



**Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business
Senator for Western Australia**

31 March 2020

UPDATE ON SUPPORT FOR AUSTRALIANS

RELAXING THE PARTNER INCOME TEST FOR JOBSEEKER PAYMENTS

The Morrison Government has temporarily relaxed the partner income test on the JobSeeker Payment. From 30 March 2020, it will be temporarily increased over the next 6 months to \$3,068 per fortnight. This will ensure that an eligible person can receive the JobSeeker Payment and associated Coronavirus Supplement providing their partner earns less than \$3,068 per fortnight, around \$79,762 per annum.

The personal income test for individuals on JobSeeker Payment will still apply.

\$1.1 BILLION IN PAYMENTS TO HIT BANK ACCOUNTS TODAY

Over \$1.1 billion in Australian Government assistance for lower income Australians will hit bank accounts today.

The first round of the \$750 Economic Support Payments will be paid automatically from today and progressively to eligible recipients over the coming weeks.

More than 6.8 million Australians will receive the first Economic Support Payment.

A second [Economic Support Payment](#) will be paid to eligible people from 13 July 2020.

For more information on the payments you can read Minister Robert's media release: <https://minister.servicessaustralia.gov.au/media-releases/2020-03-31-11-billion-economic-support-payments-hit-bank-accounts-today>

ENSURING CONTINUED ACCESS TO MEDICINES DURING COVID-19

The Australian Government has approved a number of temporary changes to medicines regulation to ensure Australians can continue to access the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines they need, as the COVID-19 outbreak unfolds.

We are also closely monitoring the impact of the pandemic on the supply of medicines, especially those manufactured overseas, so we can take early action to address any potential supply interruptions.

New temporary measures will improve access to medicines, reduce the burden on GPs and support social distancing and self-isolation.

- Continued dispensing arrangements for the ongoing supply PBS subsidised medicines without a prescription will be extended to 30 June 2020.
- A home delivery service for PBS and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) medicines is now in place.

- Ongoing work with pharmacists, GPs and the States and Territories to allow medicine substitution by the pharmacist in the event of a shortage.
- Restrictions on the quantity of medicines that can be purchased to prevent unnecessary medicine stockpiling.

These temporary changes will ensure Australians can access the medicines they need throughout the coronavirus outbreak.

For more information you can go here: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-national-health-plan-home-medicines-services-information-for-consumers>

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Australian Government has released a Coronavirus app and Whatsapp channel.

The App is available on both Android and iPhones. To access the Whatsapp channel, you can go to the website here: aus.gov.au/whatsapp

For school closures (government and non-government) please refer to state and territory education authorities that can be found here: <https://www.dese.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19#schools>.

For more information on Coronavirus and the Government's response, please visit: www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus or www.australia.gov.au. Alternatively you can contact the business.gov.au support line at 13 28 46.

Regards



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