

KEY SOCIAL SERVICES RELATED TO COVID-19: AMENDMENTS & ELIGIBILITY RELATED TO MIGRANTS WITH TEMPORARY VISAS

Disclaimer: The table below outlines Coronavirus supplements announced and amendments to conditions for select payments, as well as temporary visa holders' eligibility (or lack thereof). It represents an overview based on publically available information accessed via the [Services Australia](#), [Department of Social Services](#) [Department of Home Affairs](#) and [Department of Treasury](#) websites. This is a general guidance document only and should not be considered a definitive, in-depth assessment. Eligibility may change and the ultimate determination of eligibility lies with the appropriate authorities.

Support Type	Key Details	Temporary Visa Holder (In)Eligibility	More Info & COVID Updates
<p>CORONAVIRUS SUPPLEMENT for Centrelink Payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JobSeeker Payment - Youth Allowance Jobseeker - Youth Allowance for Students and Apprentices - Austudy for Students and Apprentices - ABSTUDY for students getting Living Allowance - Farm Household Allowance 	<p>Coronavirus supplement is an additional \$550 per fortnight</p> <p>Those who are an existing or new recipient of any of the listed payments will receive the supplement automatically.</p> <p>The Coronavirus Supplement and expanded access for payments will commence from 27 April 2020.</p>	<p>Eligible:</p> <p>The following temporary visa holders <i>may be eligible</i> for the Coronavirus Supplement via Jobseeker Payment, Youth Allowance, Austudy, Parenting Allowance & Special Benefit, if they meet the additional criteria for the specific category of payment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protected Special Category Visa (SCV) (i.e. NZ citizens on subclass 444 arriving prior to 26 Feb 2001) - <u>Non-protected SCV holders</u> (i.e. NZ citizens arriving after 26 Feb 2001) eligible if they have lived in Australia without a break for at least 10 years. <u>Non-protected SCV holders may only get the JobSeeker Payment for one single period of up to 6 months.</u> - Temporary Protection Visa holders may be eligible for Special Benefit - Safe Haven Enterprise Visa holders may be eligible for Special Benefit (with conditions in terms of how many months they can access Centrelink payments and remain on SHEV pathway) - Subject to passing of legislation: Skilled Work Regional Provisional visa (subclass 491) / Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Provisional visa (subclass 494) <p>Not normally eligible due to not meeting Australian residence rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most Bridging Visa -Visitor / Tourist Visa -Student Visa -Working Holiday Maker Visa -Pacific and Seasonal Workers -Temporary graduate Visa -Temporary Resident (Skilled Employment) <p>* Services Australia (Centrelink) website notes the following may be exempt from being an Australian resident, for limited payments and concessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - subclass 060 - Bridging visa F - subclass 070 - Bridging (Removal Pending) - subclass 785 - Temporary Protection - subclass 786 - Temporary (Humanitarian Concern) - subclass 785-Temporary Protection - subclass 449 - Humanitarian Stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visa Holder Updates on Home Affairs website • Coronavirus Updates on Services Australia website • Update 04.04.20 - NZ on 444 visas and who arrived before 26 February 2001 will have access to welfare payments and the JobKeeper payment. 444 visa holders who arrived after 2001 have access to the JobKeeper payment. Those who have lived in Australia for 10 years or more have access to JobSeeker payments for six months. • Newly Arrived Residents Waiting Period & Seasonal Work Preclusion Periods waived for these payments as of 25 March 2020 • Partner income test for JobSeeker payment has been raised to almost 80K • Expanded Jobseeker and Youth Allowance Jobseeker criteria applies to sole traders, self-employed, casual workers, contract workers who meet the income tests as a result COVID-19 • Mutual obligations requirements suspended for JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment until 27 April 2020. • Asset testing waived for 6 months from 25 March 2020, except for Farm

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parenting Allowance - Special Benefit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - subclass 790 - Safe Haven Enterprise 	Household Allowance and Special Benefit.
<p>Coronavirus Economic Support & Crisis Payments</p>	<p>1st \$750 Economic Support Payment</p> <p>One-off Crisis Payment</p> <p>2nd \$750 Economic Support Payment</p>	<p>Same potential eligibility (or Lack thereof) for Temporary Visa Holders as Above based on Services Australia information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st Economic Support Payment issued if person is getting an eligible payment on any day from 12 March to 13 April 2020. - Crisis Payment ((one week of base income support rate) available if in severe financial hardship and either: need to self-isolate or are caring for someone self-isolating. - 2nd Available from 13 July 2020 getting an eligible payment or have an eligible concession card on 10 July 2020. You will not receive if you are getting the Coronavirus supplement 	<p>More financial support for people affected by Coronavirus</p>
<p>JobKeeper Payment</p>	<p>The JobKeeper Subsidy is a payment of \$1500 per employee to eligible businesses and non-profit organisations.</p>	<p>Eligible employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holder of a permanent visa • Protected Special Category Visa Holder (i.e. NZ citizens on 444 visa who arrived prior to 26 February 2001 • Non-Protected SCV holders (NZ citizens on 444 visa who arrived after 26 February 2001) <p>Ineligible Employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All other temporary visa holders at this time 	<p>JobKeeper Payment Factsheet</p> <p>Update 04.04.20 - NZ on 444 visas and who arrived before 26 February 2001 will have access to welfare payments and the JobKeeper payment. 444 visa holders who arrived after 2001 have access to the JobKeeper payment. Those who have lived in Australia for 10 years or more have access to JobSeeker payments for six months</p> <p>Note: People will not receive money until first week of May (back paid to 20 Mar), meaning many may have no access to income for the next month</p>
<p>Medicare</p>	<p>What's Covered by Medicare</p> <p>Medicare Eligibility and Enrollment Process</p>	<p>Eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NZ citizens (SCV holders – protected and non-protected) - A temporary resident with a visa covered by a Ministerial Order: Fulbright scholars / Witness Protection (Trafficking) Temporary visa (subclass 787)/ De facto partners of Australian citizens or permanent residents /Support for Victims of People Trafficking Program / Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786) / 	<p>Residents of some countries may qualify for access to Medicare via Reciprocal Health Care Agreements (RHCA). (Belgium, Finland, Italy, Malta or the Maltese Islands, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Ireland, Slovenia,</p>

		<p>Contributory Parent visas (subclasses 173, 143, 884, 864) /Temporary Protection visa (subclass 785) /Removal Pending Bridging visa (subclass 070) /Illegal maritime arrivals holding a Bridging E (Class WE) visa / Illegal maritime arrivals holding a Humanitarian Stay visa (subclass 449) /Secondary Movement Offshore Entry visa XB (subclass 447) /Safe Haven Enterprise visa (subclass 790 / Skilled Work Regional Provisional visa (subclass 491) / Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Provisional visa (subclass 494)</p> <p>Not Eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students, Working Holiday Maker, Visitors / Tourists, Pacific and seasonal workers / Temporary Graduate - Bridging Visa holders (with the exception of BVE), unless their initial substantive visa upon arrival in Australia had Medicare entitlements, which is unlikely 	<p>Sweden, United Kingdom) Country specific information.</p> <p>No substantive changes to Medicare eligibility have been announced as a result of COVID-19</p>
<p>Temporary Early Release of Superannuation</p>	<p>From 25 March 2020, changes will allow employees to submit two applications for up to \$10,000 each from their Superannuation fund (1/FY)</p>	<p>Eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian citizens and permanent residents as well as NZ citizens with Australian held super can access 10,000/FY for this year and next <p>Eligible temporary residents are able to apply to access up to \$10,000 of their super until 30 June 2020. To apply for early release as a temporary resident, you must satisfy one or more of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You hold a student visa that you have held for 12 months or more and you are unable to meet immediate living expenses. • You are a temporary skilled work visa holder, your working hours have reduced to zero and you remain engaged with your employer. • You are a temporary resident visa holder (excluding student or skilled worker visas) and you cannot meet immediate living expenses. 	<p>More information here.</p>

STATE AND TERRITORY FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR TEMPORARY VISA HOLDERS, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

<p>VIC</p>	<p>International Student Emergency Relief Fund</p> <p>The VIC Government is providing Emergency Support For Victoria’s International Students by establishing a \$45 million <i>International Student Emergency Relief Fund</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The fund</i> will provide one-off payments of up to \$1100 to students in need while expanding emergency provisions for those experiencing exceptional circumstances. • Up to 40,000 international students enrolled at Victorian universities, TAFEs, private vocational education and training providers and English language colleges who have lost wages and work due to the coronavirus pandemic could benefit from the relief payment. • The payments will require co-contributions from university hardship funds, build on existing Victorian Government support provided to international students through the Study Melbourne Student Centre such as free legal aid and mental health services <p>More information: Visit the specific Study Melbourne homepage here.</p>
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	<p><u>Coronavirus (COVID-19) rent relief grant</u></p> <p>The VIC Government has established a \$80 million rental assistance fund to provide rent relief payments of up to \$2000 to Victorians experiencing rental hardship due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. There are no citizenship or permanent residency requirements for applicants. Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grant will assist renters in Victoria experiencing financial hardship due to coronavirus (COVID-19), who have, or will shortly have, a bond registered with the Victorian Residential Tenancies Bond Authority. • Need to have registered revised rental agreement with Consumer Affairs Victoria or gone through mediation, have less than \$5,000 in savings and still be paying at least 30 per cent of your income in rent. Your household income must be less than \$1,903 per week. <p>More information: If you have lodged your new rental agreement with Consumer Affairs Victoria, you can apply for a Rent Relief Grant online.</p>
<p>ACT</p>	<p><u>Temporary visa holders and international students Support Package</u></p> <p>Temporary visa holders and international students affected by COVID-19 who are ineligible for Commonwealth assistance programs, are able to access support through a \$450,000 ACT Government support package.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the new funding package, the RASH Coordination Committee – made up of groups working with asylum seekers including Companion House – will receive \$140,000 to provide urgent support to asylum seekers living in Canberra. • The Australian Red Cross will also see an extension to their existing emergency support program, receiving \$160,000 to assist other temporary visa holders including people on temporary work visas and safe haven enterprise visas. • The Red Cross will also work with tertiary institutions to provide \$150,000 in ACT Government support to international students who have been impacted by COVID-19 and fallen onto financial hardship. <p>More information: People seeking asylum can contact Companion House on 02 6251 4550 or via email : info@companionhouse.org.au Temporary visa holders and international students can contact 02 6234 7695 or via email: hspcanberra@redcross.org.au.</p>
<p>NT</p>	<p><u>International Students and Visa Holders Emergency Relief</u></p> <p>The Northern Territory Government has established the Worker and Wellbeing Fund Worker for people who have lost their jobs because of coronavirus (COVID-19) are not already receiving financial and/or wellbeing support, including Centrelink benefits. It includes support for International students and temporary visa holders. Red Cross have partnered with Melaleuca Refugee Centre to provide emergency relief for international students and visa holders and Territorians who have lost their job or their income has been reduced because of coronavirus (COVID-19) and are not eligible for other supports including Centrelink.</p> <p>More information: Please contact Red Cross on +61 403 987 018 to access emergency relief and support</p>
<p>QLD</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>More Information: Visit the Online Student Hub or contact 1 800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839)</p>

SA	<p><u>International Student Support Package</u></p> <p>The SA government will provide further funding, on top of the funds made available by the University of Adelaide, Flinders University and the University of South Australia. Each university will distribute funds to international students both currently enrolled or studying in a pathway course, and suffering hardship. The International Student Support Package will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10 million fund for university students significantly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions at the University of Adelaide, Flinders University and University of South Australia to distribute to their pathway and international students. • A \$500 emergency cash grant to other international students significantly impacted by the restrictions, currently enrolled in a course, living in South Australia and who meet the criteria. • And a one-off \$200 assistance payment per student living with South Australian families provided to homestay families. <p>More information: Visit www.studyadelaide.com or to register your details please click here.</p>
TAS	<p><u>Temporary Visa holders support – Pandemic Isolation Assistance Grants</u></p> <p>The Tasmanian government announced up to \$3million to assist temporary visa holders affected by COVID-19, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediate extension of eligibility for Pandemic Isolation Assistance Grants, if they can demonstrate genuine financial hardship as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. This will provide an immediate payment of \$250 per individual or up to \$1000 per family • for those whose country is safe to return to, assist with travel advice, and if necessary due to genuine financial hardship we will on a case by case basis assist with financial support to do so. <p>More information: To register your interest in support to return to your country of origin, call the public health hotline on 1800 671 738 by 23 May 2020</p>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR TEMPORARY MIGRANTS IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

- [Covid-19 Staying in Australia – Home Affairs information for Visa Holders \(by Visa Type\)](#)
- [Acting Immigration Minister Press Release Coronavirus and Temporary Visa Holders](#) (4 April 2020)
- [Home Affairs COVID Update Page for All Visa Holders](#)

STATE AND TERRITORY ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FOR TEMPORARY VISA HOLDERS

VIC	<p>COVID-19 WAIVER OF FEES – <u>What if I am from overseas and not eligible for Medicare?</u></p> <p>Overseas travellers who fall ill in Australia (and are not eligible for Medicare) often have health or travel insurance. For those who do not have adequate insurance coverage, Victorian hospitals will waive the costs of treatment. This includes waiving payment and debt recovery procedures for ambulance transfers of people suspected to have coronavirus (COVID-19), who are taken to Victorian hospitals for assessment. These arrangements have been put in place to ensure payment issues are not a barrier for people from overseas with symptoms seeking early medical advice</p> <p>All people seeking asylum are entitled to free medical care in Victorian hospitals. For more information: https://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/clinical/Asylum_seekers & https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/dental-services https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/ambulance-and-nept/ambulance-payment/payment-responsibilities</p>
NSW	<p>COVID-19 WAVIER OF FEES -<u>What if I don't have Medicare?</u></p>

	<p>Most people that are not eligible for Medicare will have health or travel insurance. For those that do not have adequate insurance coverage, NSW Health will waive these costs. This includes the waiving of payment and debt recovery procedures for ambulance transfers of people suspected to have COVID-19 infection, who are taken to NSW Health facilities for assessment.</p> <p>As of October 2009, asylum-seekers that are not Medicare-eligible can have their fees waived for some public health services in NSW. These services are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency care for acute medical and surgical conditions, including admission • some elective surgery (for conditions listed as Clinical Priority Categories 1 & 2) • ambulatory and outpatient care required to maintain health status of asylum seekers with acute and chronic health conditions (eg diabetes) • maternity services, including pregnancy care, delivery, and post-natal care mental health services (inpatient and community based). (See NSW Health)
<p>ACT</p>	<p>COVID-19 – access to medical care</p> <p>The Act Government has announced that during the COVID-19 pandemic, Medicare ineligible people requiring testing, treatment or other public health supports related to COVID-19 will have free access to medical care. This includes pathology, diagnostic, pharmaceutical and outpatient care in the ACT public health system.</p> <p>People seeking asylum are entitled to full medical care including pathology, diagnostic, pharmaceutical, and outpatient services in the ACT's public hospitals without being billed. https://www.health.act.gov.au/search?search=asylum%20seeker</p>
<p>WA</p>	<p>COVID-19 WAVIER OF FEES What if I don't have Medicare?</p> <p>Most travellers to WA will have travel insurance. To support the WA Health response to COVID- 19, the Minister for Health has confirmed that those people who are not eligible for Medicare AND who present to WA Health facilities for assessment in relation to COVID-19 infection, will not be charged out of pocket expenses.</p>
<p>SA</p>	<p>COVID-19 WAIVER OF FEES -What if I'm not eligible for Medicare?</p> <p>Overseas travellers who fall ill in Australia (and are not eligible for Medicare) often have health or travel insurance. For those who do not have adequate insurance coverage, South Australian hospitals will waive the costs of diagnosis and treatment of coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes waiving payment and debt recovery procedures for ambulance transfers of people suspected to have COVID-19, who are taken to South Australian hospitals for assessment. These arrangements have been put in place to ensure payment issues are not a barrier for people from overseas with symptoms seeking early medical advice.</p> <p>Asylum-seekers can access limited medical care through the SA Refugee Health Service https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Public+Content/SA+Health+Internet/Health+services/Refugee+Health+Service/</p>
<p>QLD</p>	<p>COVID-19 WAIVER OF FEES-What if I don't have Medicare cover?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Queensland Government provides Medicare ineligible asylum seekers with access to public health services at no charge. https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/groups/multicultural/refugee-services and http://www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/asylum-seekers/</p>

NT	COVID-19 WAIVER OF FEES Testing and treatment for coronavirus (COVID-19) is free for everyone including those who are ineligible for Medicare. See here for more information.
TAS	COVID-19 WAIVER OF FEES -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. These arrangements have been put in place to ensure payment issues are not a barrier for people from overseas with symptoms of COVID-19 seeking early medical advice.

Additional Resources

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](#):

- Belgium
- Finland
- Italy
- Malta or the Maltese Islands
- the Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Republic of Ireland
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

Temporary Visa Categories Covered by Ministerial Orders (eligible for Medicare):

You can enrol in Medicare if you have a valid temporary visa covered by 1 of these Ministerial Orders:

- Witness Protection (Trafficking) Temporary visa (subclass 787)
- De facto partners of Australian citizens or permanent residents
- Support for Victims of People Trafficking Program
- Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)
- Contributory Parent visas (subclasses 173, 143, 884, 864)
- Temporary Protection visa (subclass 785)
- Removal Pending Bridging visa (subclass 070)
- Illegal maritime arrivals holding a Bridging E (Class WE) visa
- Illegal maritime arrivals holding a Humanitarian Stay visa (subclass 449)
- Secondary Movement Offshore Entry visa XB (subclass 447)
- Safe Haven Enterprise visa (subclass 790)

- Skilled Work Regional Provisional visa (subclass 491)
- Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Provisional visa (subclass 494)