

COVID19 Information Sheet – Queensland (QLD)

Disclaimer: The information below should not be considered an exhaustive list. Please contact organisations and services directly for the most up to date information and to enquire further about eligibility. Red Cross does not make any determinations about eligibility for any of the services listed.

Queensland Government Updates

- [Queensland Government COVID19 Health Alerts](#)
- The [Queensland government has allocated \\$2.2 million to helping international students](#). The package covers access to professional support counsellors, isolation care-packs, pre-prepared meals and other living expense payments to students. Students will be able to connect with professional support counsellors through the [Online Student Hub](#)– a digital platform that will link caseworkers with students to guide them through mental health, visa, crisis accommodation and other essential needs.
- As announced by [Study Queensland](#) on 19 May, the Queensland Government has boosted its state-wide international education assistance and recovery package to \$15 million. As part of this, an additional \$10 million will now be made available to support international students experiencing severe financial hardship as a result of COVID-19. Currently, the Queensland Government is working on a process to distribute:
 - Additional funding to Queensland-based universities and TAFE Queensland to top-up their bursaries and student support services.
 - One-off payments to private VET and ELICOS students.
- The Palaszczuk Government has extended Covid-19 [support for vulnerable multicultural communities](#) with a dedicated \$900,000 connections package for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

Food and/or Emergency Relief

Note: Most services are encouraging people to phone them first as they have had to change their mode of service delivery due to COVID19.

- **St Vincent de Paul Helpline:** 1800 846 643
- **Anglicare Southern Queensland:** 1300 114 397
- **Wesley Mission’s Brisbane Relief Hub:** 1300 541 625
- **SALVOS Connect:** 1300 371 288
- **Access Community Services:** (07) 3412 8222 (option 4)
Monday – Friday, 1pm – 4pm
No citizenship or residency requirements
- **Romero Centre**
8 Dutton St, Dutton Park QLD (no drops ins, by appointment only)
(07) 3013 0100
Supports people seeking asylum in Brisbane with emergency relief and case management.
- **[Support for people in self-isolation](#) or quarantine: 1800 173 349**
Get advice, information and support or to arrange non-contact delivery of essential food and medication for people who have no other means of support.

Online directories:

- [Oneplace](#) is an online community service directory for Queenslanders looking for support, ranging from food relief, domestic and family violence support, homelessness support and much more.
- The Queensland Government has an interactive map for their [Emergency Relief Program](#), which provides financial and/or material support to people in financial crisis.
- The [Department of Social Services directory](#) also has a list of current emergency relief grants available throughout Queensland.
- [OzHarvest](#) food rescue and delivery vans are collecting and delivering food in certain locations throughout Queensland. Some areas are being impacted by COVID-19, so visit the website for more information.

Housing / Homelessness

- [QLD Homelessness Hotline](#) is a State-wide referral service for those at risk or experiencing homelessness. 1800 474 753 (24 hour service)

Rent and Utilities

- QLD Government [COVID-19 Residential Rental Hub](#) - A one-stop shop for information about renting during COVID-19. Information hotline 1800497161 – Monday to Friday (8am to 8pm) and from 9am-5pm Saturday and Sunday and texting (SMS) "Hi" to 0480 000 782.
- [COVID-19 Rental Grant](#)
 - One-off payment of up to four weeks rent (maximum of \$2,000) available to people living in Queensland who have lost their job due to the impacts of COVID-19 and who do not have access to other financial assistance. The grant is paid directly to your landlord..
 - **Before you apply:** You **must** have had a conversation with your lessor and be able to provide evidence that the lessor has declined all attempts for you to make a payment arrangement.
 - **Eligibility**
 - you live in Queensland
 - you have, or will shortly have, a bond registered with the Residential Tenancies Authority
 - you are an Australian citizen, permanent resident, or have a temporary or permanent protection visa or possess a bridging visa
 - you do not have more than \$10,000 in cash and savings
 - you can provide evidence of attempts to negotiate a payment plan with your lessor (including a letter or email from them outlining the reasons why a payment plan cannot be agreed on)
 - you have lost your job and have applied to Centrelink for income support
 - you are waiting for your application with Centrelink to be approved.
 - For more information, visit the [Queensland Government website](#)
- [Tenants Queensland – COVID-19 Resources](#)
 - [Fact sheets: renting and COVID-19](#)
 - [General information for tenants affected by COVID-19](#) (entries, repairs, rent arrears)
 - [For renters in sharehouses](#)

- [Information for international students](#)
- [When violence affects your tenancy](#)
- [Writing to your lessor: examples of letters](#)
- [Forms you might need](#)
- Rental grants, bond loans and other housing assistance
- Rent Reduction Request – [Template Letter](#)
- Information on the [QLD Eviction Moratorium](#)
- Free statewide advice service: 1300 744 263 (Interpretation available)

- [Residential Tenancy Authority of QLD](#)
 - General information available in community languages [here](#).
 - [Information on COVID-19](#)

- [Electricity and Gas Rebate QLD](#)
 - In order to apply for the electricity or gas rebates, you'll need to contact your energy provider to get the application started. If you live in a community where your energy is provided to you through a third party (such as an apartment complex or retirement community), contact the person or organization sending you the energy bill.
 - Pensioners and seniors living in Queensland are eligible to receive up to \$340.85 per year for electricity and \$73.60 per year for gas through the Queensland Electricity and Gas rebates. In order to be eligible, customers must hold one of the following:
 - Pensioner Concession Card
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card (and receive the War Widow/er Pension or special rate TPI Pension)
 - Queensland Seniors Card
 - Commonwealth Health Care Card (Electricity Rebate only)
 - [Asylum seeker status](#)—residents will need to provide their ImmiCard details (Electricity Rebate only)

- **Water and Energy Bills**
 - The Queensland government will be [providing up to \\$200 credit](#) for all 2.1 million Queensland householders to offset the cost of water and electricity. It will automatically be applied to your household bill.

Health and Medical Care

- Queensland Health Coronavirus Advice Line: 13 43 25

- The [Queensland Health website](#) is being regularly updated and will provide the most reliable health information for people in Queensland. Information for refugees and asylum seekers has been updated and the new information sheet can be found [here](#).

- [What if I don't have Medicare cover?](#)
 - Most people who are not eligible for Medicare will have health or travel insurance. To support Queensland's response to COVID-19, people who do not have adequate insurance coverage and are not eligible for Medicare **will not be charged out of pocket**

expenses if they present to any Queensland Health facility for assessment and treatment in relation to COVID-19 infection. These arrangements have been put in place to ensure payment issues are not a barrier for people from overseas to protect their own and their families' health and to play their part in reducing transmission of the disease.

- The Queensland Government provides Medicare ineligible asylum seekers with access to public health services at no charge. See: [Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health Services](#) and the [Refugee Health Network webpage](#).
- The [Refugee Health Guide](#) includes Refugee Health Programs staffed by refugee nurses, doctors and other specialists that operate nationally - providing specialised mental and primary health care and service coordination to refugees and people seeking asylum. These services are familiar with working with people on uncertain immigration pathways and fluctuating Medicare status. Information on referral pathways in Queensland can be found [here](#). Services are defined differently in each state and territory, so look for headings such as 'Refugee Health Program/ Service', 'Immigrant Health Clinic' or 'Community Health Service'.
- [Reciprocal Health Care Agreements](#): Agreements with 11 countries that cover the cost of medically necessary care when Australians visit certain countries and visitors from these countries visit Australia. Those visiting Australia from the following countries may be eligible for medical care under Medicare while in Australia, information for each country is available [here](#).
- [Temporary Visa Categories Covered by Ministerial Orders \(eligible for Medicare\)](#)

Information for International Students in QLD

- [Study Queensland](#) has updates and resources for international students on COVID19 and operates a 24/7 hotline. Contact 1 800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839) for advice.
- As announced by [Study Queensland on 19 May](#), the QLD Government is working on a process to distribute additional funding to Queensland-based universities and TAFE Queensland to top-up their bursaries and student support services and one-off payments to private VET and ELICOS students.
 - **University and TAFE Queensland students:** Contact your institution student support team. Your institution will undertake a process to assess your eligibility for financial support.

[TAFE Queensland](#) / [Australian Catholic University](#) / [Bond University](#) / [Central Queensland University](#) / [Federation University](#) / [Griffith University](#) / [James Cook University](#) / [Queensland University of Technology](#) / [Southern Cross University](#) / [Torrens University](#) / [University of Queensland](#) / [University of Southern Queensland](#) / [University of the Sunshine Coast](#)
 - **International students at private education and training providers**
 - May be eligible for a one-off \$500 payment. Please note, it could take up to two weeks to receive this money into your bank account.

- Application is via an online portal which will be open soon. The portal will remain open until all allocated funding is exhausted.
- Follow the [Study Queensland Facebook page](#) to know when the portal is open and to keep up to date with announcements
- [Eligibility information](#)

- In the meantime, international students needing immediate crisis support should reach out to their education and training provider or the [Queensland Student Hub network](#).

- The [Multicultural Australia Student HUB in Brisbane](#) provides eligible international students with ER and casework. [Facebook BNE Student Hub](#). Ph: 07 3337 5400

- The [Queensland government has allocated \\$2.2 million to helping international students](#). The package covers access to professional support counsellors, isolation care-packs, pre-prepared meals and other living expense payments to students. Students will be able to connect with professional support counsellors through the [Online Student Hub](#)— a digital platform that will link caseworkers with students to guide them through mental health, visa, crisis accommodation and other essential needs. Multicultural Australia will provide the online counselling resources. Students in demonstrated financial hardship may also be referred to GIVIT for emergency assistance.

- [Study Australia website - COVID-19 International Student Information](#) (*website includes a drop down box (top right) to translate pages into a range of languages*) and [the Department of Education, Skills and Employment \(DESE\)](#)
 - Advice only (no financial assistance) - International students hotline (1300 981 621) / international.students@dese.gov.au

- Working: (Info from [Home Affairs](#)):
 - Certain student visa holders can work for more than 40 hours per fortnight to support the supply of essential goods and services for Australians if they are:
 - Employed in the nursing sector
 - Employed by registered supermarkets
 - Employed in the aged care sector
 - See [Employers with access to these essential service arrangements](#).

- Accessing Superannuation
 - Temporary residents may be able to access up to \$10,000 of their superannuation in this financial year (until 30 June 2020) to assist in supporting themselves through the coronavirus crisis. More information is available on the [ATO website here](#).
 - The Australian government announced on 4 April that international students who have been in Australia longer than 12 months who find themselves in financial hardship will be able to [access their Australian superannuation](#). Students will need to use [MyGov](#) for this process.

- **Griffith University** is providing interest-free student loans to help students with the cost of education and living expenses. [Eligible students can apply for a loan](#) of up to \$1,000 to be repaid within 12 months for domestic students or six months for international students.
- **James Cook University** has established a food pantry in Cairns and Townsville to help students with basic necessities.
- **University of Southern Queensland** has developed a new needs-based personalised financial support package, the COVID-19 Student Financial Assistance Scheme. This will include:
 - Living expenses (payments will be dependent on the situation)
 - Provision of technology (one-off payments of up to \$1000 AUD)
 - Provision of learning resources (one-off payments of up to \$500 AUD)
- **University of Queensland** is offering short-term hardship grants or emergency loan of up to [\\$2,000](#) to a limited number of students. This can be used for rent or bond utility bills, public transport, required study-related equipment, medical expenses etc, but not for tuition fee, overseas health cover, credit card repayment etc.
- **Southern Cross University** has established an [Emergency Relief Fund](#) to support students who are experiencing financial distress because of COVID-19. Eligible students may apply for payments of up to \$500. Repeat applications are permitted no less than fortnightly in exceptional circumstances, with a total limit of \$1,500 paid to qualifying individuals. Email SCUassist@scu.edu.au for direction and support with the application process. (Southern Cross University has three campuses located at the Gold Coast, Coffs Harbour and Lismore, with branch campuses in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth).

Additional Information for People Seeking Asylum and Refugees

- If you hold a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV), you are eligible to apply for the [Special Benefit payment through Centrelink](#). You will need to meet the other criteria for the payment. Click the link for more information.
- Health information for refugees and asylum seekers has been updated and the new information sheet can be found [here](#).
- The Refugee and Immigration Legal Services (RAILS) have produced a [fact sheet](#) for people with SHEV and TPVs. The fact sheet notes that SHEV and TPV holders should consider whether they can survive on Special Benefits before withdrawing superannuation along with other relevant information.
- [Asylum-Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program](#) (ASRA). The 2019–21 ASRA program is a limited-term grant by the Queensland Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs to support the needs of people seeking asylum and vulnerable refugees on temporary visas in Queensland. The project delivers financial and material aid, case management and coordination.
For more information, contact the Red Cross MSP QLD HUB: 07 3367 5665 or 0433 940 653 or email: qldmsphub@redcross.org.au.

[Status Resolution Support Services](#) (SRSS)

- The SRSS program supports vulnerable migrants who are waiting for the government's decision on a visa application, including people seeking asylum. It provides temporary needs-based support for people facing significant barriers and unable to support themselves while resolving their immigration status.
- In Queensland, the SRSS Program is delivered by:
 - [Multicultural Australia](#) - Phone 07 3337 5400 / email: srssapplications@multiculturalaustralia.org.au.
 - [ACCESS Community Services](#) - (07) 3412 8222
- [Humanitarian Settlement Program \(HSP\)](#)
 - The HSP is a national program funded by the Australian Government to help refugees to establish themselves when they first arrive in Australia.
 - People granted the following visas are eligible to access the HSP on arrival:
 - Refugee (subclass 200, 201, 203 and 204) visa
 - Global Special Humanitarian (subclass 202) visa
 - Other visa holders are also eligible to access the HSP, but only to receive [Specialised and Intensive Services \(SIS\)](#). These include:
 - Refugee (subclass 200, 201, 203 and 204)
 - Global Special Humanitarian (subclass 202)
 - Protection (subclass 866)
 - Temporary Protection (subclass 785), Temporary Humanitarian Stay (subclass 449), Temporary Humanitarian Concern (subclass 786) and Safe Haven Enterprise (subclass 790).
 - SIS is a component of the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) available to humanitarian entrants and other eligible visa holders who have complex needs.
 - [HSP Service Provider Locations](#)