



Final 2013-14 Budget measure

OLDER AUSTRALIANS

SUPERANNUATION REFORMS - EXTENDING THE NORMAL DEEMING RULES TO NEW SUPERANNUATION ACCOUNT-BASED INCOME STREAMS

From 1 January 2015, the normal deeming rules will be extended to superannuation account-based income streams. This will mean all financial assets are assessed under the same rules.

This change will start on 1 January 2015. Account-based income streams held by pensioners, allowees or Low Income Health Care Card holders prior to 1 January 2015 will continue to be assessed under the existing rules. This means there will be no impact unless they choose to change products or buy new products from 1 January 2015.

More information about the current rules is available on our [website](#).

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Pensioners, allowees or Low Income Health Care Card holders granted from 1 January 2015 with account based income streams will be impacted by the new rules.

Pensioners, allowees or Low Income Health Care Card Holders granted prior to 1 January 2015 will continue to be assessed under the existing rules unless they choose to change products or buy new ones from 1 January 2015.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Not applicable. This measure does not introduce any new entitlements.

When will this measure start and finish?

The measure will start on 1 January 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Access and processing staff will be involved in a one hour self-paced training module and standard changes to the Guide to the Social Security Act and eReference will be made.

Where do I go for more information?

There will be detailed questions and answers and other communication material available closer to 1 January 2015.

For more information staff can email MEANS.TEST@humanservices.gov.au



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JOB SEEKERS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – EFFICIENCIES – REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PERSONAL CONTACT INTERVIEWS

From 1 July 2013, job seekers will not be subject to Personal Contact Interviews if they:

- declare more than \$500 of employment income for two consecutive fortnights, or
- fully meet their participation requirements through approved activities (other than job search) for more than 40 weeks.

If a job seeker does not meet either of the above requirements, Personal Contact Interviews will continue to apply.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

From 1 July 2013, job seekers who either:

- declare more than \$500 of employment income for two consecutive fortnights, or
- fully meet their participation requirements through approved activities (other than job search) for more than 40 weeks in duration.

Am I eligible for this measure?

You will automatically be excluded from Personal Contact Interviews if you:

- declare more than \$500 of employment income for two consecutive fortnights, or
- fully meet your participation requirements through approved activities (other than job search) for more than 40 weeks.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2013 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

No staff training is required.

Where do I go for more information?

No further information is required. Affected job seekers will be automatically removed from Personal Contact Interview selection.



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YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES—EFFICIENCIES— CHANGES TO SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS

The department will modify the service delivery model for students to a Digital by Design approach—requiring the majority of students to self-manage certain transactions through our online channels.

The Government is taking a proactive approach to reviewing and designing our services to make them easy to access and use within a digital environment. This approach provides access to the right services at a time that is convenient.

This will result in only those requiring more assistance accessing services through our call and face-to-face channels.

For the majority of students, the following transactions will be required to be completed through self service (such as online and the Express Plus Student App):

- reporting employment income
- claiming Youth Allowance (online only)
- updating address details
- request and issue of income statements
- claiming an advance payment.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will apply to Youth Allowance students, apprentices and trainees and Austudy students.

It will *not* apply to Youth Allowance jobseekers, ABSTUDY recipients or students in remote areas.

It will also *not* apply to more vulnerable students or those with complex needs.

Am I eligible for this measure?

There are no changes to eligibility for students.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will be progressively introduced from May 2013 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A range of communication and training activities will support this initiative. Staff in the zones and Smart Centres will receive detailed information, including scripts regarding the changes to servicing arrangements.

Where do I go for more information?

Staff will be able to access more information on the website through eReference.



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OTHER PAYMENTS AND SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES—EFFICIENCIES—RISK BASED ASSESSMENT OF REAL ESTATE

During the 2013-14 financial year, savings will be achieved through moving real estate valuation reviews from a time based cycle to a risk based approach.

The current cycle values all FaHCSIA's income support recipients' real estate assets at the time of a new claim. All property is then re-valued every two years, regardless of whether the result of the valuation is likely to impact payment rate.

The new approach will focus on only paying for valuations where there is a risk to outlays.

A risk based approach is consistent with the general direction of other departmental reviews.

Please note: in general, income support recipients are not aware of the real estate valuation cycle. They are alerted by letter when a review is initiated. This process will not change.

The number and profile of customers reviewed will be subject to change each year, based on customer demographics and movements in the property market.

INTRANET ONLY

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

This is essentially a backend process about selection of customers for automatic review. The process will be automated, as much of the real estate valuation activity currently requires little intervention by staff.

The changes will be implemented over several major releases during the 2013-14 financial year.

Staff will still be able to request valuations when necessary, as per current process.

<http://centrenet.csda.gov.au/corp/incass/10815180.htm>

<http://centrenet.csda.gov.au/corp/incass/10815080.htm>

Changes will be advised via network updates. Standard changes to eReference will be made.

Where do I go for more information?

Email MEANS.TEST@humanservices.gov.au or

AVO.ONLINE.FEEDBACK@humanservices.gov.au



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HEALTH MATTERS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – EFFICIENCIES – REPLACE PAY DOCTOR VIA CLAIMANT CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Currently, where healthcare providers do not request full payment at the time of service but only request payment of the difference between the Medicare schedule fee and the total amount billed, a cheque made out to the healthcare provider is sent to the patient for the Medicare benefit. It is the patient's responsibility to forward the cheque to the healthcare provider.

All healthcare providers that receive cheques from patients will now receive payment through direct electronic funds transfer on the 15th of each month, for all claims lodged in the previous calendar month.

This measure will make it easier for the patient as they will no longer need to forward the cheque to the healthcare provider.

The patient will still be required to pay the difference between the Medicare fee and the service fee directly to the healthcare provider, as is currently the case.

This measure starts from July 2014 (pending legislative change) and is ongoing.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Patients who visit a healthcare provider who do not pay their account in full, or partially pay their account, will benefit.

All healthcare providers that receive cheques from patients will receive payment through direct electronic funds transfer on the 15th of each month, for all claims lodged in the previous calendar month.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Patients who visit a healthcare provider who do not pay their account in full, or partially pay their account, will be eligible.

Payment of the Medicare benefit will be made directly to the healthcare provider through electronic funds transfer.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure starts from July 2014 (pending legislative change) and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Medicare Providers Branch will be supplied with new reference material for healthcare provider calls.

New reference material will also be provided to assist explaining the changes to patients.

Where do I go for more information?

Staff can contact: (contact names, phone numbers and email addresses withheld)

What do I tell healthcare providers if I receive a call from them?

Changes are to be made to legislation to amend the current pay doctor via claimant arrangements. Where a healthcare provider does not request full payment at the time of service but only requests payment of the difference between the Medicare benefit and the total amount billed, healthcare providers will be paid via EFT on the 15th of each month.

This will replace the current arrangement where a cheque is made out to the healthcare provider and sent to the patient for on forwarding to the healthcare provider.

This change is due to commence from July 2014 pending the legislative amendments.

What do I tell customers if I receive a call from them?

Changes are to be made to legislation to amend the current pay doctor via claimant arrangements. Where a healthcare provider does not request full payment at the time of service but only requests payment of the difference between the Medicare benefit and the total amount billed, healthcare providers will be paid via EFT on the 15th of each month.

This will replace the current arrangement where a cheque is made out to the healthcare provider and sent to the patient for on forwarding to the healthcare provider.

This change is due to commence from July 2014 pending the legislative amendments.



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OLDER AUSTRALIANS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – EFFICIENCIES – REDUCE NUMBER OF ISSUES OF *NEWS FOR SENIORS*

From 1 July 2014, the frequency of the *News for Seniors* magazine will be reduced from four to two issues per year.

Issues will be published in March and September.

This is a government savings measure.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

People who receive *News for Seniors*, including:

- Age Pension recipients
- Widow Pension recipients
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Service Pension recipients
- holders of a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This measure relates to the distribution of *News for Seniors* magazine—no action is required.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Not applicable—training is not required.

Where do I go for more information?

Visit the [News for Seniors page](#) for information about the magazine.



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WELFARE PAYMENT REFORM

CAPE YORK WELFARE REFORM – EMBEDDING AND BUILDING

From 1 January 2014, the current Cape York Income Management measure will be extended to 31 December 2015 in the following communities:

- Aurukun
- Coen
- Hope Vale
- Mossman Gorge.

Under Income Management, part of the income support payment is allocated for priority items such as food, housing, clothing, utilities, education and medical care.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

People who reside in the income managed declared areas in Cape York (Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge) Queensland.

Am I eligible for this measure?

People can only be placed on Income Management by the Families Responsibilities Commission of the Queensland Government. If a person wishes to have their payments income managed they will need to contact the [Families Responsibilities Commission](#) on 07 4057 3870.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2014 and end on 31 December 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

No further training is required as this is a continuing initiative.

Where do I go for more information?

For more information visit the [Deduction and Confirmation Services Program Branch](#) site or the [FaHCSIA website](#).

Staff can also email the Income Management helpdesk income.management.helpdesk@humanservices.gov.au



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FAMILIES

FAMILY TAX BENEFIT PART A – CHANGES TO AGE OF ELIGIBILITY

From 1 January 2014, the following change will start:

- young people aged 16 to 17 years who have completed their Year 12 Certificate or equivalent qualification will not qualify for Family Tax Benefit Part A.

Family Tax Benefit Part A will only be payable for:

- children aged 0 to 15 years
- young people aged 16 to 19 years (up until the end of the calendar year in which the child turns 19) who are in full-time study to complete their Year 12 Certificate or equivalent qualification.

This change also applies to the Double Orphan Pension.

Families receiving Family Tax Benefit for young people aged 16 to 17 years will be sent a notification in October 2013 about the new rules.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Families who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Double Orphan Pension.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Family Tax Benefit Part A will continue for young people aged 16 to 19 (up until the end of the calendar year in which the child turns 19) provided they are in full-time study to complete their Year 12 Certificate or equivalent qualification.

Families receiving Family Tax Benefit Part A for young people aged 16 to 17 years will be sent a notification in October 2013 about the new rules.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2014 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Staff training will be provided closer to 1 January 2014.

Where do I go for more information?

For more information staff can email fao.helpdesk@humanservices.gov.au



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HEALTH MATTERS

MEDICARE BENEFITS SCHEDULE—REALIGNING INDEXATION WITH THE FINANCIAL YEAR

Under this measure indexation of Medicare Benefits Schedule fees will be suspended from 1 November 2013 and will recommence in July 2014.

The next indexation of Medical Benefits Schedule fees will now occur on 1 July 2014.

This measure affects benefits paid under Medicare and treatment of veterans funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

These changes will not affect fees for pathology and diagnostic imaging services.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect:

- providers paid Medicare benefits
- providers paid benefits under treatment of veterans funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs
- patients receiving Medicare benefits—if providers charge above the schedule fee.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The measure will not affect current eligibility under Medicare or treatment of veterans funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

When will this measure start and finish?

Indexation of Medicare Benefits Schedule fees will be suspended from 1 November 2013 and recommence on 1 July 2014. Fees will then be indexed annually in July.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Information for staff will be available on eReference.

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

There is no action required for providers or families in relation to this measure. More information can be found on the Department of Health and Ageing's website, health.gov.au

Where do I go for more information?

Staff should refer to information on eReference in the first instance.

For more information visit [Department of Health and Ageing](#).

Standard processes apply for escalation of enquiries.



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HEALTH MATTERS

MEDICARE BENEFITS SCHEME—REMOVING DOUBLE BILLING

In relation to people who are receiving Chronic Disease Management services, a Medicare benefit will only be able to be claimed for the same patient on the same day for:

- a General Practitioner consultation, or
- a Chronic Disease Management service.

If a patient is bulk billed, the General Practitioner cannot claim a Medicare benefit for a consultation if they are also bulk billing for any Chronic Disease Management service on the same day.

This measure will apply from 1 November 2014.

The eligibility for Chronic Disease Management services has not changed. Talk to your General Practitioner to discuss whether you are eligible for care plan arrangements, including preparation or review of a General Practitioner Management Plan or a Team Care Arrangement.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect General Practitioners providing Chronic Disease Management services and patients with a chronic medical condition or complex care needs.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This measure will not affect the current eligibility requirements for patients requiring access to Medicare for Chronic Disease Management services.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 November 2014 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Information will be available on eReference and an eLearning package will be available with a link to information on the Department of Health and Ageing website.

Where do I go for more information?

All staff should refer to information on eReference in the first instance. Any enquiries that cannot be answered should be escalated through standard processes.



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Living Longer, Living Better—staying at home—improvements

This measure is part of the expansion of home care being introduced under the *Living Longer Living Better* aged care reform package.

This is a minor enhancement to ensure consistent leave provisions are applied across all levels of home care and that there is no adverse impact on current entitlements.

Further information about the new Home Care Packages Program is available on the [Living Longer Living Better website](#).

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Aged care providers that provide care to aged and frail people in their homes.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The changes take effect from 1 July 2013. Further information about the new Home Care Packages Program is available on the [Living Longer Living Better website](#).

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure starts on 1 July 2013 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

As this proposal is a minor enhancement to the Aged Care Reforms (primarily requiring changes to development of the new Aged Care Payment System), training has been developed for Aged Care Reform and will be slightly amended to reflect these changes.

Where do I go for more information?

Further information about the new Home Care Packages Program is available on the [Living Longer Living Better website](#).



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JOB SEEKERS

SUPPORTING JOBSEEKERS IN THE TRANSITION TO WORK — INCREASE AND INDEX THE INCOME FREE AREA FOR ELIGIBLE INCOME SUPPORT RECIPIENTS

From 20 March 2014, the income free area will increase from \$62 to \$100 per fortnight for:

- Newstart Allowance
- Widow Allowance
- Partner Allowance
- Parenting Payment Partnered
- Sickness Allowance.

The income free area is the amount a person on income support, and/or their partner may earn in a fortnight before their rate of payment is affected.

This means a person can work more without it affecting their payment.

The income free area will be indexed by annual changes to the consumer price index from 1 July 2015.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Recipients of Newstart Allowance, Widow Allowance, Partner Allowance, Parenting Payment Partnered and Sickness Allowance.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change will be automatically applied to Newstart Allowance, Widow Allowance, Partner Allowance, Parenting Payment Partnered and Sickness Allowance.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 20 March 2014 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

The Guide to the Social Security Act and eReference will be updated to reflect these changes.

Where do I go for more information?

For more information staff can email MEANS.TEST@humanservices.gov.au



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STUDENTS

IMPROVING INCENTIVES TO STUDY—EXTENSION OF THE PENSIONER EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT FOR SINGLE PARENTS

From 1 January 2014, eligibility for the Pensioner Education Supplement will be extended to single principal carers receiving Newstart Allowance. This initiative will be ongoing.

To receive the Pensioner Education Supplement, a person needs to be studying an approved course.

People are required to lodge a claim to determine eligibility for the payment. Claims can be lodged up to 13 weeks prior to 1 January 2014.

Payment of the Pensioner Education Supplement will be made fortnightly with regular Newstart Allowance payments.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Single principal carers receiving Newstart Allowance.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This measure will affect single principal carers receiving Newstart Allowance and who are:

- studying as at 1 January 2014
- intending to study after 1 January 2014.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2014 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Staff training will be provided closer to 1 January 2014.

Existing eReference information will be updated to include the new group of customers.

Where do I go for more information?

Access staff can contact Access Support and Smart Centre staff can contact Technical Support Officers to assist them with complex queries.

Student network staff have access to Senior Practitioners to assist them in dealing with complex cases.

Staff can also contact the Level 2 Helpdesk for additional support in dealing with complex queries.