



Vulnerable Welfare Payment Recipient measure of Income Management

What is the vulnerable welfare payment recipient measure of Income Management?

The vulnerable welfare payment recipient measure of Income Management aims to help vulnerable youth or at-risk individuals and their families to manage their income support and family assistance payments more effectively.

Income Management works by directing a proportion of certain income support and family assistance payments to priority items such as food, housing, clothing and utilities.

Who is eligible for this type of Income Management?

The vulnerable welfare payment recipient measure of Income Management applies to people who are living in a location where this measure is in place, and who:

- meet the youth triggers:
 - are granted the unreasonable to live at home rate of payment for Youth Allowance, Disability Support Pension, or ABSTUDY; or
 - are under the age of 16 and are granted Special Benefit; or
 - are under the age of 25 and receive a Crisis Payment due to prison release;
- or 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

How does the vulnerable welfare payment recipient measure of Income Management work?

The vulnerable welfare payment recipient measure of Income Management directs 50 per cent of participants income support and family assistance payments towards meeting basic needs such as food, clothing, housing and utilities. Lump sum payments are 100 per cent income managed.

People will be placed on Income Management for a maximum of 12 months under this measure. If determined by a social worker, a person may be placed on for a further 12 months. However, people who were placed on this measure as a result of receiving the unreasonable to live at home rate of payment for Youth Allowance, Disability Support Pension, or ABSTUDY; or are under the age of 16 and are granted Special Benefit, cannot be placed back on for the same reason if they have already been subject to Income Management for 12 months.

Income Management does not change how much a person receives. It just changes the way that they receive part of their welfare payments. People participating in Income Management receive the rest of their payments in the usual way.

Income managed funds cannot be spent on alcohol, tobacco, pornography or gambling.

People can spend their income managed funds by organising direct payments to people or organisations for things like rent, utilities, food or household items, and by using the BasicsCard.

Centrelink meets with people to help them determine how to allocate their income managed funds. Financial Wellbeing and Capability service providers can also help a person to develop budgeting skills and make informed financial choices.

Can I apply for an exemption?

A person who is assessed by a Centrelink social worker to be vulnerable or at risk may ask the delegate to reconsider their circumstances during the period in which the determination is in force.

For a person who has been placed on Income Management under a youth trigger, a Centrelink social worker can consider whether a person will be excluded from Income Management if:

- the vulnerable measure of Income Management would, due to specific and unusual individual circumstances, place the person's mental, physical or emotional wellbeing at risk, or
- it is not practicable to income manage a person under the vulnerable measure of Income Management.

A person will also be excluded if they become a full-time student or apprentice. A person will not have to apply for this exclusion, and will be eligible for as long as they are a full-time student or apprentice.

People who disagree with a decision made by Centrelink, can appeal further (at no cost) to:

- a Centrelink Authorised Review Officer
- the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

More information

To find out more, visit the [Department of Social Services](#) website, [Department of Human Services](#) website or call 1800 132 594 (for customers).

Disclaimer

The information contained in this fact sheet is intended only as a guide. The information is accurate as at June 2019.