



COVID-19 - Pandemic Leave and Payments

as at June 2021

Introduction

1. Recent COVID-19 outbreaks across Australia have again highlighted the inadequacy of the Morrison Government's responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and its continuing failure to look after Australian workers.
 2. This briefing note covers the limited support that is currently available for workers who are affected by recent COVID-19 outbreaks in their state or territory.
 3. The Commonwealth Government's JobKeeper program ended on 28 March 2021, removing a vital support for workers.
 4. A number of workers are entitled to unpaid pandemic leave through their relevant Modern Award.¹ In March of 2021, the paid pandemic leave provisions operating in a number of health care sector awards (including the *Aged Care Award 2010*) expired.
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1. See COVID-19 Award Flexibility Schedules [2021] FWCFB 1601

Payments Currently Available

5. Here's what is currently available for your members in each state and territory, including eligibility and how to apply:²

State	Payment	Eligibility	How to Apply
All States (Commonwealth Provided)	Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment. \$1,500 for each 14-day period of self-isolation, quarantine or care.	<p>For workers who:³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot earn income due to a requirement to self-isolate or quarantine because you have COVID-19 or have been a close contact of someone who does (having been directed by a health official) or are caring for a child who has COVID-19 or is a close contact of someone who does (note: in these circumstances a 14 day quarantine/self-isolation period would be required).⁴ Are aged above 17 years old; Live in a state or territory (NT currently not listed). Are Australian residents or hold an eligible working visa; Have no entitlement to relevant paid leave or have exhausted their entitlement. <p>Eligibility periods differ between states and territories (i.e. in Victoria, the period of quarantine must be <i>after</i> July 5 2020, in NSW after 17 September 2020).</p> <p>Workers cannot receive payment if, during the quarantine/self-isolation period, they have received any income, income support, or payments such as the: (no longer available) JobKeeper, the (no longer available) Victorian Coronavirus (COVID-19) Worker Support Payment or the Queensland Hardship Payment.</p>	<p>Via telephone (by calling 180 22 66). Or by completing a form (which is different in each state):⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victoria; NSW; Queensland; WA; SA; ACT; Tasmania

2. Note: Different arrangements and entitlements may apply at the workplace level, for instance where these have been won through collective bargaining. This does not cover what may or may not be available for self-employed persons, contractors etc.

3. Eligibility criteria for each state and territory are available here: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment>

4. Note: This payment covers quarantine arising from having COVID-19 or being a close contact of someone with COVID-19, but not, for instance, as a result of being tested. Quarantine arising from visiting a tier-1 exposure site in Victoria is covered, with quarantine arising from visiting a Commonwealth declared COVID-19 hotspot in Sydney to be covered from 1 July 2021.

5. For more information on how to claim, visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment>.

State	Payment	Eligibility	How to Apply
All States (Commonwealth Provided)	COVID-19 Disaster Payment \$325 if the worker loses less than 20 hours of work. \$500 if the worker loses 20 or more hours of work. This amount is taxable.	For workers who: ⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live or work in a Commonwealth declared COVID-19 hotspot.⁷ • Cannot attend work and lost income on or after day 8 of COVID-19 restrictions; • Have no entitlement to relevant paid leave or have exhausted their entitlement. • are an Australian resident or hold an eligible working visa; • are aged 17 years or older; and • have liquid assets of less than \$10,000 <p>Workers cannot receive payment if they are receiving any income support payment or the Pandemic Leave disaster Payment for the same period;</p>	Via a MyGov Account linked to Centrelink. Visa holders can claim by telephone. ⁸
Victoria	\$450 Coronavirus (COVID-19) test isolation payment	For workers who: ⁹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are aged above 17 years old; • have been, or are the carer or guardian of someone who has been, tested for COVID-19. • Were likely to work but not able to due to post-test self-isolation requirement; • Did not receive any income for the period. • Have no entitlement to relevant leave or have exhausted their entitlement. <p>Can be received <i>in addition</i> to \$1,500 Pandemic Leave Disaster payment (if eligible for both).</p>	Via Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions website.

6. For more information on eligibility, visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/covid-19-disaster-payment>

7. For a list of declared hotspots, visit <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/listing-areas-of-covid-19-local-transmission-as-hotspots>

8. For more information on how to claim, visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/covid-19-disaster-payment/how-claim>

9. For more information on eligibility, visit <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/450-coronavirus-covid-19-test-isolation-payment>

State	Payment	Eligibility	How to Apply
South Australia	SA COVID-19 Cluster Isolation Payment. \$300	For workers who: ¹⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are required to self-isolate due to public health directions from SA Health and mandatory COVID-19 testing. Do not have access to paid leave or other income support. 	Via online application form. ¹¹
Australian Capital Territory	COVID-19 Test Hardship Isolation Payment \$270 for the first 3 days' isolation and \$90/day thereafter (if test result delayed).	For workers who: ¹² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reside, or work at least 80% of the time, in ACT; are unable to work, and not receiving income as result of post-test self-isolation requirement. have no entitlement to relevant leave or have exhausted their entitlement. have less than \$5,000 and are not receiving commonwealth income support. <p>Not available to most Commonwealth and territory Government employees.</p>	Via online application form. ¹³ May be claimed once per 30 day period.
New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Northern Territory ¹⁴	No specific state-based payments. Workers may be eligible for the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment or the COVID-19 Disaster payment.		

10. For more information on eligibility, visit <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/school-and-community/financial-support-for-individuals>.

11. <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/school-and-community/financial-support-for-individuals>.

12. For more information on eligibility, visit https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1621627/CV_Hardship-Isolation-Payment-Guidelines.pdf.

13. For more information on claiming, visit <https://form.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1563>.

14. Other non-industrial forms of assistance may apply, for example in WA a \$600 electricity credit was applied to residential accounts.

For further information please call the Support Centre on:

1300 486 466