



Encouraging Self Sufficiency for Newly Arrived Migrants

Changes to waiting periods for migrants from July 2018*

* Subject to the passage of legislation

What has changed?

From 1 July 2018, the Government will extend the Newly Arrived Resident's Waiting Period for a number of welfare payments, and introduce new waiting periods for some family payments and concession cards.

New migrants to Australia under the skilled and family visa streams will be required to wait four years before they are eligible for the following payments and concession cards:

- Newstart Allowance
- Youth Allowance
- Austudy
- Parenting Payment
- Family Tax Benefit
- Parental Leave Pay
- Dad and Partner Pay
- Carer Payment
- Carer Allowance
- Mobility Allowance
- Widow Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Bereavement Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Pensioner Education Supplement
- Farm Household Allowance
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Care Card
- Low Income Health Care Card

This measure will only apply to people granted permanent residency, and some temporary visas such as temporary partner visas, on or after 1 July 2018. Migrants already granted permanent residency before 1 July 2018 will not be affected by this measure.

Individuals and families subject to a waiting period will continue to have access to broader Government funded healthcare, education services and to childcare subsidies where they are using approved childcare and participating in work, study or other approved activities.

Assurance of Support

An Assurance of Support is a commitment by one or more Australian residents to provide financial support to a new resident during an initial period. This period is either two years for most visas or ten years for Contributory Parent Visas.

Under this measure, the current two year Assurance of Support period that applies to family visas will increase from two to four years, in line with the waiting periods for welfare payments.

For more information on the current rules and residency requirements please visit the Department of Social Services website.

Exemptions to the waiting periods

There is a range of exemptions that will ensure a safety net remains available for migrants who may be particularly vulnerable and for people who are unable to support themselves as planned for reasons beyond their control.

The following exemptions to waiting periods for migrants apply:

- Humanitarian entrants and their families will continue to be exempt from existing and new waiting periods for all payments.
- Migrants who become a lone parent after becoming an Australian resident continue to have access to payments such as the Parenting Payment and Newstart Allowance, depending on the age of their youngest child. These parents will also have access to Family Tax Benefit.
- Other migrants who experience a substantial change of circumstances during their waiting period, and are in financial hardship, will continue to have access to Special Benefit as well as Family Tax Benefit if they have dependent children.
- New Zealand citizens who hold a Special Category Visa will be exempt from the waiting period for Family Tax Benefit, Parental Leave Pay and Dad and Partner Pay. This will ensure that this group continues to have immediate access to these payments upon commencing residence in Australia, if they have children in their care, and meet relevant qualification and means tests.
- Temporary partner and permanent visa holders who have a baby born between 1 July 2018 and 31 December 2018, and are otherwise eligible for Parental Leave Pay or Dad and Partner Pay, will still be able to access these payments for that baby.

For more information on the current rules and residency requirements please visit the [Department of Social Services website](#)