

**From:** [Ben Phillips](#)  
**To:** [Community Affairs, Committee \(SEN\)](#); [Matthew Gray](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Question on notice - Strengthening Income Support bill inquiry  
**Date:** Tuesday, 9 March 2021 3:59:07 PM

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Hi

Our estimate of the poverty rate for households whose main source of income is allowances (mostly JobSeeker) for pre-COVID was 88%. This rate dropped to 26% at the peak of COVID for these same households whose main source of income prior to COVID was allowances. The \$50pf increase to JobSeeker beyond the end of this month lowers this figure to 85%.

We also mentioned the poverty gap – which we view as a superior measure. The figures for this are an average poverty gap (dollar difference between disposable income and the poverty line – 0 for anyone on or above that line) are \$140pw pre-COVID, \$21 peak COVID (June 2020) and \$125pw with the \$50pf JobSeeker increase from April 2021. These dollar amounts are averages for households and based on equivalised income (adjusted down to a per adult equivalent amount).

Thanks  
Ben

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