

Lockdown Support

COVID-19 Disaster Payments

If you can't work because you or someone in your household is impacted by COVID-19, there is support available, but it comes with fairly strict eligibility criteria.

There are two payments accessible to individuals: The COVID -19 Disaster Payment; and the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment. Both payments are accessible through [Services Australia](#) and applications can be made through your [MyGov](#) account if you have created and linked a Centrelink account.

COVID-19 Disaster payments

Contrary to news reports, the COVID-19 disaster payment is not accessible to “everyone” in lockdown – strict eligibility rules apply.

The COVID-19 disaster payment is available to eligible workers who can't attend work or who have lost income because of a lockdown and don't have access to paid leave entitlements. And, it only applies from the eighth day of lockdown. That is, there is nothing you can claim for the first week of a lockdown.

What's a hotspot?

The disaster payment is only accessible if the hotspot triggering the lockdown lasts more than 7 days as declared by the Chief Medical Officer (you can find the [listing here](#)). In Sydney's case, the City of Sydney, Waverley, Woollahra, Bayside, Canada Bay, Inner West and Randwick were Commonwealth declared hotspots from 23 June 2021 with the hotspot extended until 2 July 2021 - meaning that the COVID-19 disaster payment is available to eligible workers in those areas from 1 July 2021. Greater Sydney was declared a hotspot from 26 June 2021.

Hotspot declaration	Date of declaration	Disaster payment accessible from
City of Sydney, Waverley, Woollahra, Bayside, Canada Bay, Inner West and Randwick	23 June 2021	1 July 2021
Greater Sydney including the Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong	26 June 2021	4 July 2021
Greater Melbourne	27 May 2021	4 June 2021

You need to be living or working in a hotspot for it to apply to you.

Claim periods apply. For Melbourne's lockdown for example, the disaster payment was accessible from 4 June until 10 June 2021, and those impacted have until 2 July 2021 to claim the disaster payment for the applicable lockdown period.

How much is the payment?

The COVID-19 disaster payment depends on how many hours of work you have lost in the lockdown period.

Hours lost	Disaster payment amount
Less than 20 hours work	\$325
20 hours or more of work	\$500

The payment applies to each relevant period of lockdown and is taxable (you will need to declare it in your income tax return).

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COVID-19 Disaster Payments

Are you eligible for the COVID-19 disaster payment?

The COVID-19 disaster payment is emergency relief. It is available if you:

- Are an Australian citizen, permanent resident or temporary visa holder who has the right to work in Australia, and
- Are aged 17 years or over, and
- Can't attend work and lost income on or after day 8 of a COVID-19 lockdown, and
- Don't have access to appropriate paid leave entitlements through your employer, and
- Are not getting an income support payment, a state or territory pandemic payment, Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment or state small business payment for the same period.

In addition, you need to declare that you do not have liquid assets of more than \$10,000.

[Legislation](#) passed Parliament last week retrospectively enabling the disaster payments to people who lost work because of COVID-19 lockdowns in Melbourne and enabling future payments to 30 June 2022.

Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment

The Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment is for those who have been advised by their relevant health authority to self-isolate or quarantine because:

- you have coronavirus (COVID-19)
- you've been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19
- you care for a child, 16 years or under, who has COVID-19
- you care for a child, 16 years or under, who's been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19.

The payment might also be accessible if you are a carer for someone impacted.

How much is the payment?

The payment is \$1,500 for each 14-day period you are advised to self-isolate or quarantine. If you are a couple, you both can claim this payment if you meet the eligibility criteria.

Are you eligible for the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment?

The Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment is emergency relief. It is available if you:

- Are an Australian citizen, permanent resident or temporary visa holder who has the right to work in Australia, and
- Are aged 17 years or over, and
- Are unable to go to work and earn an income, and
- Do not have appropriate leave entitlements, including pandemic sick leave, personal leave or carers leave, and
- Are not getting any income support payment, ABSTUDY Living Allowance, Paid parental leave or Dad and Partner Pay.

The payment is taxable and you will need to declare it in your income tax return.

If you are uncertain of your eligibility, talk to [Services Australia](#). If you are concerned about the impact of disaster relief payments on you, talk to your adviser.

The material and contents provided in this publication are informative in nature only. It is not intended to be advice and you should not act specifically on the basis of this information alone. If expert assistance is required, professional advice should be obtained.