

If you enter into a child support agreement on or after 1 July 2008, your Family Tax Benefit Part A will be worked out on the amount of child support that the paying parent would have paid if the Child Support Agency had used the new formula to work out your assessment—not your agreement amount.

What will my family assistance be after 1 July 2008?

Use our online Family Assistance–Child Support estimator to estimate your family assistance and child support payments.

Important: This service does not cover every individual's circumstances. The estimator is a guide only and you should not rely on an estimate as a guarantee for future income or payment.

To use this estimator, go to one of the following websites:

- www.familyassist.gov.au
- www.centrelink.gov.au
- www.csa.gov.au



Centrepay Customers

If your family assistance payment amount is likely to change and you pay bills through Centrepay, you may need to consider your arrangements.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide. The information is accurate as at May 2008. If you use this publication after that date, please check with Centrelink that it is still correct.

How to find out more

For more information about the changes to family assistance due to the Child Support Scheme Reforms, visit one of the following websites:

- www.familyassist.gov.au
- www.centrelink.gov.au

The Child Support Agency also has more information available about the changes to the Child Support Scheme including shared care, child support agreements and the changes to family assistance. You can find more information by visiting www.csa.gov.au

You can also visit Family Relationships Online at www.familyrelationships.gov.au for information about family relationship issues including agreeing on arrangements for children after parents separate.

Visit a Family Assistance Office located in Medicare Australia offices, Centrelink Customer Service Centres and Tax Office shopfronts.

Family Assistance Office/Centrelink 13 6150

To speak to Centrelink in Languages other than English 13 1202

Customer Relations Line Freecall™ 1800 050 004
(for complaints, compliments and suggestions)

Australian Government Services Fraud Tip-off Line 13 1524

TTY* Service 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.

To make an appointment 13 1021

Important: 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 to "1800" numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.



AH1626.0805



Australian Government
Family Assistance Office



Family assistance
changes—may affect you
from 1 July 2008

From 1 July 2008, there will be some changes to family assistance as part of the reforms to the Child Support Scheme. Depending on your circumstances, these changes may affect your family assistance.

What do I need to do?

You need to read this brochure and note the changes that come into effect from 1 July 2008.

You may also need to provide additional information to receive the correct amount of family assistance, if you:

- share the care of children
- have employer provided or reportable fringe benefits
- get foreign income, including tax exempt foreign income
- receive or pay child support
- have or will make a child support agreement.



I share the care of my children

How will my payment change?

From 1 July 2008, the new formula to calculate child support will acknowledge care of children as a direct contribution to the cost of raising children. As a result, child support payments and family assistance will be adjusted to reflect the amount of time a child is in your care.

If you pay child support and have regular care of a child, between 14 per cent and less than 35 per cent of the time, the level of care you have of your children will be taken as your contribution towards the cost of your child in your child support assessment. This means that the amount of child support you pay is likely to be less and you will no longer receive Family Tax Benefit.

If a child is in your care for:

- **less than 14 per cent of the time**, you will no longer receive Family Tax Benefit
- **between 14 per cent and less than 35 per cent of the time**, you will no longer receive Family Tax Benefit but you may still be entitled to some benefits associated with family assistance
- **between 35 per cent and 65 per cent of the time**, there may be a change to your rate of Family Tax Benefit
- **more than 65 per cent of the time**, you may be able to receive 100 per cent of the Family Tax Benefit.

How will my Child Care Benefit change?

If you pay child care fees to an approved child care service provider or a registered carer you may still be able to receive Child Care Benefit even if you care for your child less than 14 per cent of the time.

I have employer provided or reportable fringe benefits

How will my payment change?

Currently, the net value of reportable fringe benefits is used to work out your family assistance. From 1 July 2008, this will change and the gross value will be used.

I get foreign income

How will my payment change?

From 1 July 2008, any tax exempt foreign income you earn from an Australian source while stationed overseas will now be included as income and used to work out your family assistance.

Other foreign income will still be used to work out family assistance.

I receive child support

How will this affect my family assistance?

From 1 July 2008, if you receive child support for children in your care and no child support for others in your care then there will be changes to the way your family assistance is worked out.

Currently, the amount of child support you can receive before it reduces your rate of Family Tax Benefit is based on all the children in your care. This will change from 1 July 2008, and the amount will generally only take into account children that you receive child support for and are in your care.

I am on an income support payment and pay child support

How much will I pay?

If you receive an income support payment and you pay or owe child support, the Child Support Agency can deduct up to three times the minimum child support payable from your Centrelink payment. If your children are in your care for at least 14 per cent of the time, you may not have to pay child support. You should check with the Child Support Agency to see if this applies to you.

I have a child support agreement

How will this affect my family assistance?

If you have a child support agreement before 1 July 2008 that the Child Support Agency has reviewed and accepted to continue after 1 July 2008, your Family Tax Benefit Part A will continue to be worked out using the amount of child support received under your agreement.

