

COVID-19 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

- The [Queensland Government website – COVID19 Health Alerts](#) provides the most up to date information, including updates on [border and travel restrictions](#), and general health advice.
 - In December 2020, the Queensland government launched the New Zealand safe travel zone, for full details and the latest information on traveling from NZ [click here](#).
 - The Queensland website also contains Information in [languages other than English](#).
- **COVID-19 vaccinations:** Queensland's vaccine strategy is guided by the [COVID-19 vaccine National rollout strategy](#). The Queensland rollout aims to protect the most vulnerable Queenslanders, and will be distributed in 3 phases. The Queensland government aims to give every eligible Queenslander the opportunity to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible. For more information, visit the [Queensland government website](#).
- **Rental moratorium:** The [eviction moratorium](#) and measures implemented to support it, ceased on 29 September 2020. Some protections will continue to apply until **30 April 2021**, including:
 - an allowance for tenants experiencing family violence to end their tenancies quickly;
 - protections for tenants against being listed in a tenancy database for rent arrears caused by COVID-19 impacts;
 - limits on reletting costs for eligible tenants who end their fixed term tenancies early;
 - short term tenancy statement extensions for moveable dwellings;
 - entry restrictions and requirements to support COVID-19 social distancing measures;
 - relaxed repair and maintenance obligations.
- For support with tenancy matters contact [Tenancy Queensland](#) on 1300 744 263. The [Tenancy Queensland website](#) also has a number of factsheets and links to forms.
- The [Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment](#) is available to people in Queensland 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 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.

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 November 2020, relocation assistance will be available to people who [relocate to harvest and regional areas](#) to take up short-term agricultural work, including those on temporary visas, with the right to work in Australia. For more information about the scheme, and to lodge an application, [visit the website here](#).

- **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:

- employed by an aged care Approved Provider or Commonwealth-funded aged care service provider with a RACS ID or a NAPS ID, before 8 September 2020
- employed by a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme provider
- enrolled in a health care related course and you are supporting the health effort against COVID-19, as directed by health officials.

You **cannot** work more than 40 hours if you are employed in a supermarket. This measure ended on 1 May 2020.

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.
- Support for people in self-isolation or quarantine – **1800 173 349** (advice, information and support, or to arrange delivery of essential food or medication.)
 - **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 (07) 3013 0100 – (by appointment only).
Supports people seeking asylum with emergency relief and case management.

Online directories:

- [Oneplace](#) is an online 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. Visit the website for more information.

New Zealand community groups

New Zealand citizens living in Australia may be able to access a range of payments, depending on their visa conditions and individual circumstances. There are many organisations in Queensland working with New Zealanders living in Australia.

- **Queensland Maori Society:** Providing cultural and spiritual support for Maori people living in Queensland. Contact Tu Tawpa (0455 094 964) or [visit the website](#) for more information.
- **Nerang Neighbourhood Centre:** [Multiple programs & activities](#) including a food service; information, advice, referrals and support; information and advice for New Zealand citizens living in Australia; air conditioned room and office facilities; wireless and internet access; coffee and tea facilities. Phone (07) 5578 2457 for more information.
- **The Koha Shed:** A Queensland based registered charity organisation open to all race, colour and creed. Offering many services within the homeless, domestic violence support, disadvantaged youth support, training courses, indigenous support and mental health arenas throughout Australia. Refer to <https://www.facebook.com/thekohashed>.

- **Oz Kiwi:** A community support group, advocacy regarding New Zealander rights and access to Australian supports/ services. Helpful information regarding citizenship, PR and SCV pathways. Refer to: <http://www.ozkiwi2001.org/>.
- **Queensland Community Care:** QCC offer support to people who live permanently in Queensland, regardless of visa status. [Visit the website](#) for more information.
- **Aiga Samoa:** [Language & culture programs](#), located in Deception Bay.
- **Pasifika Families:** Language & cultural programs. Playgroups for under 5's, and run the annual Pasifika Vibes event, <https://www.facebook.com/PasifikaFamilies>
- **Ako ako Ki Piripani:** Maori community organisation, focused on language & cultural support, as well as running annual Redcliffe Waitangi Day event, <https://www.facebook.com/Akoako-ki-Piripane-1481933328537943/>
- **Community Action for Multicultural Society (CMAS):** Run from Caboolture Neighbourhood Centre. Contact Luisa Miller (cams@caboolturenhc.com.au or 5432 4220) for information on programs, including food vouchers or links to other services for help.

Rent and Utilities

- **Rental moratorium:** The [eviction moratorium](#) and measures implemented to support it, will continue to apply until **30 April 2021**, including:
 - provisions allowing tenants experiencing domestic and family violence to end their tenancies quickly;
 - protections for tenants against being listed in a tenancy database for rent arrears caused by COVID-19 impacts;
 - limits on reletting costs for eligible tenants who end their fixed term tenancies early;
 - short term tenancy statement extensions for moveable dwellings;
 - entry restrictions and requirements to support COVID-19 social distancing measures;
 - relaxed repair and maintenance obligations.
- For support with tenancy matters contact [Tenancy Queensland](#) on 1300 744 263. The [Tenancy Queensland website](#) also has a number of factsheets and links to forms.
- [Residential Tenancy Authority of QLD:](#) General information available in community languages [here](#).
- The QLD Government [COVID-19 Residential Rental Hub](#) provides information about renting during COVID-19 and an information hotline 1800 497 161 – Monday to Friday (8am to 8pm) and from 9am-5pm Saturday and Sunday.
- **Electricity and Gas Rebate QLD:** To apply for the rebate, you will need to contact your energy provider to start the application.
- **Water and Energy Bills:** The Queensland government will be [providing up to \\$200 credit](#) for all Queensland householders to offset the cost of water and electricity.

Housing / Homelessness

- [QLD Homelessness Hotline](#) is a statewide referral service for those at risk or experiencing homelessness. 1800 474 753 (24 hour service)
- Uniting Care run [homelessness services in Gold Coast](#) providing:
 - Emergency accommodation for those over 18 years
 - Support and referral for young people
 - Crisis intervention, counselling and emotional support
 - Training on living skills, budgeting skills and financial management
 - Practical assistance and advocacy

Health and Medical Care

- Queensland Health Coronavirus Advice Line: **13 43 25**. The [Queensland Health website](#) is provides the most reliable health information for people in Queensland. Information for refugees and asylum seekers can be found [here](#).
- [World Wellness Group](#) has a free Multicultural Connect Phone Line (1300 079 020) for those affected by Covid-19. The service is open to people of all ages and backgrounds, regardless of visa status. WWG also offers free mental health support for people on temporary visas. Referral forms and more information is available by contacting WWG on (07) 3333 2100.
- The [Immigrant Women's Support Service](#) is open to support people with experience of sexual assault and family violence. An emergency relief hotline (07) 3846 0316 operates on Tuesday and Thursdays from 9:00am – 12:00pm. General enquiries on (07) 3846 3490.
- [What if I don't have Medicare?](#) Most people who are ineligible for Medicare will have health or travel insurance. If you do not have adequate insurance and are ineligible for Medicare you will not be charged out of pocket expenses if you present to any Queensland Health facility for assessment and treatment in relation to COVID-19.
- 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. Information on referral pathways in Queensland are found [here](#).
- [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 \(eligible for Medicare\)](#)

- To support older people from culturally diverse backgrounds, the Australian Department of Health has funded the Multilingual Older Persons COVID-19 Support Line. The support line will run for six months from 10 February 2021 until 31 July 2021 will be offered in the following six languages – Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Greek, Italian & Vietnamese. For more information visit the [PICAC Alliance website](#).

Information for the LGBTQI+ community

- Information on health and counselling services, social groups, legal support, multicultural specific services, and other services can be found on this [national LGBTQI+ directory](#).
- The Queensland Rainbow Hub is a free space to support and empower international LGBTQI+ students and friends in Queensland: <https://www.facebook.com/QLDrainbowhub/>

Information for International Students in QLD

- The Queensland Government provides a range of support services and resources to international students, including a network of online and physical [Student Hubs](#) and the 24/7 hotline – 1800 778 839. If you are experiencing hardship as a result of COVID-19, you are encouraged to book an appointment through the online Queensland Student Hub via the website: [Student Support | Qld Student Hub](#). If your education or training provider is not on this list, please check with your provider's student support team directly.
- **University of Queensland** has frequent COVID-19 updates on its website, including [student specific information](#). [Financial hardship](#) information is also available.
- **Griffith University** is providing interest free [student loans and other financial support](#) to help with the cost of education and living expenses. [Eligible students can apply for a loan](#) of up to \$1,000 to be repaid within six months for international students. Other information, including the [return to campus plan](#) is available on the website.
- **James Cook University** has established a food pantry in Cairns and Townsville to help students with necessities, and has other [student support options](#).
- **University of Southern Queensland** has no current financial assistance. For a list of supports available, visit the [USQ website](#).
- **Southern Cross University** website provides [general COVID-19 information](#) and advice for students. If you need to contact the University because your situation is affected by the COVID-19 outbreak please use this dedicated email: SCUAssist@scu.edu.au.

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 Information 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.
- The Refugee and Immigration Legal Services (RAILS) have produced a [fact sheet](#) for people on SHEVs and TPVs addressing special benefits, superannuation, and other information.
- [Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program](#). The program is a limited term grant by the State Government supporting the needs of people seeking asylum. The project delivers financial and material aid, and case management. 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](#): The SRSS program supports people who are waiting for a 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 Queensland, SRSS is delivered by: [Multicultural Australia](#) – Ph: 3337 5400
 - [ACCESS Community Services](#) – Ph: 3412 8222
- [Humanitarian Settlement Program](#): 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 SHEV (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](#).