

# 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, **and receive**
- Disability Support Pension (under 21 with no dependant children), **or**
- Parenting Payment (Single), **or**
- Parenting Payment (Partnered) and claimed on or after 1 July 2006 and have been assessed as having a partial capacity to work due to a disability, **or**
- Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance and be over 60 and in receipt of an income support payment continuously for nine months, **or**
- Partner Allowance, Widow Allowance, Special Benefit or Parenting Payment Partnered and be over 60, but under age pension age, and in receipt of an income support payment continuously for nine months, **or**
- Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance and have a partial capacity to work as assessed by a Job Capacity Assessor, **or**
- Partner Allowance or Parenting Payment Partnered and your partner is over 60 and receives New Start Allowance or Sickness Allowance and has received income support payments continuously for nine months, **or**
- New Start Allowance or Youth Allowance and are a single principal carer of a dependent child, **and**
- have a telephone connected in your own or your partner's name, **and**
- meet residence requirements.

You qualify for a higher rate of 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 Disability Support Pension (under 21 with no dependant children),

From 20 September 2009, Telephone Allowance is not payable to income support recipients of age pension age, people receiving Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Widow B Pension, Wife Pension or Bereavement Allowance as they receive Pension Supplement. For most pensioners, the value of Telephone Allowance has been either added into the Pension Supplement or forms part of the rate paid under transitional arrangements. The last quarterly payment of Telephone Allowance for these pensioners will be made soon after 20 September 2009. See the *Pension Supplement* factsheet.

From 20 September 2009, Telephone Allowance is not payable to Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders as they receive Seniors Supplement. The last quarterly payment of Telephone Allowance for these customers will be made soon after 20 September 2009. See the *Secure and Sustainable Pension Reforms* factsheet.

## How do I get Telephone Allowance?

Your eligibility for Telephone Allowance is assessed when you claim a Centrelink payment.

You can also provide telephone and Internet subscriber information using Centrelink's Online Customer Services at [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://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.

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](http://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 September 2009, 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.