

Members have reported feedback from employees seeking income support via Centrelink who are unclear if their employment has been stood down or terminated as a result of the coronavirus covid-19, whether they can apply for income support from the federal government.

To clarify, the Government is temporarily expanding eligibility to income support payments and establishing a new, time-limited Coronavirus supplement to be paid at a rate of \$550 per fortnight. This supplement will be paid to both existing and new recipients of the eligible payment categories. These changes will apply for the next six months.

Jobseeker Payment and Youth Allowance Jobseeker criteria will provide payment access for **permanent employees who are stood down or lose their employment**; sole traders; the self-employed; **casual workers; and contract workers** who meet the income tests as a result of the economic downturn due to the Coronavirus. This could also include a person required to care for someone who is affected by the Coronavirus.

People will not be permitted, and will need to declare **that they are not, accessing employer entitlements (such as annual leave and/or sick leave)** or Income Protection Insurance, at the same time as receiving Jobseeker Payment and Youth Allowance Jobseeker under these arrangements. Income testing will still apply, but the asset testing and one week waiting period will be waived.

Special Payments for Specified Sub Class Visa Holders can gain Special Consideration Benefits (Partner Visa holders)

SpB is a discretionary income support payment that provides financial assistance to people who, due to reasons beyond their control, are in financial hardship and unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

To receive SpB, it must be established that the person is not eligible for any other pension or allowance. The circumstances under which it is granted and the amount paid are determined by a delegate of the Secretary of the Department.

For further information visit <https://guides.dss.gov.au/guide-social-security-law/3/7/1>