

COVID19 Information Sheet - New South Wales (NSW)

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.

NSW Government Updates

- [NSW Government Coronavirus Homepage](#)
- The NSW Government is providing a \$20 million package for **international students** who are stranded in Australia due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The package includes accommodation support, legal support, and a 24/7 hotline - 13 77 88. More information is available on the [NSW government website](#).
- The NSW government has teamed up with both Foodbank and the Rapid Relief Team to deliver [emergency relief packages](#) and food boxes to people in need as follows:
 - **Foodbank Emergency Relief packages** are available for people who have been directed by NSW Health to self-isolate, and who:
 - can't or are genuinely struggling to afford food and groceries
 - have no family or friends able to help them with shopping
 - have no access to delivery services.
 - The packages contain 2 weeks of food and personal care items.
 - **Rapid Relief Team (RRT) Food Box** are available for people who are in self-quarantine due to their vulnerability and who:
 - have lost income or their job, or are on a low income such as a pensioner
 - have little or no support from friends or relatives
 - are struggling with meeting their cost of living bills
 - are unable to access delivery services.
 - If you, or someone you know is in need, please call Services NSW on [13 77 88](#).
- [NSW Government supporting international students through COVID-19](#): The NSW Government announced on 15 May that it will fund temporary crisis accommodation for stranded international students as part of a \$20 million package.
- An additional [funding package of \\$6 million](#) was announced on 3 June, to fund specialist migrant and settlement NGOs, and multicultural community organisations to provide basic support to vulnerable people including those at risk of or experiencing domestic violence.

Food Support and/or Emergency Relief

OzHarvest Hamper Hub

- OzHarvest Hamper Hubs will provide a new emergency food relief service for vulnerable members of the community, especially International Students.
- Each week, beginning 11th June, OzHarvest will provide a limited number of Food Relief Hampers and frozen ready-to-eat meals available at a 'pop up' locations in Sydney.
- For more information and to register visit <https://events.ozharvest.org/hamper>

Auburn Diversity Services

108 Silverwater Road, Auburn

Phone: 02 8737 5500 / Email: info@adsi.org.au
ER referral form on website: www.adsi.org.au/services/emergency-relief
Must reside in Auburn, Lidcombe, Berilla and Regions Park

Christian Community Aid Service

Phone: 02 9858 3222
12 Lakeside Road Eastwood NSW 2122
Email: administration@ccas.org.au
Must phone for an assessment.

Parramatta Community Food Care

18 Barney Street, North Parramatta, NSW. Ph: 9630 3892
Service provides discounted food.
Centrelink card and ID proof.
Service is open on Thursday - 6:00 pm- 8:00pm. And Friday 10:30 am- 1:00 pm.

[Turbans 4 Australia](#)

Food hampers and hot meals available in Liverpool & Parramatta, visit the website for more information and opening times.

[Muslim Women Australia](#)

In partnership with Penny Appeal, Human Appeal, and other charity organisations, MWA are providing food packages and cooked food for iftar for individuals and families. MWA are also providing winter essential packs to those in need. The winter packages include blankets, a heater, a beanie, gloves and a kettle. Call MWA on 02 9750 6916 to arrange for an appointment.

[Islamic Women's Welfare Association](#)

Emergency Food Relief each Monday and Thursday at 1:00pm, 181 Haldon St, Lakemba.

[Golden Manna](#)

Food hampers and hot meals available in Sadlier & Fairfield, visit the [Facebook page](#) or phone (02) 8103 3074 for more information and opening times.

[Parramatta Mission Meals Plus Partnership](#)

Phone: (02) 9891 2277
Address: 119 Macquarie St,
Parramatta, NSW, 2150
Meals Plus is open for breakfast and lunch M-F.
Breakfast: 8.00am-9.00am
Lunch: 11.30am-1.00pm

[St Vincent De Paul](#)

72 Harris Street Harris Park NSW
Ph: 1800 606 724.
Need to call on the number to make an appointment.
Western Sydney Community Centre
Hania, Tuesday/Thursday/Friday at 2:00 pm at
98 Auburn Road Auburn
Ph: 9649 2063

[The Parks Community Network Inc.](#)

The Parks Community Network Inc provides services for communities in South West Sydney, to assist and relieve poverty, distress, suffering, destitution, misfortune, loneliness, helplessness and personal need. Ph: 9609 7400 for information on food relief, NILS, and vouchers.

Salvation Army Auburn

166-170 South Parade Auburn. Ph: 9646 3767

Make appointment for food vouchers etc.

The Hills Community Aid and Information Service

Food vouchers / EAPA Vouchers

Please call and leave a message at (02) 9639 8620 or email enq@hca.org.au and a member of staff will be in contact.

[Salvation Army Emergency Relief](#)

1300 371 288

Phone for Assessment

St Vincent De Paul Bankstown

02 9796 1176

ER. Phone for Assessment

[Anglicare](#)

02 8774 7467 / 02 8624 8600

Food Pantry. Phone for Assessment

[ADRA](#)

9829 6701

Food Hampers. Phone to book.

[Nagle Centre Family Care & Support Service St Vincent de Paul Society - Campbelltown](#)

South West Multicultural & Community Centre – Minto

02 9603 2500

\$10/food hampers

[Karma Kitchen \(Hindu Council Benevolent Fund\)](#)

0411 548 411 or 0412 399 164

Emergency Care packs: Fresh food parcel for people impacted by COVID-19 - including international students, seniors and unemployed individuals

[Western Sydney MRC](#)

Support for individuals and families impacted by COVID-19

Food vouchers and brokerage services.

Please call us on 8778 1200 to make an appointment.

[Western Sydney Community Centre](#)

02 9649 2063

Fresh Food Pantry

[Mohboba's Promise \(Cumberland Area\)](#)

02 9887 1665

Food support for Afghan Women and Children
Phone for Assessment

Pathways Community (Cumberland area)

02 9636 7400

Foodbank Collection by Appointment Only.

Phone for Assessment

C3 Church Fairfield

0425 352 199 on Monday, 0413 420 085 on Tuesday to Thursday

Food Hampers

Call for Phone Assessment

Core Community Services Cabramatta

02 8707 0600

Food Vouchers

Phone Assessment required

Exodus Foundation

02 8717 1531

Hot/Frozen Take-away Meals

Food for Life, Salvation Army, Busby

0435 659 175

Heckenberg Community Connect

02 9607 0077

\$7.00 family meals that you cook yourself. Must RING BEFORE.

Islamic Women's Association

02 8764 6425

Phone for Assessment

St Vincent De Paul Society Care and Support Centre (Wagga Wagga)

207 Edward St, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

02 6921 2381

Housing Support / Homelessness

- **Housing support** for **international students**. The NSW Government is funding temporary crisis accommodation for vulnerable international students in NSW during the current COVID-19 pandemic. To be eligible you must:
 - Hold an international student visa
 - Have been evicted or be facing imminent eviction
 - Have been laid off from your employment
 - Have less than \$1,500 in savings
 - Have no other avenues of supportMore information is available on the [NSW government website](#).

St Vincent de Paul NSW - Assistance Line for Accommodation: 13 18 12

Linked 2 Home 1800 152 152

Homeless or at risk of homeless. Many refuges are closed. However, temporary accommodation may be available for those who are high risk. Referral made over the phone.

[Barnardos](#)

Transitional accommodation for families with children and young pregnant women - 16 to 24 years
Phone: 02 8752 0300

[Elsie Women's Refuge](#) (Wagga Wagga)**[Micah House](#)** (Wagga Wagga)

53 Gurwood Street
Ph (02) 6921 7337
Fax (02) 6921 8143

Men2Home

Parramatta Mission, working in partnership with Mission Australia and St Vincent de Paul Society operate the Western Sydney Single Men's Homeless program.
Phone: 0419 696 673 or 02 8880 8234

[Mission Australia](#) Phone 1800 384 331

Western Sydney Homelessness Outreach Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Service (HOPARRS) supports people over the age of 21 years, and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

[Wesley Community Services](#)

Homelessness support for couples with children or singles with children who are Australian Citizens or permanent residents.

[Hunter Homeless Connect](#) has local services in Newcastle and supports available for different categories i.e. housing, food, NILS and other helpful resources.

Rent and Utilities

[Tenants Union NSW: Renting & Coronavirus: What you need to know](#)

- [Can my landlord evict me during this crisis?](#)
- [Can my landlord continue with inspections, including open homes?](#)
- [I have lost income, what can I do?](#)
- [I'm trying to negotiate a rent reduction. My landlord wants a lot of personal info?](#)
- [Even if the landlord agreed to reduce rent, I can't afford to continue renting this property. I would like to break my lease early and move out – can I do this?](#)
- [I'm having trouble with other household bills, what can I do?](#)
- [I am supposed to be at Tribunal, should I still go? What will happen to my case?](#)
- [I am an international student and affected by the travel ban. What can I do?](#)
- [I'm in public or community housing. Will my rent go up due to increasing social support payments?](#)
- [Does the COVID19 crisis change any of my rights or obligations?](#)
- [Can I move house during the current gathering/movement restrictions in NSW?](#)
- [Many people in our community are finding it hard to cope at this time. What else can we do?](#)
- [Rent Reduction Template Letter \(in English only\)](#)
- [NSW Eviction Moratorium – An Explainer](#)

[Western Sydney Tenants Union](#) – (02) 8833 0933.

[Eviction Moratorium](#)

- The NSW Government implemented the federally announced 6 month Evictions Moratorium in two steps: (1) an interim 60 day stop on all evictions for rental arrears where the renting household has been financially impacted by COVID-19. The stop commences 15 April and is in place for 60 days from then; and (2) after the 60 day stop, restrictions on evictions for rental arrears for COVID-19 impacted tenants will apply for 6 months. A landlord will only be able to apply for eviction for rental arrears if they can show they:
 - attempted to negotiate a rent reduction with the tenant in good faith
 - if informal negotiations failed, that the tenant and landlord have attempted mediated rent reduction negotiations through the Fair Trading dispute resolution process
 - and that the eviction is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of the specific case.

[Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW](#) has more information about customer assistance / hardship programs, and range of useful resources you may be eligible for if you are facing financial difficulties.

[Energy Accounts Payment Assistance \(EAPA\)](#)

- EAPA is a NSW Government Scheme designed to help people who are having trouble paying their home electricity and/or gas bill because of a crisis or emergency situation. The \$50 EAPA vouchers are distributed to electricity and gas customers by a range of community welfare organisations.
- Where to find EAPA: list of [NSW Government EAPA distributors](#)
- **Before you seek assistance**
 - If you are having trouble paying your bill, speak to your energy company first. If you are unable to make arrangements with your supplier, contact a local community agency that distributes EAPA vouchers to make an appointment.
 - If you can't get an appointment right away, let your supplier know you made an appointment for EAPA assessment. *Your supplier is not allowed to disconnect you if they know you have an appointment booked for an EAPA assessment.*
- **Who can get EAPA?**
 - If you are in financial hardship due to a crisis or emergency situation you can apply for EAPA voucher assistance.

[Water Payment Assistance Scheme \(PAS\) Credits](#)

PAS can help you if you are having difficulty paying your Hunter Water, Sydney Water or Shoalhaven Water bill. This scheme assists people experiencing financial hardship by providing credit to a water account.

- **Before you seek assistance**
 - If you are having trouble paying your bill you should speak to your water company first. Water suppliers may be able to suggest a payment scheme or arrangement to assist you manage your bills (see [customer assistance programs](#)).
- **Where can you get water credits?**

Many community welfare organisations offer PAS. These include:

 - St Vincent de Paul Society
 - The Salvation Army
 - Anglicare
 - The Smith Family
 - Some community or neighbourhood centres.

If you can't find a PAS agency in your area, [contact us](#) for help.
- **Who can get water credits?**

Anyone who is in financial hardship can apply for PAS assistance. The hardship may be caused by a range or combination of factors.
- **What about tenants?**

- Although the landlord is responsible for the water account, in many cases it is a condition of the lease for tenants to pay for the cost of water consumption. If you are responsible for this part of the water bill, you may be eligible for PAS.
- Access to PAS for tenants is limited to \$150 for water usage. As PAS cannot be used to put an account in credit, the landlord should not pay the entire bill in advance if you want to use PAS credit. As this is a private arrangement between you and your landlord or real estate agent, speak to them first if you are facing financial difficulty.

Holroyd Community Aid Incorporated

17A Miller street, Merrylands, NSW.

Ph: 9637 7391

Following an assessment, may be able to support partial coverage of gas/electricity bill.

Evidence of financial hardship is required.

Cumberland Multicultural Community Centre

8 Factory St Granville, NSW. Ph: 9637 7600

May be able to provide support with electricity bill.

Assessment required.

Health and Medical Care

- Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080 for general advice or if you have symptoms. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.
- COVID19 - [What if I don't have Medicare?](#)
 - 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.
- 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:
 - 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](#))
- 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 New South Wales 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 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](#).
- [Temporary Visa Categories Covered by Ministerial Orders \(eligible for Medicare\)](#)

Information for International Students

- Visit the [Study NSW International Student Welfare Services Hub](#) for the latest information about the support services that are available to international students.
- [NSW Government supporting international students through COVID-19](#): The NSW Government announced on 15 May that it will fund temporary crisis accommodation for stranded international students as part of a \$20 million package. The package includes a temporary housing scheme, targeted at students in need and delivered through approved student accommodation or homestay providers. It also provides increased support via the International Legal Service NSW, making available 50,000 free subscriptions to the multilingual My Legal Mate student app. A new 24/7 international student support service, through the NSW Government COVID-19 hotline (13 77 88), will offer free advice and information about other measures, including the moratorium on rental evictions and medical, mental health, legal and emergency support.
- [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](#).
 - Students will need to use [MyGov](#) for this process.
- **University of New South Wales** has announced various types of support to students, including emergency e-vouchers up to \$200 for urgent needs and emergency grant up to [\\$2,000](#) to students who are facing multiple issues associated with COVID-19.

- **Western Sydney University** is giving current international students (who are onshore in Australia) a 10 per cent fee reduction, as well as offering other support measures. The university offers a range of [financial assistance](#) to assist students with education-related costs and basic living expenses. This is in addition to the one-off grocery voucher and free nutritious meals available on a regular basis.
- **University of Wollongong** is offering a [living expense grant](#) up to \$1,500 and internet boost/software purchase loan. Students' applications will be assessed case by case basis.
- **University of Sydney** has [financial assistance for international students due to Covid-19 travel restrictions](#). The university website says financial assistance for international students is currently closed, but [general bursaries](#) are available. This can be used to cover essential living and study expenses.
- **The University of Newcastle** has announced a \$1 million worth [student hardship fund](#), to support students to pay for their meals, bills and accommodation.
- **Charles Sturt University** is offering a [COVID-19 Student Support Grant](#) of up to \$500 as a one-time payment to students who have been impacted due to COVID-19. Students in most need can get this amount. While full time students are eligible for \$500 support, those with less study load will get pro-rata amount. Charles Sturt has campuses in Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo, Albury-Wodonga, Wagga Wagga, Goulburn Port Macquarie and Canberra as well as Parramatta and Manly.
- **University of Technology Sydney** is providing accommodation and housing support for students. Students who need support can contact UTS Student Legal Service at studentlegalservice@uts.edu.au.
- **Macquarie University** is offering up to \$1000 loans to needy students, in addition to an existing loan and grant scheme offering up to \$2000. It includes e-vouchers up to \$250 to pay for urgent essentials, one-time grant of up to \$2,000 for assisting their study, and up to \$2,000 interest-free loans which can be used for moving house etc.
- **University of New England** has a [Student Emergency Assistance Fund – COVID 19](#). The University has campuses in Sydney, Tamworth, Taree, Coonabarabran, Gunnedah, Moree, Narrabri, Inverell, Tenterfield, Guyra. For an update on how campuses are operating, check the [COVID-19 Information](#) page.
- **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 have 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.
- [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 New South Wales, the SRSS Program is delivered by:
 - [Life Without Barriers](#) Ph 02 9508 4100 (Rockdale) / 02 8830 7601 or 02 8830 7602 (Parramatta) / info@lwb.org.au
 - [Settlement Services International](#). Contact information is [here](#).
- [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](#)