

COVID-19 Information Sheet – Tasmania (TAS)

Disclaimer: The information below should not be considered an exhaustive list and service delivery may change. Please contact organisations and services directly for the most up to date information and to enquire further about eligibility. Red Cross does not determine eligibility for the third party services listed.

Government of Tasmania Updates

- [Tasmanian Government COVID-19 Updates](#)
 - Tasmanian border restrictions and subsequent quarantine arrangements are classified as low, medium, and high. To check the classification of a location, visit [the Tasmanian government's coronavirus website](#). These classifications change depending on the COVID-19 situation in each state and territory.
- **COVID-19 vaccinations:** The Tasmanian and the Australian Governments are working together to give safe COVID-19 vaccinations to the community. Vaccines are being delivered in phases. All Tasmanians aged 18 and over will be able to get vaccinated for free. More information is available on the [Tasmanian government website](#).
- [Support for Temporary Visa Holders:](#)
 - [Pandemic Isolation Assistance Grants](#) are available to support low-income persons, casual workers and self-employed persons who are required to self-isolate due to COVID-19 risk. To apply, please call the Public Health Hotline on [1800 671 738](#).
 - The [Rapid Response Skills Initiative](#) provides funding of up to \$3,000 towards the cost of training for people who have lost their jobs because they have been made redundant, the place they worked has closed, or the employer had to let staff go.
 - The [Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment](#) is available to people in TAS on temporary visas who have a visa with work rights, and also meet with other criteria including:
 - You have coronavirus (COVID-19)
 - You have been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19
 - You care for someone who has COVID-19; or who has been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19
 - You are caring for who has COVID-19
 - You are unable to go to work and earn an income
 - You have no appropriate leave entitlements, including pandemic sick leave, personal leave or leave to care for another person.
- Home Affairs has updated the [COVID-19 and the Border / Staying in Australia webpage](#) with more detailed information for people with temporary visas:
 - [Visitor visa or Electronic Travel Authority \(ETA\)](#)
 - [Student and Temporary Graduate Visa](#)
 - Temporary Skill Shortage ([subclass 482](#)) or Temporary Work (Skilled) ([subclass 457](#))
 - [Working Holiday](#) Maker visa
 - [Seasonal Worker](#)
 - [Special Category](#) Visa
 - [Bridging Visa](#)

- [Regional Visa](#)
- [My visa has expired](#)

From September 2020, concessions have been made for certain visa holders impacted by the pandemic. These concessions help if you have been disadvantaged by border closures, business restrictions or the economic downturn. If you hold, or held, a visa listed below during the COVID-19 concession period you may be eligible:

- [Skilled Regional \(Subclass 887\) visa](#)
- [Business Innovation and Investment \(Permanent\)\(Subclass 888\) visa](#)
- [Business Innovation and Investment \(Provisional\)\(Subclass 188\) visa](#)
- [Safe Haven Enterprise \(Subclass 790\) visa](#)
- [Temporary Graduate \(Subclass 485\) visa](#)

For information on the [Temporary Activity Visa \(subclass 408\)](#) visit the Home Affairs website.

How to stay COVID safe

- With the relaxing of restrictions, and opening of state and some international borders, Australian governments are encouraging everyone to remain COVID safe.

Physical distancing

- When and where possible, remain 1.5 metres away from other people.
- Avoid physical greetings such as handshaking, hugs and kisses.
- Take extra care if you are using [public transport](#).
- Avoid crowds and large public gatherings.
- Wear a mask when in public.

Workplaces & schools

- Follow the recommended government [health and hygiene advice](#).
- Avoid non-essential face-to-face meetings.
- Provide alcohol-based hand rub for all staff.
- Eat lunch at your desk or outside rather than in the lunchroom.
- Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces that many people touch.
- Open windows or adjust air conditioning for more ventilation.
- Stay at home if you are feeling unwell.

Employment & Work Rights

- From 01 May 2021, if you relocate to take up ongoing work, including an apprenticeship, for more than 20 hours a week for more than six months, you may be eligible to receive up to:
 - \$3,000 if you relocate to a capital city*
 - \$6,000 if you relocate to a regional area
 - An extra \$3,000 if you relocate with a dependent.

For more information on Relocation Assistance, visit the Australian Government's Department of Education, Skills & Employment [website here](#).

- **Seasonal workers information**

- The Tasmanian Government announced that [eligible agricultural \(seasonal\) workers](#) from non-affected regions will be permitted to enter Tasmania to assist with planting, production and harvest seasons from September 2020.
- As seasonal workers will likely be working and living closely together, additional conditions will be in place for approved applicants, for more information about these restrictions visit [Conditions for Essential Travellers](#).

- **Temporary relaxation of working hours for student visa holders**

Due to exceptional circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure the supply of critical services, the [Department of Home Affairs and Australian Border Force](#) will take a flexible approach to student visa holders working beyond their usual work limitations, but only in specified industries.

You can work more than 40 hours a fortnight if you are:

- working for an aged care Approved Provider or Commonwealth-funded aged care service provider with a RACS ID or a NAPS ID (including if you are engaged by a labour hire company or recruitment agency)
- working for a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider (including if you are engaged by a labour hire company or recruitment agency)
- enrolled in a health care related course and you are supporting the health effort against COVID-19, as directed by health officials
- working in the agriculture sector
- working in the tourism and hospitality sector
- working in a supermarket, or associated distribution facility, located in an area impacted by COVID-19 lockdown restrictions for the duration of the lockdown.

All workers in Australia have the same rights and protections at work, regardless of citizenship or visa status. Your employer must comply with Australian workplace and immigration laws, including their obligation to:

- Pay you the right pay rate for all time worked
- Provide a safe workplace.
- For information on [working](#) in Australia visit the [Home Affairs website](#).

The [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) provides education, assistance, advice and guidance to employers and employees, and can inquire into and investigate breaches of the Fair Work Act.

Food and/or Emergency Relief

- [AskIzzy](#) is a national database with links to supports including housing, food and clothing, health services, financial support, family violence assistance, and much more.
- The National Debt Helpline provides free financial advice, and [the NDH website](#) has information on topics such as rent, utilities and emergency financial assistance. The NDH is open Monday to Friday from 9:30am – 4:30pm, on 1800 007 007.

Launceston

- **The Salvation Army** Phone 6323 7500. Telephone assessment required.
- **City Mission.** Phone 6335 3000. Telephone assessment required.
- **St Vincent de Paul.** Phone 6326 5551. Telephone assessment required.
- **Launceston Benevolent Society** 6344 4213. Telephone assessment required.
- **Catholic Care** Phone 6332 0600. Telephone assessment required.

Hobart and Surrounding

- **Australian Red Cross & Migrant Resource Centre**, ph: 0408 727 649 for more information.
- **Catholic Care** - Phone 6278 1660 / 1800 819 447
- **St Vincent de Paul** Phone 6234 4244. Telephone Assessment. Face-to-Face by appointment.
- **[Uniting Care Tas Emergency Relief](#)** - Phone: 6263 5217 (Gagebrook) / 6234 1296 /6234 1896 (Hobart). Telephone assessment required.
- **The Salvation Army** Phone 6382 1559
- **[Hobart City Mission](#)** Ph: 6251 4200 (Glenorchy) / 6215 4251 (Hobart). Phone appointments.
- **[Salvation Army Doorways Emergency Relief](#)** Phone 6228 8400 (Hobart) Ph: 6244 4615 (Howrah), Ph: 6261 5996 (New Norfolk) Telephone assessment required
- **Benevolent Society Hobart** Phone 6234 1296. Telephone assessment needed.
- **[Multicultural Council of Tasmania](#)**

Georgetown

- **Neighbourhood House** Phone 6312 3019 Telephone assessment required
- **Salvation Army** Phone 6382 1559 Telephone assessment required
- **St Vincent de Paul** 6344 4213 Telephone assessment required
- **[Salvation Army Doorways](#)** Ph: 6228 8400 (Hobart) Ph: 6244 4615 (Howrah), Ph: 6261 5996 (New Norfolk) Telephone assessment required

Deloraine: Neighbourhood House Phone: 6362 2678 Telephone assessment required

Scottsdale: Salvation Army Phone: 6323 7500 Telephone assessment required

St Helens: Anglicare phone: 6376 1810. Telephone assessment required

Rent and Utilities Support

- The **[Tenants Union of Tasmania](#)** can provide support information for renters, and has factsheets with the latest government announcements.
 - Temporary changes to the *Residential Tenancy Act* came into effect for the duration of the COVID-19 Emergency period. Frequently asked questions about the changes and answers are in this link, **[FAQ COVID-19 Emergency Bill](#)**.
 - **[Support for Households:](#)** The Tasmanian Government will cap electricity prices and freeze water bills for the financial year 2020/21. This is in addition to other hardship funds and arrangements.
- **[Energy Ombudsman Tasmania](#)**
 - **[Fact Sheet- Are you having difficulty paying your bills?](#)**

- **Annual Electricity Concession** – The annual electricity concession provides a daily discount to eligible customers at a *cents per day* rate. To receive the concession, you need to provide your concession card details to Aurora Energy. Eligible cards are:
 - DHS or DVA Pensioner Concession Card
 - DHS Health Care Card
 - ImmiCard (Bridging Visa E)

Housing / Homelessness

- [Housing Connect Tasmania](#) – You can contact Housing Connect at one of their offices or by phone. Call 1800 800 588. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- **The Salvation Army.** Information below is from the [website](#).

McCombe House (Hobart)

Phone: (03) 6228 1099 (Opening hours: 24/7 & on call)

Emergency Accommodation for women & children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness or escaping family violence.

Oakleigh Accommodation Services (Burnie)

Phone: (03) 6430 4100 (Opening hours: 24/7 & on call)

Emergency and transitional accommodation for men, women and children experiencing or at risk of homelessness, or escaping family violence

Housing Connect SASH (Hobart)

Phone: (03) 6278 2817 (Opening hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm & on call)

Crisis and transitional support for men, women and children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) South & North (Hobart & Launceston)

Phone: (03) 6270 03 or (03) 6323 7500 (Opening hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm)

Support for older people who are at risk of homelessness. Men, women over 50 years who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Tas. Street to Home

Main office address: 117 Main Road, New Town, phone: (03) 6278 2817

Opening hours: 8.30pm - 4.30pm & On call

Crisis support to rough sleepers – men, women and children experiencing homelessness.

Health and Medical Care

- **Tasmania Public Health Hotline:** 1800 671 738
- [What if I'm from overseas and I'm not eligible for Medicare:](#)
Overseas travellers who get sick in Australia (and are not eligible for Medicare) often have health or travel insurance. For those who do not have adequate insurance coverage, **Tasmanian hospitals will waive the costs of treatment and testing for COVID-19.** This includes waiving payment and debt recovery procedures for ambulance transfers of people suspected to have coronavirus, who are taken to Tasmanian hospitals for assessment.

- Wellways (Burnie, Launceston and Hobart), offer a number of different mental health support services. [Visit the website](#) for more information, or phone 1300 111 400.
- Headspace (Devonport, Launceston, Hobart), specialise in mental health support for young people between the ages of 12 – 25. [Visit the website](#) to find the centre nearest you.
- 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. Information on referral pathways in Tasmania are found [here](#).
- [Reciprocal Health Care Agreements](#): Agreements with 11 countries that covers 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](#).

Information for the LGBTQI+ community

- Information on health and counselling services, social groups, legal support, multicultural specific services, and other services are found on this [national LGBTQI+ directory](#).

Information for International Students in Tasmania

- October 2020: The Australian Government has recommenced granting student visas. If you do not yet have a student visa, you are encouraged to apply for a visa and commence your studies online, so that when borders re-open you can travel to Australia to continue your studies. For the latest information, visit the [Study Australia website](#). A general advice line is available by phoning 1300 981 621.
- [Study Tasmania - COVID-19 International Student Information](#) and [the Department of Education, Skills and Employment \(DESE\)](#) provide information and links to supports.
- International students hotline (1300 981 621) / international.students@dese.gov.au
- **University of Tasmania:** For the second half of 2020 and into 2021, a range of exciting activity has returned to campus and some learning, teaching and research will continue online. View the [Staged Reopening booklet](#) for more information on the opening phases and coming on campus.

Information for New Zealanders living in Australia

New Zealand citizens in Australia on a Special Category Visa (SCV) may be able to access a range of payments, depending on their circumstances.

- Those who came to Australia prior to 26 February 2001 generally have protected status and have the same access to all Australian payments as permanent residents and Australian citizens, where eligible, including JobSeeker Payment.

- New Zealanders who came to Australia after 26 February 2001 and have non-protected status can access family payments, such as FTB, paid parental leave payments and childcare subsidy, where eligible. If they have been continuously living in Australia for at least 10 years since February 2001, they can also access JobSeeker Payment or Youth Allowance for a one-off period of up to six months.
- New Zealanders on an SCV may be eligible for the JobKeeper Payment if they meet the qualifying criteria, <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/jobkeeper>.
- New Zealand citizens may also be able to claim the Age Pension or, in limited circumstances, Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment, under the Social Security Agreement between Australia and New Zealand.
- For further general information:
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/payments-visa-holders>
- Individuals needing specific advice on their circumstances should contact Services Australia:
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/contact-us>

Additional Support for People Seeking Asylum and Refugees

- If you have a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV), you are eligible to apply for the [Special Benefit payment](#). Click the link for more information.
- [Status Resolution Support Services](#) (SRSS)
 - The SRSS program supports people who are awaiting a government decision on a visa application, including people seeking asylum. It provides temporary support for people facing significant barriers who are unable to support themselves.
 - In Tasmania, the SRSS Program is delivered by:
 - [Catholic Care](#). Call 1800 819 447 or (03) 6278 1660 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, or email misp.info@aohtas.org.au for more information and to see if you are eligible. For an interpreter please call 13 14 50
- [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:
 - 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](#).