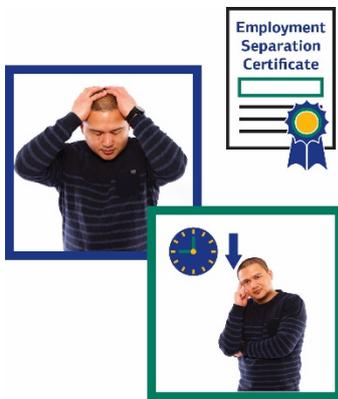


- apply for a payment through Centrelink.



To apply during coronavirus, we don't need:

- a bank statement
- a letter from your employer
- an Employment Separation Certificate.



An **Employment Separation Certificate**

is proof that:

- you have lost your job
- you're working less hours than you usually would.



Your employer needs to give the certificate to you.



We might ask you for these documents later.



If you have any problems, you can call us on **132 850**.



4. Check how your application is going.

After you apply online, you can check how your application is going by:



- signing in to your myGov account and selecting Centrelink



- using the Express Plus Centrelink app on your smartphone or tablet.



You can download and use the Express Plus Centrelink app after you've set up your Centrelink online account.



You can find information about how to do this at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/expressplus

We'll email you to let you know if we:



- said yes to your application



- said no to your application.



You may need to tell us any income you have earned before we can pay you.

Extra Centrelink payments



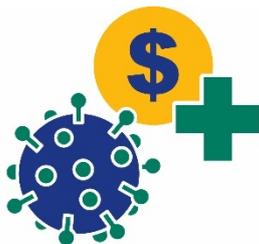
To help during coronavirus, we're giving people some extra payments.

The extra payments are:



- the Coronavirus Supplement
- the Economic Support Payment.

The Coronavirus Supplement



The **Coronavirus Supplement** is an extra payment to support people during the pandemic.



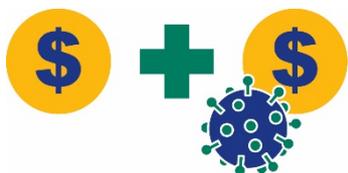
You'll get an extra \$550 every 2 weeks.

You'll get the Coronavirus Supplement if you already get one of the payments listed on the next page.

- Austudy
- ABSTUDY (Living Allowance)
- Farm Household Allowance
- JobSeeker Payment
- Parenting Payment
- Partner Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Widow Allowance
- Youth Allowance



If you already get one of these payments, you don't need to do anything.



We'll pay the Coronavirus Supplement automatically with your regular payment.

Economic Support Payments



Economic Support Payments are payments of \$750.



There are 2 payments.

You'll get the first \$750 payment if:



- you're already getting one of the payments from the list on page 21 between 12 March 2020 and 13 April 2020



- you have an eligible concession card from 12 March 2020 to 13 April 2020



- you live in Australia at the moment.

You'll get the second \$750 payment if:



- you're already getting one of the payments from the list on page 21 on 10 July 2020



- you have an eligible concession card on 10 July 2020



- you aren't getting the Coronavirus Supplement.

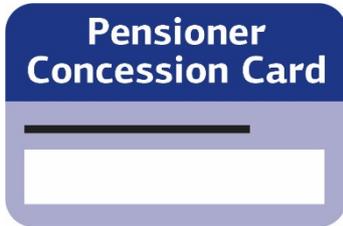


We'll start paying the second payment in July 2020.

Eligible payments and concession cards

- ABSTUDY (Living Allowance)
- Age Pension
- Austudy
- Bereavement Allowance
- Carer Allowance
- Carer Payment
- Disability Support Pension
- Double Orphan Pension
- Family Tax Benefit A
- Family Tax Benefit B
- Farm Household Allowance
- JobSeeker Payment
- Newstart Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- Partner Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Veteran Compensation payments, like lump sum payments
- Veteran Income Support Supplement
- Veteran Service Pension
- Veteran Payment
- War Widow(er) Pension
- Widow Allowance
- Widow B Pension
- Wife Pension
- Youth Allowance

You also might be eligible for Economic Support Payments if you have a:



- Pensioner Concession Card



- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card



- Veteran Gold Card.



You'll only get the Economic Support Payment for 1 of your eligible payments or concession cards.

Will your regular Centrelink payment be affected?



If you already get a Centrelink payment, like a JobSeeker Payment, Parenting Payment or Youth Allowance, you don't need to do anything.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we've made changes so you may not need to:



- go to appointments



- look for work



- work or study for a set number of hours a week.



You can find out more on our website

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/covid19

What if you're overseas and can't get back?



If you're overseas and can't get back to Australia, we might be able to keep your payment going.



We can do this if:

- your Centrelink payment is about to stop
- you can't get back into Australia because of coronavirus.



If you need to call us from overseas, our international phone numbers are on our website

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/phoneus

Contacting us at the moment



A lot of people are contacting us right now.

It's better to:



- go online and use your myGov account



- use the **Express Plus Centrelink app** on your smartphone or tablet



- call the 24-hour Centrelink self-service phone line on **136 240**.



You can find more information about our self-service options on our website

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/selfservice



Our other phone lines have long wait times right now.

It might take you a while to get through.



Please be patient, we're working as fast as we can.



You can call the JobSeeker Payment phone line on **132 850**.



You can find a list of our other phone numbers on our website

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/phoneus



To keep you and our staff safe, please only visit a service centre if you really have to.

Please don't go to a service centre if you:



- are feeling sick



- have been told you must self-isolate.

If you do come into a service centre, we may ask if you have:



- just got back from overseas



- been in contact with someone who has coronavirus.



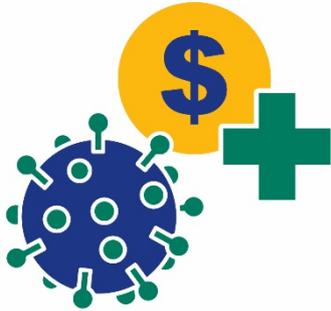
If you say yes, we'll ask you to:

- leave the service centre
- use our online or phone services instead.



We might call you after and check if you were able to do get the support you needed.

Word list



Coronavirus Supplement

The Coronavirus Supplement is an extra payment to support the community during the pandemic.



Eligible

If you're eligible, you meet the rules about who can get support payments.



Income

The money you earn from working.



JobKeeper Payment

Money that the government pays to employers to help pay their workers during coronavirus.



Pandemic

A virus becomes a pandemic when it spreads quickly to lots of countries around the world.



Self-isolate

If you self-isolate, you don't:

- leave your house
- see other people.



Virus

A virus is an illness or disease that can spread easily from one person to another person.



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