

COVID19 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](#)
 - [Government service closures](#) (info about TMAG and parks and reserves reopening)
 - [Commonwealth Emergency Relief Support](#) and other emergency relief support
 - Information for [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people](#)
- [Support for Temporary Visa Holders:](#)
 - The Tasmanian Government has announced support for temporary visa holders who are experiencing difficulties.
 - There are three types of assistance that will be made available to temporary visa holders:
 - [Pandemic Isolation Assistance Grants](#) will be made available for those who can demonstrate genuine financial hardship as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The grant amount depends on the size of your household: (\$250 per adult / \$125 per child -Maximum capped at \$1000 per household). To access the Pandemic Isolation Assistance Grant or to register your interest in support to return to your country of origin, call the Public Health Hotline on [1800 671 738](tel:1800671738).
 - Emergency relief and assistance will be provided through partnered non-government organisations where required. Details of this support and how to access it will be provided on the Government website when available.
 - Rapid Response Skills Initiative: Migrants nominated under the Skilled Migration Program are also eligible for the [Rapid Response Skills Initiative](#). This provides funding of up to \$3,000 to assist 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 Department of Education recognises the financial hardship being faced by temporary residents as valued members of our community. In response, all Temporary Residents with children studying in Tasmanian Government Schools will be offered a [25 per cent discount on tuition fees](#) in Term 2 and Term 3.
 - Support to return to their country of origin. The nature of support will be determined once we have a clear picture of who needs help and where they are going. Anyone wanting assistance to return to their country of origin was required to register their interest by 5.00pm, 23 May 2020. Applications are currently being considered and individual applicants will be contacted as these are assessed.
 - The Temporary Visa Holder Skilled Employee Assistance Program is designed to assist skilled temporary visa holders to maintain a connection with their employers during COVID-19. [Applications are open](#) on the government website, and further information is available by phoning [1800 440 026](tel:1800440026) or email ask@business.tas.gov.au.
- [Establishment of COVID-19 Rental Relief Fund](#) (see more information below under Rent/Utilities section).

Applications are open to those who meet the following criteria:

- Experiencing coronavirus-specific hardship
- Paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent
- Have less than \$5000 in savings
- People who aren't eligible for JobKeeper or JobSeeker

The Government has also put a halt on rental evictions, restrictions on inspections to support social distancing and a ban on rental increases during the emergency period.

Food and/or Emergency Relief

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** in partnership with **Migrant Resource Centre** are providing food relief in Hobart and surrounding areas. Contact Red Cross on 0408 727 649 for more information.
- **Catholic Care** - Phone 6278 1660 / 1800 819 447 (SRSS service provider. Please see more information below in the section on 'Additional services for people seeking asylum')
- **St Vincent de Paul** Phone 6234 4244. Telephone Assessment. Face-to-Face assessment by appointment only.
- [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](#) Phone: 6251 4200 (Glenorchy) /6215 4251 (Hobart). Appointments must be made by phone.
- [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

- **Neighborhood 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 Emergency Relief](#) Phone 6228 8400 (Hobart) Ph: 6244 4615 (Howrah), Ph: 6261 5996 (New Norfolk) Telephone assessment required

Deloraine

- **Neighborhood 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

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

Main office address: N/A as FV service

Phone: (03) 6228 1099

Opening hours: 24/7 & On call

Services provided: Emergency Accommodation

Eligibility criteria: Women & Children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness or escaping DV; Hobart Tasmania.

Oakleigh Accommodation Services

Phone: (03) 6430 4100

Opening hours: 24/7 & On call

Services provided: Emergency and Transitional Accommodation for Men; Women and children experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Eligibility criteria: Women & Children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness or escaping DV; Burnie, Tasmania.

Housing Connect SASH

Phone: (03) 6278 2817

Opening hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm & On call

Services provided: Crisis and Transitional Support

Eligibility criteria: Men, Women & Children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness; Hobart Tasmania.

Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) South & North

Phone: (03) 6270 03 or (03) 6323 7500

Opening hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm

Services provided: Support for older people who are at risk of homelessness

Eligibility criteria: Men, Women over 50 years who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness; Hobart & Launceston Tasmania.

Tas. Street to Home

Main office address: 117 Main Road New Town Tasmania

Phone: (03) 6278 2817

Opening hours: 8.30pm - 4.30pm & On call

Services provided: Crisis Support to Rough Sleepers

Eligibility criteria: Men, Women & Children who are experiencing primary homelessness; Hobart Tasmania.

Rent and Utilities Support

- [COVID19 Rental Relief Fund](#)

- Up to \$2000 or four weeks rent for tenants suffering from extreme hardship.
 - Assistance to tenants paying more than 30% of their income in rent and with less than \$5000 in savings.
 - **Eligible:** Tenants covered by the Residential Tenancy Act 1997, tenants who rent rooms, are part of a share-house or are sub-tenants, migrants and temporary visa holders subject to them meeting all other eligibility criteria.
 - Payments will be made to landlords and it will be a requirement they pass on this level of assistance to their tenant via rent reductions.
 - Administered by Communities Tasmania through Housing Connect.
 - Applications will open next week
- **[Tenants Union of Tasmania](#)**
 - [FAQ COVID-19 Emergency Bill](#)
 - **[Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania](#)**
 - [Renting during COVID19 Fact Sheet](#)
 - **Eviction Moratorium:** The Tasmanian Government's [Consumer, Building and Occupational Service Department](#) has key information about changes to rental and tenancy legislation as a result of COVID-19:
 - [Residential tenancy changes](#)
 - [Travel bans - rental bonds and leases](#)
 - [Property managers - overseas students - COVID-19 travel bans - rental bonds and leases](#)
 - **[Support for Households](#)**
 - The Tasmanian Government has announced it will: cap electricity prices and freeze water bills for next financial year, at an estimated combined cost of \$20 million. This is in addition to hardship funds and arrangements currently in place.
 - The Government welcomes news that:
 - Aurora Energy has established a \$5 million fund to assist customers with bill relief, waiving fees or charges, freezing debt, payment plans, in addition to a range of other support measures
 - Aurora Energy has also advised it will not be disconnecting any residential or small business customers, without their agreement during this crisis.
 - **[Energy Ombudsman Tasmania](#)**
 - If you are experiencing some difficulties with the payment of an account it is important that you contact your retailer at the earliest opportunity.
 - Your retailer will have a range of payment options such as a payment extension or a payment plan through direct debits or periodical payments.
 - [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)
 - Tasmanian Concession Card (issued by Department of Premier and Cabinet).
- [Anglicare can provide free financial advice.](#)

Health and Medical Care

- Tasmania Public Health Hotline: 1 800 671 738
- [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. 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.
- 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 Tasmania 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 in Tasmania

- [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 (from 1 May 2020, this changes and students will only be able to work 40 hours per fortnight)
 - 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 Tasmania** is offering a [Fast Track Safety Net Grant](#) of up to \$350 for support with living costs and study resources and [Safety Net Grant Scheme](#) which offers discretionary grants of up to \$2,000.

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 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 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 mssp.info@aohtas.org.au for more information and to see if you are eligible.
- [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](#)