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Information for Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients in response to COVID-19

This document has been developed to answer any questions that Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients may have around the COVID-19 pandemic.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will my Disability Support Pension (DSP) be impacted if I receive the JobKeeper payment?

Yes. The amount of DSP you are paid depends on how much income you earn. If you are receiving more money through the fortnightly \$1,500 JobKeeper payment, than you were before, you may get less money through your DSP. However, it is likely that you will be receiving more money overall.

Most single people on the youth rate of DSP will have their DSP payment suspended for the period that they are receiving the JobKeeper Payment.

When the JobKeeper payment stops on 27 September 2020 and if your income goes back to what it was before receiving the payment, then the amount you receive on DSP will also go back to what it was before.

Any DSP recipient that loses their DSP as a result of the JobKeeper payment will have their DSP suspended for the period they receive the JobKeeper payment, however will retain their Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) and associated benefits for the entire period. Any concessions they currently receive through their PCC should be retained (however many of these are provided by States and Territories and eligibility for those is a matter for the States and Territories).

DSP recipients whose DSP payment is reduced to nil due to increased employment income will continue to have access to Commonwealth concessions on medical benefits and pharmaceutical concessions provided by the PCC for 52 weeks.

Recipients of DSP whose partner's income brings them over the income limit for the payment are entitled to keep their PCC for a period of 12 weeks after their DSP payment ceases to be payable.

When the JobKeeper Payments cease, the recipient will need to advise Services Australia of the change in their circumstances, and assuming no other changes to circumstances have occurred, their DSP will re-commence. A DSP recipient that is working can suspend their entitlement for up to two years without needing to re-apply for DSP.

If you have questions about your DSP, please contact Services Australia on 132 717.

More information about the JobKeeper scheme, including information on eligible employers and employees can be found at <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/jobkeeper>.

Will my Carer Payment (CP) be impacted if I receive the JobKeeper payment?

Yes. The amount of CP you are paid depends on how much income you earn. If you are receiving more money through the fortnightly \$1,500 JobKeeper payment, than you were before, you may get less money through your CP. However, it is likely that you will be receiving more money overall.

When the JobKeeper payment stops in six months' time and your income goes back to what it was before receiving the payment, and assuming there are no other changes in circumstances, then the amount you receive on CP will also go back to what it was before.

Any carers that lose their CP will receive no CP for 12 weeks while receiving the JobKeeper Payment. They will retain the Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) for those 12 weeks. However, after 12 weeks, CP will be cancelled and the PCC will no longer be able to be used. When the JobKeeper Payment ceases, the recipient will need to re-apply for CP from the beginning of the process. A previous medical report may be able to be re-used, depending on how old the report is.

If you have questions about your CP, please contact Services Australia on 132 717.

More information about the JobKeeper scheme, including information on eligible employers and employees can be found at <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/jobkeeper>.

Will the Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA) be impacted if a DSP recipient has their DSP suspended?

Generally, when your Disability Support Payment (DSP) is reduced to nil due to employment income, this means your CRA has also been reduced to nil.

Where your DSP payment is suspended for up to 2 years, your CRA will also not be payable.

Once your DSP payment resumes, your CRA payments may also resume, provided you continue to meet the CRA requirements.

Special rules apply in some circumstances. Please contact Services Australia on 136 240 for detailed information about CRA eligibility and rates.

Am I eligible for the additional \$750 Economic Support Payment?

If you are currently receiving the Disability Support Pension (DSP), Age Pension or Carer Payment, you are eligible for the Economic Support Payment of \$750, which was paid to you between 31 March 2020 and 17 April 2020. You will receive a second payment of \$750 from 13 July 2020 if you continue to meet the eligibility requirements.

You do not need to apply for this payment, it will be automatically paid to you.

People receiving other government benefits may also be eligible for the \$750 Economic Support Payment, however, you will only get one payment, even if you get more than one qualifying payment or card.

More information about the Economic Support Payment, including a full list of eligible payments can be found at <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/news/750-one-economic-support-payment>.

Will I get the extra \$550 Coronavirus supplement?

If you are currently receiving one of the following Governments payments, you will receive the temporary Coronavirus Supplement of \$550 per fortnight on top of your current payments:

- JobSeeker Payment, Partner Allowance, Widow Allowance, Sickness Allowance and Wife Pension
- Youth Allowance for job seekers
- Youth Allowance for students and apprentices
- Austudy for students and apprentices
- ABSTUDY for students getting Living Allowance
- Parenting Payment partnered and single
- Farm Household Allowance
- Special Benefit

If you receive the Disability Support Pension, Age Pension or Carer Payment and **not** one of the above payments, you are not eligible for the Coronavirus supplement.

Will I have to pay tax if I get the JobKeeper Payment?

The JobKeeper payment is considered taxable income.

More information on tax thresholds and income tax can be found at

<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Lodging-your-tax-return/>.

If a supported employee would like to know more about taxable income, they should speak to their employer, family or carer or an Advocacy organisation for assistance.