



National Rental Affordability Scheme

Coronavirus

The coronavirus represents a significant challenge for Australia's community and economy.

The department continues to undertake its day-to-day work managing the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS, the Scheme), and explore ways we can support approved participants, tenancy managers, investors and tenants during this difficult time.

Extension of time for 2019–20 documents and information

An authorised delegate of the Secretary of the department agreed an extension of time for all approved participants to provide statements of compliance for the 2019–20 NRAS year **until 30 September 2020** (from the current 30 June 2020) and other required documents and information in relation to the 2019–20 NRAS year **until 30 November 2020**.

The department experienced minimal disruption to the assessment of approved participants' statements of compliance. The average time taken to issue incentives was 37 days.

Tenant eligibility and income

As a matter of policy, the following Economic Support Payments and monies received from access to temporary early release of superannuation **will not** be counted as income for the purpose of NRAS and therefore **not** impact tenant eligibility, these are:

- the two original \$750 Economic Support Payments,
- and the two additional Economic Support Payments; \$250 paid in December 2020 and \$250 to be paid in March 2021, and
- up to \$10,000 in 2019–20 and \$10,000 in 2020–21 in superannuation payments accessed by individuals affected by coronavirus.

Income support payments **are** counted as income as part of the NRAS eligibility assessment, and as such, the additional fortnightly payment of \$550 (Coronavirus Supplement) on top of the current income support payment **will** be counted. Jobkeeper payments **will** also count for income.

Statutory Declarations

From time to time a statutory declaration may be required as supporting evidence to meet requirements under the National Rental Affordability Scheme Regulations 2020; for example to support a request to transfer allocations or in relation to tenant income.

We understand social distancing rules may make it difficult to get documents witnessed by an authorised witness such as justice of the peace. In these circumstances, the department can accept alternative forms of declarations in lieu of a statutory declaration. Appropriately authorised digital signatures will also be accepted.

In relation to tenant income, tenants may be requested to provide proof of income at a later date. Please note, sole reliance by the approved participant on a statutory declaration or other form of declaration by the tenant without other supporting evidence is at the risk of the approved participant.

Importantly, providing false or misleading information to the department may result in a breach determination under the National Rental Affordability Scheme Regulations 2020.