

# Newly Arrived Resident's Waiting Period



*Newly Arrived Resident's Waiting Period—English*

Many payments and services from Centrelink are only available to people who reside in Australia and are either Australian citizens, holders of permanent visas or New Zealand citizens who are protected special category visa holders.

Many Centrelink payments and services are also not available to new Australian residents until they have been a permanent Australian resident and been in Australia for 104 weeks. This 104 week waiting period generally commences on the day you arrive in Australia or are granted permanent Australian residence or Australian citizenship (whichever is the later). Any time spent outside Australia during your 104 week waiting period does not count towards completion of the waiting period. If you have been granted one of the temporary visas which qualify you for Special Benefit or Low Income Card, the waiting period commences from the date you are granted the temporary visa or arrive in Australia, whichever is the later.

New Zealand citizens who are not protected special category visa holders cannot begin to serve the newly arrived resident's waiting period until they are granted a permanent resident visa or Australian citizenship.

The purpose of the waiting period is to ensure that migrants provide for their own support during their initial settlement period in Australia or are supported by their sponsors.

Some people, including refugees, Australian citizens and their family members and people who have previously lived in Australia for 104 weeks do not need to wait 104 weeks to access most Centrelink payments and services. There are also a number of other exemptions. You should not assume that you have to serve the waiting period but lodge an application for payment. Your application will then be assessed to determine if you have an exemption from the waiting period.

## What Centrelink payments can't be paid until I have completed the 104 week waiting period?

**Newstart Allowance:** for people who are unemployed and looking for work.

**Sickness Allowance:** for people who are temporarily unable to work due to short term injury or illness, and have a job to return to when fit to do so.

**Youth Allowance:** for young people who are either studying, looking for work or have a temporary illness.

**Carer Payment:** helps people who provide full time care to another person who needs supervision or personal care due to severe illness or a disability.

**Austudy:** helps students aged 25 years and older who have low income to continue with their full-time education.

**Mobility Allowance:** helps with the extra costs of travel for people with disabilities who are undertaking voluntary work, paid work, vocational training, or any combination of these and who cannot use public transport without extra help.

**Special Benefit:** a payment to assist people in hardship who do not qualify for any other social security payment. There are an number of exemptions from the newly arrived resident's waiting period for Special Benefit, including if you have suffered a financial hardship due to a substantial change in circumstances beyond your control. An inability to find employment is not a qualification reason for Special Benefit.

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## What Centrelink payments can I receive as soon as I have permanent residence in Australia:

**Family Tax Benefit, Baby Bonus, Maternity Immunisation Allowance and Child Care Benefit:** can help with the cost of raising children and with the cost of child care. May also include a Health Care Card.

**Carer Allowance:** can help if you have to care for another person.

**Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment:** can help farmers or small business owners.

**Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment:** can provide immediate short term financial assistance to victims of major or widespread disasters.

## What employment services can I receive as soon as I have permanent residence in Australia?

Newly arrived residents to Australia can register for employment services with an employment services provider or Centrelink to get advice and assistance in seeking work. For more information, contact your local employment services provider or Centrelink to see what services you are eligible to receive.

## Need help?

If you are affected by the Newly Arrived Resident's Waiting Period, it is important to contact Centrelink immediately if your circumstances change, for example, if you have a child, lose your job or get sick.

## How to contact Centrelink

**Inside Australia,** call the number most appropriate for your circumstances:

**Employment Services** **13 2850**

**Retirement** **13 2300**

**Disability, Sickness and Carers** **13 2717**

**Family Assistance Office** **13 6150**

**Youth and Students** **13 2490**

**To speak to Centrelink in languages other than English** **13 1202**

**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.)

**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 from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

**Outside Australia,** call Centrelink International Services on one of these numbers:

From Austria **0800 295 165 (free call)**

From Canada **1888 2557 493 (free call)**

From China (North)\* **10 800 6100 427 (free call)**

From China (South)\* **10 800 2611 309 (free call)**

From Denmark **8088 3556 (free call)**

From Germany **0800 180 2482 (free call)**

From Greece **0080 0611 26209 (free call)**

From India **000 800 61 01098 (free call)**

From Indonesia **001 803 61 035 (free call)**

From Italy **800 781 977 (free call)**

From Korea Republic **003 081 32326 (free call)**

From the Netherlands **0800 0224 364 (free call)**

From New Zealand **0800 441 248 (free call)**

From Philippines **1800 1611 0046 (free call)**

From Portugal **800 861 122 (free call)**

From Singapore	<b>800 6167 015 (free call)</b>
From Spain	<b>900 951 547 (free call)</b>
From Thailand	<b>001 800 611 4136 (free call)</b>
From Turkey	<b>00 800 6190 5703 (free call)</b>
From United Kingdom	<b>0800 169 5865 (free call)</b>
From United Arab Emirates	<b>800 061 04319 (free call)</b>
From USA	<b>1866 3433 086 (free call)</b>

From other countries +61 3 6222 3455 (you can reverse the charges if this service is offered by your local telephone provider).

\*China (North) is the provinces of Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Jilin, Shandong and Henan. All other provinces are considered to be China (South) for this purpose.

**Note:** these international free call numbers connect you directly to Centrelink International Services. This free call may not be available from every location within the country, and may not be free from mobile phones or public phones. You may need to insert coins/card in pay phones as for a local call and this may not be refunded at the end of the call.

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services 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 October 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.