

Joint Committee on Human Rights Inquiry into Compulsory Income Management

Public Hearing – 5 July 2024

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

**Topic:** Income management exemptions

**Question reference number:** IQ24-000111

**Question asked by:** Senator DARMANIN

**Type of Question:** Spoken.      **Hansard Page/s:** 51

**Date set by the Committee for the return of answer:** 19 July 2024

**Question:**

Senator DARMANIN: Going back to Ms Tink's questions about the number of exemptions, I take your point that it's administered by Services Australia. Are you able to provide information around whether factors like access to legal help to make the exemption applications is also a factor, and whether people have access to support, particularly people of First Nations. If they are proportionately lower in putting in applications, is it because there are barriers to being able to do those independently?

Mr Boneham: We'll have to take that on notice and get that advice from Services Australia.

**Answer:**

The application process for an exemption has been designed so that people can apply independently without the need for support such as legal help. On contacting Services Australia, a Service Officer will speak with the customer about the exemption process, gather information (for example immunisation record, day care attendance, playgroup participation etc) and discuss documentation required. The customer is warm transferred to a member of the Income Management Exemption and Assessment Team who will conduct a financial vulnerability assessment interview and make a decision of whether to grant an exemption.