# Vulnerable measure of income management

## What is the vulnerable measure of income management?

The vulnerable measure of income management aims to help individuals and their families, who are vulnerable or at risk, to better manage their income support and family assistance payments. Fifty per cent of a person’s payments are income managed to ensure that they are spent on priority items such as food, housing, clothing and utilities.

The vulnerable measure of income management applies to people who are receiving an eligible payment, living in a location where the vulnerable measure is in place, and who are assessed by a Centrelink social worker as being vulnerable or at risk, and likely to benefit from income management.

A person may be considered vulnerable or at risk if he or she:

* is in financial hardship
* is experiencing financial exploitation
* may not be undertaking reasonable self-care, or
* is homeless or at risk of homelessness.

After a person has been on the measure (from 3 up to 12 months), a Centrelink social worker will reconsider the person’s situation. The social worker may decide that it is appropriate that income management should continue.

In addition, a person can ask that a social worker reconsider their circumstances.

The vulnerable measure also automatically applies to young people who are:

* receiving the Unreasonable To Live At Home rate of payment, or
* under the age of 16 and receiving Special Benefit, or
* under the age of 25 and receive a crisis payment due to prison release.

After 12 months, a Centrelink social worker will reconsider the person’s situation. The social worker may decide that it is appropriate that income management should continue.

The young person may ask that a social worker assess whether income management is appropriate or not.

**Who can refer people to a social worker?**

Community agencies can contact Centrelink directly to discuss whether income management might be an option for a person. Relatives and friends who are worried about a person can also refer them to a social worker.

**Review and appeal rights**

A person can ask a Centrelink Authorised Review Officer to review the social worker’s decision. If a person disagrees with a decision made by the Authorised Review Officer, they can apply to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal and then to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for further reviews.

**What other budgeting support do people receive?**

People who are participating in income management are offered free and confidential Financial Management Program services, for financial counselling and money management skills training.

## More information

To find out more visit **families.fahcsia.gov.au**, **humanservices.gov.au** or call 1800 132 594 (for customers).

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide. The information is accurate as at July 2013.