

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2012-2013**

Outcome 3 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0922_13

Senator Cash asked on 13 February 2013, Hansard page 83

Question

Exemptions from workplace participation measures

Senator CASH: Do you have data in terms of an average? Ms Drayton: Not by payment type. The average is the figure that I gave you earlier; for short-term ones, it is 13 weeks. We will certainly take that on notice because I have not done it by payment type before. I am sure we will be able to get you some information on that. It is just not something that we have readily available. Senator CASH: Okay; that is fine. If you could take it on notice. The only other question then was: how many have been exempted in 201011 and 201112? Senator CASH: We do not have the 2010-11 figure with us? Ms Drayton: No, we do not have that here with us, but we will take that on notice and provide it.

Answer

The following table shows the median duration of exemptions by payment type as at 30 November 2012. The recorded exemption period is from the earliest start date of consecutive episodes for the current exemption to the exemption end/review date, so this includes any further periods of exemption which have been granted to the same job seeker.

Benefit Type	Median duration (weeks)	
	Short Term Exemption*	Long Term Exemption**
Newstart Allowance	13	52
Parenting Payment Partnered	13	57
Parenting Payment Single	13	52
Youth Allowance (other)	12	22

Source: DHS Administrative Data as at 30 November 2012

There were 4780 Youth Allowance (Other) recipients with an exemption as at 25 November 2011. This represented 5.8 per cent of activity-tested recipients of Youth Allowance (Other).

*Short-term exemptions include those exemptions which can be granted for up to a maximum of 13 or 16 weeks for any single period. For example where a job seeker:

- is incapacitated due to illness, injury or disability of a temporary nature
- is undertaking a rehabilitation program to assist returning to work
- has temporary unexpected caring responsibilities (caring for an adult or child)
- is experiencing a major personal crisis e.g. homelessness
- is an expectant mother
- is a refugee in their first 13 weeks in Australia
- has other special circumstances – case by case circumstances beyond the job seeker's control
- is overseas
- has suffered a bereavement
- has suffered a major personal disruption at home e.g. fire, burglary
- is affected by a declared natural disaster
- is undertaking a community service order
- is undertaking jury duty
- has suffered a domestic violence/relationship breakdown
- is experiencing special family circumstances – case by case circumstances e.g. stressful separation
- is claiming Disability Support Pension (this is an interim status whereby recipients do not have an Activity Test or participation requirement).

** Longer term exemptions include those exemptions which can be granted for either up to a maximum of 26 or 52 weeks for any single period. For example where a job seeker:

- is incapacitated due to serious illness e.g. cancer, acquired brain injury
- is a refugee in their first 6 months in Australia undertaking a preparatory program (up to 26 weeks)
- is a principal carer of a large family (four or more children 6-15 years old, or 16-18 years old and the children are still completing secondary study)
- is an emergency and respite foster carer
- is a principal carer caring for a child with high needs, however, the carer is not eligible for Carer Payment
- is a principal carer providing home schooling
- is a principal carer facilitating distance education
- is a principal carer caring for a child through the result of complying with a care plan or court order.