

Crisis Payment for people in extreme circumstances



What is Crisis Payment?

Crisis Payment is a special one-off payment that may be paid to customers who, because of an extreme circumstance such as domestic violence or a natural disaster, are forced to leave their home and establish a new home. For people who have experienced domestic and family violence, the Crisis Payment may also be payable if the person who suffered domestic and family violence remains in their home after the family member responsible has left or been removed.

Crisis Payment may also be payable upon release from goal or psychiatric confinement. (See the Centrelink brochure 'Crisis Payment for released prisoners'.)

Who can receive Crisis Payment for an extreme circumstance?

Both new and existing customers who are in financial hardship and have suffered an extreme circumstance may be able to receive Crisis Payment.

To receive Crisis Payment for an extreme circumstance, you must be eligible for certain Centrelink pensions or benefits. Such payments include Parenting Payment, Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance, Disability Support Pension and Age Pension. You will not be eligible for a Crisis Payment if your only entitlement from Centrelink is a Family Tax payment or Child Care Benefit.

How much is the Crisis Payment?

The amount you receive is equal to one week's payment of the basic Centrelink payment to which you are entitled without any add-ons such as Rent Assistance or Pharmaceutical Allowance.

When do you qualify for Crisis Payment under extreme circumstances?

To receive a payment you must:

- be in receipt of, or have established entitlement to, a Centrelink pension or benefit, **and**
- be in severe financial hardship, **and**
- have left your home and cannot return because of an extreme circumstance such as domestic violence or a natural disaster, and have set up or intend to set up a new home, **or**
- remain in your home after experiencing domestic violence where the family member responsible has left or been removed from the home, **and**
- contact Centrelink with your Intent to Claim within seven days of the extreme circumstance and lodge a claim for Crisis Payment within 14 days of contacting Centrelink, **and**
- be in Australia at the time of the claim, **and**
- not have received more than three Crisis Payments due to an extreme circumstance within the previous 12 months (a maximum of four payments can be made in any 12-month period).



What is an extreme circumstance for the purposes of Crisis Payment?

An 'extreme circumstance' can either be domestic or family violence, or an event that makes the home unable to be lived in or unsafe to remain in. All extreme circumstances must be verified by a third party.

What verification of the extreme circumstance will be required?

In the case of domestic violence, third party verification is required:

- of the domestic violence, **and**
- that the person has set up or intends to set up a new home, **or**
- if the person remains in their home, that the family member responsible has left or been removed from the home.

A professional assessment by a Centrelink Social Worker is also needed.

In cases of other extreme circumstances, third party verification is required:

- of the extreme circumstance that forced the person from his or her home, **and**
- that the house is unable to be lived in or unsafe to remain in, **and**
- that the person intends to establish a new home.

How to find out more

Employment Services	13 2850
Retirement Services	13 2300
International Services	13 1673
Disabilities, Sickness and Carers	13 2717
Family Assistance Office	13 6150
Youth and Student Services	13 2490
ABSTUDY	13 2317
Assistance for Isolated Children	13 2318
To speak to Centrelink in languages other than English	13 1202

Customer Relations Freecall™ 1800 050 004
(for complaints, compliments and suggestions)

Australian Government Services Fraud
Tip-off Line 13 1524

TTY* enquiries Freecall™ 1800 810 586
*TTY is only for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment. A TTY phone is required to use this service.

To make an appointment 13 1021

Go to our website at www.centrelink.gov.au

Check the 'we speak your language' link on Centrelink's website for information in languages other than English.

Important: Calls to '13' numbers from a standard telephone service can be made from anywhere within Australia for not more than the cost of a local call (call charges may vary depending upon the telephone service provider). Calls to '1800' numbers are free of charge. Calls from public and mobile telephones may be charged at a higher rate.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments available.

What are your responsibilities?

- It is your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment and to make the application, having regard to your particular circumstances.
- The information is accurate as at December 2006, but may of course change. If you use this publication after that date, please check with Centrelink that the details are up to date.

From what date are benefits payable?

Most government payments are paid from, or after, the date on which the application is made. So the sooner you lodge your application, the quicker you may be paid.

What is the position if you deal with a third party?

You may deal with a third party who is not a member of Centrelink's staff. If you do so, please remember that Centrelink has not authorised any third parties to provide information or advice to you about payments.