



Australian Government



Centrelink
giving you options

Youth Payment Rates

1 July–19 September 2008

Youth Allowance

Youth Allowance (YA)

Basic conditions of eligibility

- Full-time students and Australian Apprentices aged 16–24, or students who are temporarily incapacitated for full-time study aged 21–24:
 - students and Australian Apprentices aged 25 and over, getting Youth Allowance immediately before turning 25 and remaining in the same course of study or Australian Apprenticeship.
- Unemployed, aged under 21, looking for work or combining part-time study with job search, or undertaking any other approved activity, or temporarily incapacitated for work or study.
- Independent, aged 15 and above the school leaving age in their state who are satisfying or exempt from the activity test.

Residential requirements

- Must be an Australian resident.
- Available to newly arrived migrants after 104 weeks in Australia as an Australian resident (some exemptions may apply).
- If exempt from activity test may be paid for up to 13 weeks for temporary absence from Australia in certain limited circumstances. The length of your last return to Australia may affect your entitlement during the absence from Australia.
- May be paid for 13 weeks of a temporary absence or longer if the person has to travel to study or train as part of their full-time Australian course or Australian Apprenticeship.

Basic rates

- Single, no children:
 - aged under 18, at home \$194.50 pf
 - aged under 18, away from home \$355.40* pf
 - aged 18 and over, away from home \$355.40* pf
 - aged 18 and over, at home \$233.90 pf
 - Single, with children \$465.60* pf
 - Partnered, no children \$355.40* pf
 - Partnered, with children \$390.20* pf
- * Rent Assistance may be payable.
- Single, principal carer of a dependent child (granted an exemption for foster caring/home schooling/distance education/large family) \$546.80 pf.
 - Special rate for long-term income support customers or migrants studying English aged 21 or over commencing full-time study or Australian Apprenticeship:
 - Single, living at home \$287.20 pf

- Single, living away from home \$431.70 pf
- Partnered, no children \$390.20 pf

- Young people not considered independent must be assessed to get the away from home rate.
- Pharmaceutical Allowance may be paid. See Chart H.
- Payment is generally made to a parent for those aged under 18 who are not independent.
- Advance of Youth Allowance of up to \$500 may be payable.
- Work for the Dole participants may be eligible for an additional payment of \$20.80 per fortnight.
- Youth Allowance (job seeker) assessed as having a partial capacity to work will receive the Pensioner Concession Card.

Fares Allowance

- Only paid to tertiary students who have to live away from their permanent home for study.
- Reimbursement of the cost of the cheapest practicable form of public transport, regardless of transport actually used.
- Not payable for daily travel.

Rent Assistance

- See Chart G.
- Rent Assistance for single people without children may only be paid to those who receive the away from home rate of Youth Allowance.
- Where both members of a couple without children are getting an allowance or benefit, Rent Assistance is shared.

Youth Disability Supplement

- Youth Disability Supplement of up to \$100.60 per fortnight is payable to Youth Allowance customers aged under 21 who have been assessed as having partial capacity to work.
- Youth Disability Supplement is added to the rate of Youth Allowance and the rate payable cannot exceed the rate payable to those over 21 on Newstart Allowance.

Parental income test

- If not independent, a parental income test applies.
- Rate reduces if parent's income exceeds threshold of \$31 400 PLUS for additional dependent children:
 - \$1230 for first dependent child aged under 16
 - \$2562 for each additional dependent child aged under 16
 - \$3792 for each dependent child:
 - aged between 16–24 in full-time study, or
 - aged between 16–24 undertaking a full-time Australian Apprenticeship, or
 - aged between 16–20 and seeking employment, or

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- who receives a boarding allowance or second home allowance under the Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme
- \$7585 for a tertiary student living away from home, where there are two such children in the family.
- Rate reduces by \$1.00 for every \$4.00 over the threshold.
- After applying parental income test, a personal income test is applied.
- The parental income and assets test does not apply if the parent(s) holds a current low-income Health Care Card or they receive a designated income support payment through either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The Family Actual Means Test may still apply.
- In some circumstances (where parental income decreases/increases substantially) parent(s)' income in the current tax year is used.
- The parental means test does not apply to Youth Allowance (job seeker) assessed as having a partial capacity to work.
- was self-employed (except as a sole trader engaged wholly or mainly in primary production) or a partner in a partnership
- earned in excess of A\$2500 (including tax exempt income) from a source in Norfolk Island or outside Australia
- was a wage or salary earner who claimed or will claim a tax deduction for a business loss (whether current or carried forward) that does not consist only of a passive investment loss in your partnership income tax returns
- had an interest in assets held in a country other than Australia in excess of A\$2500 or is a migrant who first entered Australia under a business skills category (business migrant) in the last 10 years.
- In certain circumstances family actual means in the current tax year may be used.
- Where a family member receives Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment the Family Actual Means Test does not apply.

Personal income test

- Gross income is assessed.
- There is an income-free area of \$62.00 per fortnight for job seekers and \$236 per fortnight for students and Australian Apprentices.
- Income above the income-free area reduces payment unless credit in Income Bank (for students and Australian Apprentices—see below) or Working Credit.
- See Chart D(a).

Income Bank

- Allows Youth Allowance students to accumulate up to \$6000 of any unused portion of their fortnightly income-free area.
- Allows Youth Allowance Australian Apprentices to accumulate up to \$1000 of any unused portion of their fortnightly income-free area.
- Income Bank credits can be used to offset any income earned that exceeds the fortnightly income-free area.

Assets test

- If not independent, family assets test applies (no personal assets test):
 - No payment can be made if family's assets exceed \$547 000
 - A 75 per cent discount for farm/business assets applies to the family assets test.
- If independent:
 - Homeowners see Chart A
 - Non-homeowners see Chart B.
- Payment may be deferred when liquid assets exceed \$2500 (single) or \$5000 (couple or single with dependants).
- Hardship provisions may apply to the personal assets test.

Family actual means test

- Family actual means (i.e. family spending and savings) in the 2006–07 tax year is used where you are not independent and where one or both of your parents:
 - had an interest in a trust, private company or unlisted public company

Chart A and B—Assets test for Parenting Payment

Chart A—Assets test for homeowners

Family situation	For full allowance
Single	up to \$171 750
Partnered (combined)	up to \$243 500
Illness separated couple (combined)	up to \$243 500
One partner eligible	up to \$243 500

Chart B—Assets test for non-homeowners

Family situation	For full allowance
Single	up to \$296 250
Partnered (combined)	up to \$368 000
Illness separated couple (combined)	up to \$368 000
One partner eligible	up to \$368 000

Some assets are deemed to earn income, while certain assets are not included in the assets test. Contact Centrelink for more information.

Note: the rate of payment is calculated under both the income and assets tests. The test that results in the lower rate (or nil rate) will apply.

Extra Allowable Amount for retirement village and granny flat residents

If your Entry Contribution is equal to or less than the Extra Allowable Amount, you are assessed as a non-homeowner. Your Entry Contribution will count as an asset. You may qualify for Rent Assistance. The Extra Allowable Amount is the difference between the non-homeowner and homeowner assets test limits, currently \$124 500.

Hardship provisions

If you have assets but little or no income you are expected to rearrange your affairs to provide for yourself. In some cases that is not possible. If you are in "severe financial hardship" you may be able to get an income support payment. Different tests apply to such cases.

Chart D(a)—Personal Income test for Youth Allowance, Austudy ABSTUDY

Income test

Maintenance income does not affect this payment.

Family Situation	For full Allowance (pf)*	For part Allowance (pf)
Single, aged under 18, at home Students & Australian		
Apprentices	up to \$236	less than \$573.50
Job seeker	up to \$62	less than \$417.50
Single, aged 18 or over, at home Students & Australian		
Apprentices	up to \$236	less than \$639.17
Job seeker	up to \$62	less than \$483.17
Single or partnered, no dependants, away from home Students & Australian		
Apprentices	up to \$236	less than \$841.67 [#]
job seeker	up to \$62	less than \$685.67 [#]
Partnered, with dependants Students & Australian		
Apprentices	up to \$236	less than \$899.67 [#]
Job seeker	up to \$62	less than \$743.67 [#]
Single, with dependants Students & Australian		
Apprentices	up to \$236	less than \$1025.34 [#]
Job seeker	up to \$62	less than \$869.34 [#]
Single, long-term unemployed aged 21 or over, undertaking full-time study or Australian Apprenticeship, at home	up to \$236	less than \$728.00
Single, long-term unemployed aged 21 or over undertaking full-time study or Australian Apprenticeship, away from home	up to \$236	less than \$968.84 [#]
Partnered, long-term unemployed, no dependants, aged 21 or over undertaking full-time study or Australian Apprenticeship, no children	up to \$236	less than \$899.67 [#]

* For job seekers, fortnightly income between \$62 and \$250 reduces fortnightly allowance by 50 cents in the dollar. Income above \$250 reduces payment by 60 cents in the dollar.

For students and Australian Apprentices, fortnightly income between \$236 and \$316 reduces the fortnightly allowance by 50 cents in the dollar. Income above \$316 reduces payment by 60 cents in the dollar. For students and Australian Apprentices the income test is subject to Income Bank credit.

Partner income which exceeds the cut-off point reduces fortnightly allowance by 60 cents in the dollar.

[#] These figures may be higher if you are eligible for Rent Assistance or Pharmaceutical Allowance.

Note: for ABSTUDY recipients aged 21 years and over the rate of entitlement is aligned with Newstart. Please contact ABSTUDY on 13 2317 to ascertain the effect of personal income.

Chart G—Rent Assistance

Family Situation	Maximum payment per fortnight	No payment if your fortnightly rent is less than	Maximum payment if your fortnightly rent is more than
Single, no children	\$107.20	\$95.40	\$238.33
Single, no children, sharer	\$71.47	\$95.40	\$190.69
Couple, no children	\$101.00	\$155.20	\$289.87
One of a couple who are separated due to illness, no children*	\$107.20	\$95.40	\$238.33
One of a couple who are temporarily separated, no children	\$101.00	\$95.40	\$230.07

* Includes respite care and partner in prison.

■ Rent Assistance for families with children is usually paid with Family Tax Benefit. See Family Tax Benefit for current rates.

■ Rent Assistance is not paid:

- to people paying rent to a government housing authority, although in some situations sub-tenants may qualify for Rent Assistance
- for residents of Australian Government funded nursing homes and hostels
- to single Disability Support Pensioners aged under 21, without dependants, living with parents
- to other single people aged under 25, living with parents.

■ Special rules apply to single sharers, people who pay board and lodging or live in a retirement village.

■ Rent Certificates are required to verify rent where a customer does not have a formal written tenancy agreement or is not named as a tenant on a formal written tenancy agreement.

■ Rent Assistance is paid as part of another payment. It may be reduced due to the income test rules applying to that primary payment.

■ Rent Assistance is subject to portability provisions where relevant.

Chart H—Pharmaceutical Allowance (PhA)

Rate: \$5.80 per fortnight for eligible single people, and \$2.90 per fortnight for each eligible member of a couple (i.e. \$5.80 in total if both members of a couple are eligible). However, where a person is a member of an illness separated couple or a respite care couple or where a partner is in prison, the rate is \$5.80 per fortnight (i.e. same as for a single person).

Payment	Conditions under which PhA is paid
Age Pension Bereavement Allowance Carer Payment Disability Support Pension Mature Age Allowance Parenting Payment (Single) Sickness Allowance Widow B Pension Wife Pension	Automatically paid to customers of these payments.
Newstart Allowance	Customers must be temporarily incapacitated, or have a partial capacity to work, or be a single principal carer of a dependent child, be over 60 years of age and have been in receipt of income support continuously for at least nine months.
Partner Allowance Widow Allowance ABSTUDY Special Benefit*	Customers must be either temporarily incapacitated, or be over 60 years of age and have been in receipt of income support continuously for at least nine months.
*(Note: Special Benefit customers are NOT required to be Australian residents in order to be paid PhA).	
Austudy	Customer must be over 60 years of age and have been in receipt of income support continuously for at least nine months.
Parenting Payment (Partnered)	Customer must be over 60 years of age and have been in receipt of income support continuously for nine months or be unable to meet participation requirements due to a temporary incapacity.
Youth Allowance (job seeker)	Must be either temporarily incapacitated or a single principal carer of a dependent child or have a partial capacity to work.
Youth Allowance (full-time students and Australian Apprentices)	Must be temporarily incapacitated.
Community Development Employment Project (CDEP)	As per relevant payment type.

Note: PhA is subject to portability provisions where relevant.

Calling Centrelink

Employment Services	13 2850
Youth Allowance	13 2490
Austudy	13 2490
ABSTUDY	13 2317
Australian Apprentices	13 3633
Pensioner Education Supplement (PES)	13 2490
Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme	13 2318
Retirement	13 2300
Disability, Sickness and Carers	13 2717
Family Assistance Office	13 6150
To speak to Centrelink in languages other than English	13 1202
For information about claiming a payment from a country other than Australia and about claiming an Australian payment while outside Australia	13 1673
Calling from outside Australia (you can reverse charge)	+61 3 6222 3455
Australian Government Services Fraud Tip-off Line or through the internet at www.centrelink.gov.au	13 1524

Customer Relations Freecall™ 1800 050 004
Suggestions, complaints and compliments

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

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Only for people who are deaf or who have a hearing or speech impairment. A TTY phone is required to use this service.

Information on payment rates is also available on the Centrelink website at www.centrelink.gov.au

Calls from your home phone to Centrelink "13" numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to "1800" numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

Centrelink self service

A growing number of Centrelink services are available through online and phone self service. Using self service you can:

- update family income estimate
- claim student Youth Allowance or Austudy
- report employment income
- update address and banking details.

Online self service

Once you have registered you can logon at www.centrelink.gov.au to access online services.

Refer to Service Available Times on our website for when online services are available.

Phone self service

Centrelink has two self service lines. For general self service, phone **13 6240**, Monday to Friday from 5.30 am to 12 midnight (except for national and state-based public holidays), on Saturday from 5.00 am to 6.00 pm and on Sunday from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm.

For the reporting line, phone **13 3276**, Monday to Friday from 6.00 am to 10.00 pm (except for national and state-based public holidays). Remember to call before 6.00 pm (8.00 pm for Parenting Payment) on the day you are due to report.

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 1 July 2008, 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 the 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.