

# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE DURING COVID-19

## ***What Centrelink Payments am I eligible for?***

You can figure out what payments you are eligible for by using [this](#) guide.

When dealing with Centrelink, it is very important to be honest about your living and financial assistance, as dishonestly claiming payments that you are not entitled to can be a serious criminal offence.

## ***What can I do if I disagree with a decision of Centrelink?***

You have the right to have a Centrelink decision reviewed by an Authorised Review Officer, who has the power to remake the decision and should provide you with detailed reasons for their decision. You can request a review by an Authorised Review Officer over the phone or in writing.

If you are seeking a review of a Centrelink debt, an Authorised Review Officer may have the power to increase the debt if they think it should be higher, and can refer you for criminal prosecution if they believe you have acted fraudulently.

If you disagree with the decision of the Authorised Review Officer, you can appeal this decision to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. You should get legal advice before appealing your decision.

## ***What if I am not eligible for Centrelink payments?***

If you are an international student, you may be eligible for relief payments from the government (see [here](#)) or your education provider may be providing financial and non-financial support (you should contact your education provider or student union to find out).

If you are a refugee or asylum seeker, you may be able to access food and other supports through a number of organisations, such as the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (03 9326 6066).

*Mohamed has lost his job as a taxi driver because of COVID-19, which means he will struggle to support himself and to continue to pay his rent.*

*He can apply for the JobSeeker payment with Centrelink to financially support himself.*

*He can also seek rent relief from his landlord with the help of consumer affairs, and may be eligible for rent relief payments from the government.*



### ***What other financial support is available?***

Depending on your personal circumstances, you may be eligible for:

- A rent reduction and rent relief payments. See our tenancy fact sheet [here](#) for information;
- JobKeeper payments. See [here](#) for information;
- Deferred payments on your home loan; or Access to some of your superannuation.

Information about this is available [here](#) (you should get advice from a financial advisor or financial counsellor before doing this).

If you are required to miss work because you have to self-isolate due to COVID-19, and you don't have sick leave, you may be able to get additional financial assistance – see our 'Employment Rights' fact sheet [here](#) for information about this.

There may be other financial support available to you, depending on your personal circumstances. If you are under financial stress, you should speak to a financial counsellor for help in managing your finances and to find out what other assistance you might be entitled to.

### ***Further Information:***

Services Australia:

[servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/affected-coronavirus-covid-19](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/affected-coronavirus-covid-19)

National Debt Helpline:

[ndh.org.au/debt-problems/covid19/](https://ndh.org.au/debt-problems/covid19/)

### ***Free Financial Counselling Services:***

National Debt Helpline:

1800 007 007

Uniting Lentara (Moreland and Hume City Councils):

(03) 9351 3600

Nexus Primary Health (Mitchell Shire):

1300 77 33 52

Uniting Kildonan (North-Eastern regions):

1800 002 992

### ***Free Legal Advice!***

**Northern Community  
Legal Centre:**

(03) 9310 4376

[admin@northernclc.org.au](mailto:admin@northernclc.org.au)

**Social Security Rights  
Victoria**

(Monday – Thursday,  
9.30AM – 12.30PM):  
0419 793 652

**Victoria Legal Aid:**

1300 792 387

Arabic: (03) 9269 0127

**This document is not legal advice. This information is accurate as of 5th August 2020. You should seek legal advice before acting on the basis of this information.**