

Telephone Allowance



What is Telephone Allowance?

Telephone Allowance helps with the costs of maintaining a phone and home internet service within Australia.

Who can get it?

You qualify for basic rate Telephone Allowance if you:

- have a Pensioner Concession Card, **or**
- a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, **and**
- have a telephone connected in your own or your partner's name, **and**
- meet residence requirements.

You qualify for higher rate Telephone Allowance if you:

- meet the above conditions, **and**
- have a home internet service connected in your or your partner's name, **and**
- are receiving an income support payment and are of age pension age, **or**
- are receiving Disability Support Pension, **or**
- are receiving Carer Payment, **or**
- are the holder of a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.

How do I get Telephone Allowance?

Your eligibility for Telephone Allowance is assessed when you claim a Centrelink payment or a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.

If you are currently a Pensioner Concession Card holder or a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holder and not receiving Telephone Allowance, you may test your eligibility for basic and/or higher rate Telephone Allowance if you become a home telephone or home internet subscriber.

You can provide telephone and internet subscriber information using Centrelink's Online Customer Services at www.centrelink.gov.au

How much will I be paid?

Refer to the *A Guide to Australian Government Payments* booklet for the current rates of Telephone Allowance. At 20 March 2008 the basic rate of Telephone Allowance for a household, singles or couples, will be \$22 a quarter and the higher rate will be \$33 a quarter.

Telephone Allowance is adjusted annually in September in line with the Consumer Price Index.

It is paid every three months on, or in the fortnight following, 1 January, 20 March, 1 July, and 20 September. Telephone Allowance is a non-taxable payment.

How to find out more

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

Retirement **13 2300**

Disability and Carers **13 2717**

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.

For information or to make an appointment **13 1021**

Note: 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.

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 February 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 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.