

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
<s22@[dss.gov.au](mailto:s22@dss.gov.au)>
Sent: Tuesday, 1 September 2020 1:58 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-pension-increase-in-september-20200818-p55mym.html> 2020/10505 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Tuesday, 1 September 2020 1:57:51 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy; s22; s22; s22;
s22
Subject: FW: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-pension-increase-in-september-20200818-p55mym.html>
2020/10505 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon

Please find below a response to complaint 2020/10505.

Thanks,

s22

s22

Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22@[dss.gov.au](mailto:s22@dss.gov.au)

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

The Australian Government appreciates the important economic and social contribution senior Australians make to our community and is keen to ensure that pensioners' living standards are safeguarded by the Age Pension. Pensions are funded by taxpayers and targeted through the means test to those who need it most.

You have commented on pension rates for September 2020.

Pension rates are calculated according to provisions in legislation and are not a decision of Government. Under social security law, base pension rates are indexed twice a year to ensure they keep pace with increases in the cost of living, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI). CPI and PBLCI measure changes in prices on a range of goods and services such as food, health care, postage, fuel, housing costs and utilities costs (including the availability of rebates offered by some state and territory governments).

Base pension rates are also benchmarked to Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE) to align them with community living standards.

As you may be aware, Australia is currently experiencing a period of deflation, or a decline in prices. This is reflected in the recent CPI and PBLCI price values, which declined in the June 2020 quarter. Additionally, wages growth is slowing, as reflected in the latest MTAWE value. Base pension rates are currently above the MTAWE benchmark.

When prices or wages fall, legislation ensures social security payment rates do not decrease. This feature safeguards payment recipients from experiencing reductions in payment rates during periods of price or wage decline. This means pension rates will not change on 20 September 2020. The next indexation review is scheduled for 20 March 2021. Pension rates will continue to be reviewed twice a year, as set out in legislation.

The Age Pension is paid at the highest permanent rate of income support in the social security system. The maximum total pension rate for single pensioners is \$944.30 a fortnight or \$24,551.80 a year. The maximum rate for pensioner couples combined is \$1,423.60 a fortnight or \$37,013.60 a year.

In addition to their main payment, pensioners can receive a range of benefits and concessions that increase their economic security, including:

- the exemption of the principal home from the assets test for homeowners;
- assistance for people who rent in the private rental market, through Commonwealth Rent Assistance;
- subsidised prescription medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme;
- subsidised health care and related products;
- subsidised aged care; and
- concessions provided by state and territory governments, which could include subsidised rates for homeowners, utilities such as electricity, gas and water, and public transport and vehicle registration fees. Concessions offered vary between states.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners have received two Economic Support Payments of \$750. The first payment was automatically paid by Services Australia (Centrelink) between 31 March and 17 April 2020 into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. The second payment was paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

If you are having a difficult time financially, Centrelink has social workers who can assist in a number of ways such as providing information or referral to financial counselling services which are free. You can arrange an appointment to see a social worker by phoning Centrelink on 13 28 50.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 19 August 2020 3:13 PM

To: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>

Subject: FW: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-pension-increase-in-september-20200818-p55mym.html>
2020/10505 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination Team received the below complaint (ID 2020/10505).

Please review and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response to this email. If you are able to respond, turnaround time for the complaint process is 25 calendar days although an earlier response is preferred.

Please send your cleared response through to complaints@dss.gov.au mailbox so that it can be issued accordingly.

Alternatively, if you prefer you can send the response straight from your branch with a cc to the aforementioned mailbox once appropriately approved.

Regards,

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @optusnet.com.au
Sent: Wednesday, 19 August 2020 1:53 PM
To: s22 @fairfaxmedia.com.au; Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>; s22 @dss.gov.au
Subject: Re: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-pension-increase-in-september-20200818-p55mym.html>
Importance: High

Dear s22 ,

Plain and simple... Discrimination within the eyes of the law...

This is actually a breach of the law...to deny one section of the community...specifically those with pensions...from a paltry increase and suggests yet again the incumbent Federal government chooses those within the community who they believe will improve the economy - it is plain and simple discriminatory in the worst possible way...to deny those who for decades paid their taxes...

This goes back to the time when Mathias Cormann and Joe Hockey the famous 'lifters and leaners' photograph....

Joe Hockey and Mathias Cormann caught smoking cigars outside Parliament House

THEY'VE said we must do the "heavy lifting" - to save our budget. Now Joe Hockey and Mathias Cormann have been caught sitting back smoking cigars.

Whilst Joe Hockey has moved on to more lucrative employment, of course well supported by the Australian Taxpayers...Mathias Cormann is still there cutting into what clearly he views as the leaners...rather than the lifters...the Australian pensioners...

Again, it is blatant when an email was leaked relating as to who should be taken to hospital as per coronavirus...those within the aged care sector or the younger members of the community who have also contracted the virus...in the eyes the government economists it is the younger members of the community...as they will more likely recover and be useful to the future economy...after the virus...

Yours sincerely,

s22

From: s22
Sent: Friday, 7 August 2020 2:24 PM
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy; s22 ; s22 ;
s22 ; s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form REF 2020/10269 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Please find below a response to complaint 2020/10269.

Thanks,

s22

s22
Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

The Australian Government appreciates the important economic and social contribution senior Australians make to our community and is keen to ensure that pensioners' living standards are safeguarded by the Age Pension. Pensions, such as the Age Pension, are funded by taxpayers and targeted through the means test to those who need it most.

You mentioned that you receive the Age Pension but your wife is not yet eligible and as a result you receive the partnered rate of pension which is intended to support an individual who is a member of a couple – not two people with little or no other additional income. Partners who are not yet eligible for the Age Pension are generally expected to work in order to contribute to the household finances. The partnered rate is paid to an eligible member of a couple whether or not his or her partner is receiving a payment from Centrelink. If your wife is not able to work, she can test her eligibility for an income support payment available to people aged below Age Pension age, such as JobSeeker Payment. If she were eligible, her payment would be paid at the partnered rate of payment.

The social security system recognises that single pensioners need more income to have a similar standard of living to couples. The single rate is set at 66.33 per cent of the couple combined pension, while each eligible member of a couple receives 50 per cent of the combined couple rate.

Couples gain economies and advantages from living together and can pool resources to meet their needs. Single people cannot usually share costs such as electricity, telephone, transport, heating and house maintenance, which is why single pensioners receive a higher pension rate than each member of a couple.

Members of a couple also face some individual costs for which the opportunity to economise by sharing is limited. Food, clothing, medical expenses and travel costs are examples of expenses where there are limited economies. As a result, a couple needs more than a single person, but less than double, to achieve the same standard of living.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 27 July 2020 11:21 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Cc: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form REF 2020/10269 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hello,

The Feedback Coordination Team received the below complaint.

Can you please advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response to this email?

Turnaround time for the complaint process is 2 weeks although an earlier response is preferred.

I would be happy to forward any response from the complaints@dss.gov.au mailbox. Alternatively, you could send the response straight from your branch with a cc to the aforementioned mailbox once approved by your supervisor.

Please remove this email beforehand if responding straight from your branch

Happy to discuss.

s22 [redacted]

Feedback Coordination Team
Ph: 1800 634 035
Fax: (02) 6133 8442
Email: complaints@dss.gov.au

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services
Sent: Saturday, 25 July 2020 3:48 PM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Saturday, 25 July 2020 - 3:47pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? No

==My Details==

Title: s2 [redacted]
Your Name: s22 [redacted]
State/Territory: Queensland

Email address: s22 @hotkey.net.au

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request? no

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method: Email

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): DSS

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au.: I

Receive the aged pension amount of \$711.80 per fortnight as a married person, my wife is not of aged pension age yet, yet a single person receives much more, around \$944 per fortnight.

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words).: I am a 74 yo aged pensioner with a 65 yo wife who is not eligible for the aged pension for a further 18 months. I receive \$711,80 per fortnight to support both of us, whereas a single person, only supporting his/her self receives around \$944 per fortnight. This is a considerable inequity and I believe I should be able to receive the same rate as a single person, at least.

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words).:

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words).:

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: Change my pension rate to the single persons rate until my wife is eligible for the aged pension, in 18 months time, at which time we can revert to a married couples pension rate.

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose my personal information to any individuals or organisations, including third parties, involved in the complaint for the purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes

I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes

I wish to remain anonymous: No

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/27171>

IP: s22 [REDACTED]

s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 July 2020 5:48 PM
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID 2020/9976 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon

Please see below a BM-cleared response to the query from s22 .

With thanks

s22

Dear s22 ,

Thank you for your email of 1 July 2020. The Australian Government appreciates the important economic and social contribution senior Australians make to our community and is keen to ensure that pensioners' living standards are safeguarded by the Age Pension. Pensions such as the Age Pension are funded by taxpayers and targeted through the means test to those who need it most.

A pensioner and their partner can receive an amount of income before their pension starts to be reduced, called the free area. If your partner is also of Age Pension age (currently 66 years) and receives a pension (including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment), the free area for a couple (combined) is currently \$316 a fortnight. For every \$1 a fortnight of income earned by your partner or yourself above the free area, your own pension is reduced by \$0.25 a fortnight.

If your partner is not of Age Pension age or receiving any type of pension, your own free area is \$158 a fortnight. In this situation, half of your partner's earnings are attributable towards you for the purposes of the pension income test. If this attributable amount is above \$158 a fortnight, then every dollar a fortnight above the \$158 reduces your own pension by \$0.50 a fortnight.

You mentioned a rate of \$711.80 a fortnight. This is the maximum rate of Age Pension for a pensioner who is partnered. If you are receiving this rate, it means that any income from your partner is not affecting your Age Pension rate.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension payment recipients, are entitled to two Economic Support Payments of \$750. The first payment was automatically paid by Services Australia (Centrelink) between 31 March and 17 April 2020 into the same bank account as your Age Pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020. These payments are not reduced by any income you or your partner may earn.

If you are having a difficult time financially, Centrelink has social workers who can assist in a number of ways. They can provide information or referral to financial counselling services which are free. You can arrange an appointment to see a social worker by phoning Centrelink on 13 2850.

I hope this information is of assistance.

s22

Director, Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Older Australians Branch
Pensions and Family Payments Group
Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au M: s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 1 July 2020 1:49 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au
Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID 2020/9976 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint from s22 insert complainant (2020/9976).

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services
Sent: Wednesday, 1 July 2020 10:54 AM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Wednesday, 1 July 2020 - 10:53am Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Compliment

==My Details==

Title: s2

Your Name: s22
State/Territory: South Australia
Email address: s22@hotmail.com
My Preferred Language: English

==Feedback Details==

Details:

Hello, I am a 78 year old pensioner and my partner works for s22
s22 and every 2nd Monday I am required to give
Centerlink her wage details and then my pension gets cut most
times by 3/4 and I end up with around \$200 for the fortnight. Now
I find this \$750 which the Government has promised us I will only
get \$711.80 I want to know why am I getting less than what is
promised
s22 works hard looking after the age and her tax is more than
paying my lousy pension what did all my working life tax go too
???

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/26966>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Sent: Monday, 15 June 2020 4:19 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Monday, 15 June 2020 4:19:02 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Please find below a cleared response to s22 follow up correspondence (2020/9724):

Dear s22,

Support for senior Australians is provided through our retirement income system which combines an affordable basis for generating retirement incomes with targeted support for those who most need assistance. The retirement income system is funded through a mix of consolidated revenue, employer contributions and employee contributions. It is based on three parts, or pillars:

- compulsory employer superannuation contributions through the Superannuation Guarantee, supported by taxation concessions;
- voluntary private savings, including personal superannuation contributions which are supported by taxation concessions and other private savings; and
- the taxpayer-funded means tested Age Pension which provides a safety net for people who are unable to support themselves fully in retirement and supplements the retirement incomes of those with lower levels of private savings.

In most cases, retirement incomes of senior Australians are a combination of two or three of the above components, with the Age Pension as the key component for many people. The Australian Age Pension has always been a non-contributory means-tested payment, financed through general taxation revenue on a recurrent basis. It has never been a contributory insurance-type scheme.

The Government has no plans to change the name of the Age Pension nor how it is referred.

Regards,

s22

Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au
(located in Aviation House)

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 15 June 2020 4:16 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy <s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks s22 , cleared.

s22
A/g Branch Manager
Older Australians Branch
Pensions and Family Payments Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 15 June 2020 2:54 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy <s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 ,

For your clearance—below is a draft response to a follow up complaint from s22 .

It sounds like s22 .

Dear s22 ,

Support for senior Australians is provided through our retirement income system which combines an affordable basis for generating retirement incomes with targeted support for those who most need assistance. The retirement income system is funded through a mix of consolidated revenue, employer contributions and employee contributions. It is based on three parts, or pillars:

- compulsory employer superannuation contributions through the Superannuation Guarantee, supported by taxation concessions;
- voluntary private savings, including personal superannuation contributions which are supported by taxation concessions and other private savings; and
- the taxpayer-funded means tested Age Pension which provides a safety net for people who are unable to support themselves fully in retirement and supplements the retirement incomes of those with lower levels of private savings.

In most cases, retirement incomes of senior Australians are a combination of two or three of the above components, with the Age Pension as the key component for many people. The Australian Age Pension has

always been a non-contributory means-tested payment, financed through general taxation revenue on a recurrent basis. It has never been a contributory insurance-type scheme.

The Government has no plans to change the name of the Age Pension nor how it is referred.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 11 June 2020 9:54 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 [redacted] and s22 [redacted],

Please see below response from s22 [redacted] for action.

Thanks,

s2 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant s22 [redacted]
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> **M:** s22 [redacted]

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 4:55 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s2 [redacted]

Below is further correspondence from s22 [redacted] (2020/9724).
Can you please forward onto your team for appropriate action.

Thanks

s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]
Pensions and Family Payments Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 2:59 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon team,

Please see below further correspondence from s22 [redacted] (2020/9724).

Kind regards,

s22 [redacted]

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@internode.on.net>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 12:24 PM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Re: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi,

Thank you for your answer, appreciated, however I take issue with this part of your answer.

"To provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, are unable to support themselves"

We baby boomers certainly have supported ourselves and many many others, we also supported an aged pension system for our retirement which was supposed to be seeing by now a payment of around \$1,000 per week for seniors had it not been misappropriated and used for other purposes, other than what it was designed for.

Now, I believe, if the media is correct, that the government is attempting to bundle seniors into a "welfare payment"

(Welfare - statutory procedure or social effort designed to promote the basic physical and material well-being of people in need.

This is incorrect and a lie, we do not need basic welfare poverty pack because we provided it to the government in trust as our caretakers so that we would have it as a direct result of having already paid for our retirement from a lifetime of working and paying taxes. All oif this money is not welfare at all, it is our right after the burden and sacrifices we have shouldered all our working lives. Has a large part of this gigantic generation of wealth been stolen from us?

I look forward to your response,

Regards

s22

On 6/10/2020 10:30 AM, Complaints wrote: was

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a non-contributory system designed to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation. It is a means tested, residence-based system, designed to provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, unemployment or ill health, are unable to support themselves. As a non-contributory social security payment, the Age Pension is not based on past income or contributions, or taxes paid during a person's working life.

It is not the case that Indigenous people have a lower Age Pension qualification age than non-Indigenous people. The Age Pension qualification age is the same whether or not a recipient is Indigenous.

Consistent with the legislation passed in 2009, on 1 July 2019, the Age Pension qualification age for men and women increased to 66 and is scheduled to further increase by six months every two years until it reaches 67 years on 1 July 2023. On 1 July 2021, the qualification age will increase to 66 years and 6 months. To receive the Age Pension a person must also satisfy the residence requirements and meet the means test requirements.

If a person below Age Pension qualification age is unable to work, they may be eligible for an alternative social security payment. For example, they may qualify for payments such as the JobSeeker Payment or Disability Support Pension, subject to eligibility criteria.

JobSeeker Payment is the primary income support payment for unemployed people of workforce age while they look for work. The rate of JobSeeker Payment is the same whether or not a recipient is Indigenous.

Regards

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 12:41 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Tuesday, 2 June 2020 - 12:40pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? No

==My Details==

Title: s2

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: South Australia

Email address: s22 @internode.on.net

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method: Email

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): The federal government of Australia

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate

documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au: I am

addressing the glaring inequality of the aged pension age

between aboriginal indigenous and white Australians. In my case,

I am required to work 17 years longer than an indigenous

Australian which see's me 67 years of age before I receive my

entitlement of an aged pension, why this huge inequity?

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words): I want to know why there is

an aged pension paid to aboriginal people earlier than white

people and their apparant shorter life span isnt a good enough

excuse. Many aboriginals who dont self abuse live long lives,

well into their 80's they are also entitled to free health care

in most situations. I am bringig this matter to your attention

prior to starting a petition which will then be taken to Canberra

as the voice of the people who are at the effect of this

inequality.

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words): Unemployment benefits are

also greater remuneration than white unemployed, why?

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words): This sitation is racist

because you are favouring one race over another.

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and

the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: An aged

pension provided at the same age as the indigenous Australians

pension age for all Australian citizens who have worked and paid

taxes and contributed to the building, maintenance and wealth

generation of the country known as Australia.

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose

my personal information to any individuals or organisations,

including third parties, involved in the complaint for the

purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes

I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes
I wish to remain anonymous: No

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/26726>

IP: s22



Virus-free. www.avq.com

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 10:39 AM
To: GMSG -s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 10:39:15 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a BM cleared response to complaint 2020/9724 from s22 .

Thanks,
s22

s22
Departmental Officer
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au
(located in Aviation House)

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 10:32:35 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: s22
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks s22 , cleared.

s22
A/g Branch Manager
Older Australians Branch
Pensions and Family Payments Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au M: s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 9:26 AM
To: s22 <s22@dss.gov.au>
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

For your clearance – draft response to a complaint regarding Age Pension for Indigenous Australians below:

Dear s22

Australia’s social security system is a non-contributory system designed to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation. It is a means tested, residence-based system, designed to provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, unemployment or ill health, are unable to support themselves. As a non-contributory social security payment, the Age Pension is not based on past income or contributions, or taxes paid during a person’s working life.

It is not the case that Indigenous people have a lower Age Pension qualification age than non-Indigenous people. The Age Pension qualification age is the same whether or not a recipient is Indigenous.

Consistent with the legislation passed in 2009, on 1 July 2019, the Age Pension qualification age for men and women increased to 66 and is scheduled to further increase by six months every two years until it reaches 67 years on 1 July 2023. On 1 July 2021, the qualification age will increase to 66 years and 6 months. To receive the Age Pension a person must also satisfy the residence requirements and meet the means test requirements.

If a person below Age Pension qualification age is unable to work, they may be eligible for an alternative social security payment. For example, they may qualify for payments such as the JobSeeker Payment or Disability Support Pension, subject to eligibility criteria.

JobSeeker Payment is the primary income support payment for unemployed people of workforce age while they look for work. The rate of JobSeeker Payment is the same whether or not a recipient is Indigenous.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au
Sent: Monday, 8 June 2020 3:47 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

This looks good. I added in the high level words and I was also just wondering if we should change the Indigenous para to be a little more direct – see below.

If you agree, happy for it to go to s22 .

Thanks

s22

From: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 3 June 2020 3:34 PM
To: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

Draft response below. I've kept it brief and just addressed the specific complaint – do you think it needs some more general information on AP?

s22

From: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 6:03 PM
To: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22

Can you have a look at this one please?

Thanks

s22

From: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 4:54 PM
To: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

Is this one for your team?

Thanks,

s2

s22

Executive Assistant s22

A/g Branch Manager Older Australians

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 4:49 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s2 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks

s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]
Pensions and Family Payments Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 3:31 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9724) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to Age Pension from s22 [redacted] (2020/9724).

Please find the original complaint below which provides background. The key concerns can be summarised as:

- Wants to address the glaring inequality of the aged pension - the age between aboriginal indigenous and white Australians.
- Required to work 17 years longer than an indigenous Australian which sees her 67 years of age before she receives entitlement of an aged pension.
- Wants to know why aged pension is paid to aboriginal people earlier than white people.

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is 25 calendar days, although an earlier response is preferred. Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 12:41 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Tuesday, 2 June 2020 - 12:40pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==

Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? No

==My Details==

Title: s22

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: South Australia

Email address: s22 @internode.on.net

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method: Email

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): The federal government of Australia

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au.

I am addressing the glaring inequality of the aged pension age between aboriginal indigenous and white Australians. In my case,

I am required to work 17 years longer than an indigenous Australian which see's me 67 years of age before I receive my entitlement of an aged pension, why this huge inequity?

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words): I want to know why there is an aged pension paid to aboriginal people earlier than white

people and their apparant shorter life span isnt a good enough excuse. Many aboriginals who dont self abuse live long lives, well into their 80's they are also entitled to free health care in most situations. I am briging this matter to your attention prior to starting a petition which will then be taken to Canberra as the voice of the people who are at the effect of this inequality.

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words).: Unemployment benefits are also greater remuneration than white unemployed, why?

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words).: This sitation is racist because you are favouring one race over another.

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: An aged pension provided at the same age as the indigenous Australians pension age for all Australian citizens who have worked and paid taxes and contributed to the building, maintenance and wealth generation of the country known as Australia.

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose my personal information to any individuals or organisations, including third parties, involved in the complaint for the purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes
I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes
I wish to remain anonymous: No

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/26726>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 29 June 2020 9:26 AM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: Age Pension Questions 2020/9647 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Monday, 29 June 2020 9:25:43 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy; s22 ; s22 ; s22 ;
s22
Subject: Age Pension Questions 2020/9647 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a response to complaint/query 2020/9647.

Thanks,

s22

s22

Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

US-Australia International Social Security Agreement

Normally, to qualify for the Australian Age Pension, a person must be an Australian resident, have resided here for at least 10 years and be of Age Pension age (currently age 66). Payment is also subject to income and assets tests. The only exception to the requirement to be an Australian resident and in Australia when the claim is lodged is for former Australian residents living in a country which has a social security agreement with Australia.

Australia has 31 social security agreements, including with the United States (US). The Social Security Agreement between Australia and the United States of America (the Agreement) allows people to make a claim for certain Australian or US pensions from either country. It also allows people who have split their working life between the two countries to combine periods to meet the minimum qualifying requirements. This is known as 'totalisation' and operates in the following way under the Agreement:

- periods of Australian residence can be combined with periods of contributions in the US in order to meet the minimum qualifying requirements for Australian benefits; and

- periods of Australian Working Life Residence (AWLR) (defined as the period between the age of 16 years and Age Pension age during which the person was an Australian resident) can be combined with periods of US contributions in order to meet the qualifying requirements for US benefits.

In order to use the Agreement to claim an Australian pension while residing in the US, a person must have actually resided in Australia during their working life for a minimum of 12 months. To use the Agreement to claim a US pension a person must have a minimum of 6 quarters of coverage.

A copy of the Agreement can be found at <https://www.dss.gov.au/about-the-department/international/international-social-security-agreements/current-international-social-security-agreements/social-security-agreement-between-australia-and-the-united-states-of-america>. In addition, information about how the Agreement operates can be found at www.dss.gov.au/about-the-department/international/international-social-security-agreements/current-international-social-security-agreements/australia-and-the-united-states-of-america-usa-frequently-asked-questions#4.

Paying pensions outside Australia

The rate of pension for those individuals outside of Australia (both for Australian residents temporarily overseas for longer than 26 weeks, and those residing outside of Australia) is based on their period of AWLR. As noted above, this is the period between the age of 16 years and Age Pension age during which the person was an Australian resident.

A person must have 35 years AWLR to receive a full basic rate of means-tested pension outside Australia. A person who has less than 35 years AWLR will receive a proportional means-tested rate. For example, a person with 15 years AWLR will receive 15/35^{ths} of the basic means-tested rate of pension. In these cases, there is an expectation that the individual, through periods of time working or living in another country, would be eligible to receive a pension from that country for the remaining period.

The Agreement with the US also provides for concessional treatment of an individual's US pension when calculating the rate of Australian pension payable. This concessional treatment only applies when the person's Australian benefits are calculated at a proportional rate (i.e. when the individual is outside Australia). The individual's AWLR is used to determine the proportion of foreign pension to be assessed e.g. for someone with an AWLR of 120 months then 120/300^{ths} of their foreign pension would be assessed as income.

Also, when any Australian pension is paid to a person in the US, any benefit payable under the US Supplemental Security Income program is not counted as income for Australian pension purposes.

The Australian Department of Social Services is not able to provide specific advice on whether someone would be eligible to receive either an Australian or US benefit under the terms of the Agreement. Anyone seeking more information about potential entitlements and how to make a claim should contact their local Social Security Administration office for more information. Alternatively, Services Australia (Centrelink) International Services can be contacted on 1866 3433 086 (from the US) during Australian business hours of 08:00 – 17:00 Australian Eastern Standard Time, or at their website: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/international-services.

Paying pensions inside Australia

The rate of benefit paid in Australia under an agreement depends on whether or not the individual required the use of totalisation under the agreement to unlock their benefits (see explanation above). Pensioners in Australia who get accelerated access to Australian pensions through totalisation are subject to direct deduction. Direct deduction means that any pension which is received from an agreement country is deducted from the Australian pension entitlement on a dollar for dollar basis until such time as they reach 10 years Australian residence. Pensioners who qualify for a pension outside of an Agreement, by meeting the 10 years residence requirement, have their foreign pension means tested using the ordinary income test.

Question 1 - Is the Age Pension benefit eliminated due to failing the income and/or asset test? Or just reduced by 50 cents for every dollar?

Australia's social security system is a non-contributory system designed to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation. It is a means tested, residence-based system, designed to provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, unemployment or ill health, are unable to support themselves.

Eligibility for the Age Pension is subject to the income and assets tests. The test that results in the lower rate of payment is the one that is applied to the pensioner.

The pension income test is designed to encourage people to supplement their income support payments with other income, if they are able to. A pensioner (and/or their partner) can receive an amount of income before their pension starts to be reduced. This amount may comprise income from investments, earnings, or a combination of income from various sources and is known as the income free area. The pension income test free area from 1 July 2020 is \$178 a fortnight for singles and \$316 a fortnight for couples combined.

Age Pensioner is an Australian resident:

For each dollar of income over the income test free area, the single pension is reduced by 50 cents (the taper rate). For couples, their combined pensions are reduced by 50 cents. This means that for a pensioner couple, their individual pensions are reduced by 25 cents a fortnight for each dollar of income that the couple has over the income test free area.

This means that a part pension is payable up to an assessable income of \$2,066.60 a fortnight for a single pensioner or \$3,163.20 a fortnight for a pensioner couple. These figures may be higher if a pensioner does not own their own home and is renting, and Rent Assistance is paid with the pension. The operation of the pension income test free area and taper rate means that pensioners are always better off while they (or their partner) are earning income in addition to their pension payments.

The assets test is designed so that people with substantial assets use their assets, either directly or to produce income, to meet their day-to-day living expenses before calling on the social security system for support. This is why the assets test applies equally to income producing investments and to other assets that produce little or no income. The assets test helps to ensure that people with higher levels of assets who have the capacity to support themselves cannot otherwise access social security payments. An asset is any property or possession that a person owns, with the exception of exempt assets, such as the person's home in which they live.

The pension assets test provides different free areas based on whether a pensioner is single or partnered and their home ownership status. The current assets test free areas are \$268,000 for a single homeowner, \$482,500 for a single non-homeowner, \$401,500 for homeowner couples (combined), and \$616,000 for non-homeowner couples (combined).

Where a person's rate of pension is worked out under the assets test, the value of their assets above the assets test free area reduces their pension by \$3 a fortnight for each extra \$1,000 in assets. Pension payments currently cease to be payable when assets exceed \$583,000 for a single homeowner and \$876,500 for homeowner couples. For non-homeowners, pensions cease to be payable when assets exceed \$797,500 for singles and \$1,091,000 for couples. These limits increase if Rent Assistance is paid with the pension.

Deeming rules are used to assess income from financial investments for social security purposes. Financial investments include all bank accounts, managed investments, shares and most superannuation. To calculate the investment income assessed, deeming rates are applied to the total market value of a person's financial investments. The actual returns from the person's investments are not used for income assessment.

A deeming rate of 0.25 per cent applies to the first:

- \$53,000 of a single recipient's total financial investments;
- \$88,000 of a pensioner couple's total financial investments;
- \$44,000 of total financial investments for each member of a couple who receives an allowance payment.

A deeming rate of 2.25 per cent will apply to financial investments above these amounts. The thresholds at which the upper deeming rate begins to apply are indexed in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in July each year.

The lower deeming rate is designed to reflect available returns from safe and accessible investments, such as savings accounts. The upper deeming rate is designed to reflect that as a person's assets increase, they can be expected to invest in higher-return investments, which may have limited accessibility or some additional risk.

Available returns from bank accounts, term deposits and market-linked investments, including shares and superannuation are considered when setting the deeming rates. The deeming rates are continually monitored to ensure they are in line with available returns.

Age Pensioner is a non-resident:

As noted above, the rate of pension for those individuals outside of Australia (both for Australian residents temporarily overseas for longer than 26 weeks, and those residing outside of Australia) is based on their period of AWLR.

Question 2 - Are there additional supplements to the Age Pension and are those also means tested?

Age Pensioner is an Australian resident:

The maximum rate of Age Pension for Australian residents is comprised of three components:

i) Base pension

The maximum rates are currently \$860.60 a fortnight for singles and \$648.70 a fortnight for each member of a couple.

ii) Pension Supplement

The Pension Supplement is a regular extra payment to help with utility, phone, internet and medicine costs.

The maximum rates are currently \$69.60 a fortnight for singles and \$52.50 a fortnight for each member of a couple.

The Pension Supplement is added to the maximum rate of the base pension before the income or assets test is applied.

iii) Energy Supplement

The Energy Supplement is an extra payment to help with energy costs. The maximum rates are currently \$14.10 a fortnight for singles and \$10.60 a fortnight for each member of a couple.

The Energy Supplement is added to the maximum rate of the base pension before the income or assets test is applied.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

CRA provides assistance to payment recipients who rent in the private rental market and community housing.

In order to receive CRA, a person must pay or be liable to pay eligible rent above a minimum level, called the rent threshold. CRA is then calculated at \$0.75 for each dollar above the rent threshold up to a maximum rate. The amount of CRA people are eligible for is also dependent on their family situation (single, partnered, number of children, and whether they are sharing accommodation (for singles)).

Age Pensioner is a non-resident:

Age pensioners who are non-residents of Australia or who are away from Australia for more than 6 weeks receive the base pension rate and the basic Pension Supplement.

i) Base pension

The maximum rates are currently \$860.60 a fortnight for singles and \$648.70 a fortnight for each member of a couple.

ii) Basic Pension Supplement

The maximum rates are currently \$24.20 a fortnight for singles and \$19.90 a fortnight for each member of a couple.

Supplementary payments like the maximum Pension Supplement and CRA are generally only payable to Australian residents and for limited, temporary absences only. The reason for this is that supplementary payments are designed to meet the costs of daily household and living expenses in Australia.

Question 3 - At what age can benefits start at?

Consistent with the legislation passed in 2009, on 1 July 2019, the Age Pension qualification age for men and women increased to 66 years and is scheduled to further increase by six months every two years until it reaches 67 years on 1 July 2023. To receive the Age Pension, a person must also satisfy the residence and means test requirements.

Question 4 – Are the Wife and Widow benefits typically for if a spouse does not qualify for their own benefit?

Wife Pension was an income support payment for female partners of people receiving the Age Pension or Disability Support Pension as of June 1995. Wife Pension payments ceased on 20 March 2020 and recipients may have been transferred to other payments.

Widow Allowance is a payment for widowed, divorced or separated women over a set age. New claims for Widow Allowance closed on 1 July 2018.

Widow B Pension was for certain older women who had lost the financial support of a male partner, through death, separation or divorce (who do not qualify for Parenting Payment). In recognition of women's increased labour force participation, no new Widow B Pensions have been granted since 20 March 1997. Instead, people in need may have qualified for other income support payments. Widow B Pension payments ceased on 20 March 2020 and recipients were transferred to the Age Pension.

Under the US Agreement, Parenting Payment (Single) is available to widowed persons who meet the relevant eligibility criteria.

Question 5 - Is there a cost of living associated with the Age Pension?

Pensions increase regularly to keep pace with the cost of living. Base pensions are indexed twice a year, in March and September, to the higher of the increase in the CPI and the increase in the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index.

After indexing to price increases, base pension rates are then benchmarked to 41.76 per cent of Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE) (original series) for pensioner couples combined. The single rate of pension is 66.33 per cent of the combined couple rate.

The following publications may be of use:

- Consumer Price Index (6401.0): <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6401.0>
- Selected Living Cost Indexes (6467.0): <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6467.0>
- Average Weekly Earnings (6302.0): <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6302.0>

The Pension Supplement is indexed every March and September with CPI increases.

The 20 March indexation is based on price index growth in the six months to the previous December, and previous November's MTAWE. The 20 September indexation is based on price index growth in the six months to the previous June and previous May's MTAWE.

Income and asset free areas and deeming thresholds are indexed every 1 July to CPI growth in the 12 months to the previous March.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 22 May 2020 12:55 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Age Pension Questions 2020/9647 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received an enquiry in relation to Aged Pension from s22 [redacted] (ID 2020/9647)

Please find the original enquiry below. The key questions can be summarised as:

1. Is the Age Pension benefit eliminated due to failing the income and/or asset test? Or just reduced by 50 cents for every dollar?
2. Are there additional supplements to the Age Pension and are those also means tested? s22 [redacted]
3. At what age can benefits start at? s22 [redacted]
4. The Wife and Widow benefits are typically if a spouse does not qualify for their own benefit correct? s22 [redacted]
5. Is there a cost of living associated with the Age Pension? s22 [redacted]

Please review the enquiry and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

s22 [redacted]

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman safeguards the community in its dealings with the Australian Government. While they cannot override the decisions of agencies, they may be able to assist in resolving a dispute. If you consider an Australian Government agency has treated you unfairly or unreasonably you may wish to consider the information available [here](#)

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@ampf.com>
Sent: Friday, 22 May 2020 9:24 AM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Age Pension Questions

Hello,

My name is s22, our financial advisory firm has a client we are trying to run retirement projections for and they happen to be a dual citizen of the U.S. and Australia. I was hoping someone would be willing to contact me or provide me with some resources which may help to answer the following questions:

1. Is the Age Pension benefit eliminated due to failing the income and/or asset test? Or just reduced by 50 cents for every dollar?
2. Are there additional supplements to the Age Pension and are those also means tested?
3. At what age can benefits start at?
4. The Wife and Widow benefits are typically if a spouse does not qualify for their own benefit correct?
5. Is there a cost of living associated with the Age Pension?

I very much appreciate your time, I have reviewed quit a bit of information on your website which is very helpful but, I seem to be finding conflicting information so I thought I would reach out to speak with someone.

Respectfully,
s22

P.S. [Learn more](#) about how we can help you feel confident, connected and in control of your financial life.

s22
Financial Advisor | Financial Planning Specialist
s22
s22
.....

s22

[Visit my team website](#)

s22
s22

s22

***** "This message and any attachments are solely for the intended recipient and may contain confidential or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, any disclosure, copying, use, or distribution of the information included in this message and any attachments is prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us by reply e-mail and immediately and permanently delete this message and any attachments. Thank you." *****

s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 4 May 2020 9:58 AM
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy; s22 ; s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a response to complaint 2020/9284.

Thanks,

s22

s22

Departmental Officer
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy

Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22 ,

The Australian Government appreciates the important economic and social contribution senior Australians make to our community and is keen to ensure that pensioners' living standards are safeguarded by the Age Pension. Pensions such as the Age Pension are funded by taxpayers and targeted through the means test to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients, will receive two Economic Support Payments of \$750. The first payment was automatically paid by Services Australia (Centrelink) between 31 March and 17 April 2020 into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. The second payment will be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement applies to recipients of the payments listed under the Coronavirus Supplement section at www.dss.gov.au/coronavirus. The Government is not expanding access to the

Coronavirus Supplement at this time. Pensions are a long term payment for people who are not expected to work to support themselves due to age, disability or caring responsibilities. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

If you are having a difficult time financially, Centrelink has social workers who can assist in a number of ways. They can provide information or referral to financial counselling services. These services are free. You can arrange an appointment to see a social worker by phoning Centrelink on 13 2850.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 4 May 2020 9:56 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks s22 , cleared.

s22
A/g Branch Manager
Older Australians Branch
Pensions and Housing Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 4 May 2020 9:07 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy <s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 ,

For your clearance – below is a draft response to a DSS complaints mailbox complaint from an Age Pensioner regarding the Coronavirus Supplement. She only gave her first name so I have just addressed s22 '.

Thanks,
s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Sunday, 3 May 2020 12:12 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Cleared, thanks.

I think just change it to "s22" at the start, then good to go to s22 .

s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 1 May 2020 5:23 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

Draft response to complaint below. Response not due until next Friday the 8th.

She has given her name only as s22, although her email address includes s22. Should I leave as s22?

s22.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 29 April 2020 9:52 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Sorry, yes we can take this. s22, can you take a look?

Thanks
s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 24 April 2020 2:27 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

Is this one your team can respond to?

Thanks,
s2

s22
Executive Assistant s22
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 24 April 2020 1:20 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>

Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks

s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]

Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]

Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dds.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 24 April 2020 12:41 PM

To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/9284) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the Coronavirus supplement from an anonymous person (2020/9284).

Please find the original complaint below, which provides background. The key concern can be summarised as:

- Age care pensioner not eligible for the income support supplement

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dds.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

s22 [redacted]

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Thursday, 16 April 2020 1:05 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Thursday, 16 April 2020 - 1:05pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? Yes

==My Details==

Title: s2

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: Victoria

Email address: s22@outlook.com

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method: Email

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): Social services

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who

was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate

documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au.: I

have paid taxes all my life and I am on the aged pension why are

every other payment except for aged carers dsp not getting

anything extra to help with their cost of living going up cause

they are locked up in their homes yet you pay the parenting

payment extra money when most of these don't work sit home and

keep having keep having babies so they don't have to work ever

really you don't care about the aged dsp carers to you they

don't need any extra the aged don't have kids to get the

family tax benefits yet parenting payment is a he same as the

aged and they get ftb payment

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words).: COVID 19 extra fortnight

payment on top of what you get

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words): Everyone on Centrelink should be getting it

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words): Parenting payment shouldn't be getting it if they aren't working

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: Pay aged dsp carers that is xtra \$550 a fortnight

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose my personal information to any individuals or organisations, including third parties, involved in the complaint for the purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes

I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes

I wish to remain anonymous: Yes

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/26106>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Sent: Thursday, 23 April 2020 6:02 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/9157) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Thursday, 23 April 2020 6:02:09 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/9157) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good Evening

Please find below the reply to s22 (complaint 2020/9157).

Kind Regards

s22

Policy Officer

Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section

Older Australians Branch

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a non-contributory system designed to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation. It is a means tested, residence-based system, designed to provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, unemployment or ill health, are unable to support themselves. Pensions are funded by taxpayers and targeted through the means test to those who need it most.

Pensions increase regularly to keep pace with the cost of living. Base pensions are indexed twice a year, in March and September, to the higher of the increase in the Consumer Price Index and the increase in the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index. Pensions are also benchmarked to wages to align them with community living standards.

On 20 March 2020, the maximum total pension rate for single pensioners increased to \$944.30 a fortnight or \$24,551.80 a year. The maximum rate for pensioner couples combined increased to \$1,423.60 a fortnight or \$37,013.60 a year. Pension rates will be indexed again on 20 September 2020.

In addition to their main payment, pensioners can receive a range of benefits and concessions that increase their economic security, including subsidised prescription medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, subsidised health care and related products and concessions provided by state and territory governments.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit

www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

As you are already aware, eligible pensioners, including Age Pension and Disability Support Pension recipients, will receive two Economic Support Payments of \$750. The first payment was automatically paid by Services Australia (Centrelink) between 31 March and 17 April 2020 into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. The second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020. Recipients who receive the Coronavirus Supplement will not receive the second Economic Support Payment.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID 19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID 19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 12:24 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/9157) [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Yes, s22 [redacted], can you please have a look?
Thanks
s22 [redacted]

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 12:21 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/9157) [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Hi s22 [redacted],
Can your team respond to this one?
Thanks,
s2 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant s22 [redacted]
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au> **M:** s22 [redacted]
The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 11:10 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/9157) [SEC=OFFICIAL]
s2 [redacted],
Will you branch respond to this correspondence?
Sending to you as it mentions aged pensioners first.
I have also checked against PDMS.
Thanks
s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]
Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 10:36 AM

To: s22 @dss.gov.au

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/9157) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the income support supplement from s22 (2020/9157).

Please find the original complaint below, which provides background. The key concern can be summarised as:

- Aged and DSP recipients not eligible for the income support supplement

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred. Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

A/g Assistant Director, Feedback Coordination Team

Audit and Assurance Branch

Corporate and Governance Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Saturday, 11 April 2020 10:55 AM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Saturday, 11 April 2020 - 10:54am Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==

Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? No

==My Details==

Title: s2

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: Victoria

Email address: s22 @hotmail.com

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request? No

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method:

- Email

- Mobile phone

Mobile Phone: s22

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): My complaint is about the government and him making changers to the Centrelink package

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au.: My complaint is about the government and why he has not included aged and disability payments to the covid-19 package we are struggling just as much as everyone else that gets a Centrelink payment why can't we get the same \$550 as well yes we get the \$750 twice but everyone else gets \$550 on top of there payment they also get the \$750 as well as the \$550

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words).: For age and dsp should ask get the covid-19 package like everyone one else that's getting the extra \$550 on top of there payments

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words).:

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words).:

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: Is all people in Centrelink payment should all get the same payments of this covid-19 package

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose my personal information to any individuals or organisations, including third parties, involved in the complaint for the purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes

I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes

I wish to remain anonymous: No

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/25666>

IP: s22

s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 8:46 AM
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: RE: NB:URGENT Regarding discrimination - ID (2020/8959) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (2020/8959).

Regards

s22

Departmental Officer
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy

Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22 ,

You may be interested to know that on 30 March 2020, the Government announced a \$130 billion JobKeeper Payment to help keep more Australians in jobs and support businesses affected by the significant economic impact caused by COVID-19.

Affected employers (including sole traders) will be able to claim a fortnightly payment of \$1,500 per eligible employee from 30 March 2020, for a maximum period of 6 months. This is higher than the \$1,124.50 a fortnight a recipient on the single, no children rate of JobSeeker Payment who is also receiving Coronavirus Supplement would receive. There is no upper age limit for access to the JobKeeper Payment. Individuals just need to be at least 16 years of age on 1 March 2020 to be eligible. Recipients of JobKeeper Payment may also receive social security payments such as the Age Pension, subject to meeting the income and assets tests. More information can be found at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/jobkeeper.

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Age Pension is paid to people of Age Pension qualification age (rather than working age income support payments like JobSeeker Payment). Consistent with the legislation passed in 2009, on 1 July 2019 the Age Pension qualification age for men and women increased to 66 and is scheduled to further increase by six months every two years until it reaches 67 years on 1 July 2023. To qualify for an Age Pension, a person must also satisfy the residence and means test requirements.

A pensioner and their partner can receive an amount of income before their pension starts to be reduced. This amount may comprise income from investments, earnings, or a combination of income from various sources and is known as the income test free area. The pension income test free area is currently \$174 a fortnight for singles and

\$308 a fortnight for couples combined. The pension income test free area is adjusted each year in July for increases in the cost of living using the Consumer Price Index.

Age Pensioners may also access the Work Bonus, which operates in addition to the income test free area. Under the Work Bonus, the first \$300 of work income a fortnight is not counted in the pension income test allowing, for example, a single age pensioner of Age Pension age, with no other income, to earn up to \$474 a fortnight from work and still receive the maximum rate of Age Pension.

Pensioners are also able to build up any unused amount of the \$300 fortnightly exemption to a total of \$7,800. This amount can be used to exempt future earnings from the pension income test, so a pensioner could earn up to \$7,800 a year extra without it affecting their pension. Any unused amount of the Work Bonus is held in a Work Bonus income bank. The income bank amount is not time-limited – if unused it carries forward, even across years.

The assets test helps to ensure that people with higher levels of assets who have the capacity to support themselves cannot otherwise access social security payments. An asset is any property or possession that a person owns, with the exception of exempt assets, such as the person's home in which they live.

The pension assets test provides different free areas based on whether a pensioner is single or partnered and their home ownership status. The current assets test free areas are \$263,250 for a single homeowner, \$473,750 for a single non-homeowner, \$394,500 for homeowner couples (combined), and \$605,000 for non-homeowner couples (combined).

Where a person's rate of pension is worked out under the assets test, the value of their assets above the assets test free area reduces their pension by \$3 a fortnight for each extra \$1,000 in assets. Pension payments currently cease to be payable when assets exceed \$578,250 for a single homeowner and \$869,500 for homeowner couples. For non-homeowners, pensions cease to be payable when assets exceed \$788,750 for singles and \$1,080,000 for couples.

You may find it useful to arrange an interview with a Financial Information Service officer, who can provide more information on Age Pension eligibility. This is a free service. You can arrange an appointment by telephoning Services Australia on 13 2300 for the cost of a local call (calls made from mobile phones may incur additional costs).

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 3:07 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: NB:URGENT Regarding discrimination - ID (2020/8959) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s2 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?
I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]

Pensions Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 3:01 PM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au
Subject: FW: NB:URGENT Regarding discrimination - ID (2020/8959) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to discrimination from s22 (2020/8959).

Please find the original complaint below, which provide background. The key concerns can be summarised as:

- Would like flexibility with policy for application

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred. Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @live.com.au
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 12:49 PM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: NB:URGENT Regarding discrimination

Hi , regarding discrimination , I have been in contact with Chief Executive for Services Australia , Ms Rebecca Skinner about eligibility for the JobSeeker payment and as you can see I have received a letter back however without any mention of discrimination

When I went on lime for the registration for the JobSeeker I was only eligible for the old AGE PENSION , and I take this as one of the worst cases of discrimination towards the elderly , I have been running a company for many years and employed people over the years , and now we are all going through hare times I feel that the Australian government is not supporting me , this is the first time I have ever asked for help over all my years , hopefully you will consider my complaint and I am asking that an inflexible of policy ' not be allowed to discriminate against me on the basis of AGE alone .

I have 2 attachments

Regards

s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 1:33 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8956) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 1:33:12 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8956) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (2020/8956).

Regards

s22

s22
Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

When the Age Pension was introduced in 1909, the average male life expectancy at birth was 55 and the pension age was set 10 years above the average male life expectancy. Average life expectancy has risen to 81 for newborn boys and 85 for newborn girls meaning the pension is now available at least 15 years below average life expectancy.

The 2015 Intergenerational Report found for every person aged 65 and over, the number of people aged between 15 and 64 has fallen from 7.3 people in 1975 to an estimated 4.5 people today. By 2055, this is projected to nearly halve again to only 2.7 people. This means that there will be fewer people paying taxes to pay for a larger proportion of people requiring the Age Pension.

Legislation was passed in 2009 to change the qualifying age to help maintain sustainability of the Age Pension. On 1 July 2019 the Age Pension qualification age for men and women increased to 66 and is scheduled to further increase by six months every two years until it reaches 67 years on 1 July 2023. To qualify for an Age Pension, a person must also satisfy the residence and means test requirements.

If a person below Age Pension qualification age is unable to work, they may be eligible for an alternative social security payment. For example, they may qualify for payments such as the Disability Support Pension or JobSeeker Payment, subject to eligibility criteria.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 2:41 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8956) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s2 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?
I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]
Pensions Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 2:21 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8956) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the retirement age from s22 [redacted] (2020/8956).

Please find the original complaint below, which provide background. The key concerns can be summarised as:

- Would like retirement age lowered.

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 7:27 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Wednesday, 8 April 2020 - 7:26pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==

Please choose from the options below: Feedback

==My Details==

Title: s2

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: South Australia

Email address: s22@westnet.com.au

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request? My wife has to do all my shopping for me and take care of me..as a result of this situation and my vulnerable status, she cannot return to work as a social worker.

She is 61 and I am about to turn 74. It is likely that given my vulnerable status, she will never be able to work again and yet she is not eligible for the pension until she is 67.5 years old.

Given this hiccup, the retiring age needs to be lowered because there will be many with complex situations after this situation is over; that is if it is ever over! It is inevitable that more viruses will come out of countries with wet markets. This is not the end of the dcrisis.crisis

My Preferred Language: English

==Feedback Details==

Details: I am 74 and my wife aged 61 is a health SA social worker. She cannot work because I need 24 hour care but I do not meet your current overly strict regime for my wife to be able to qualify as my carer. She too has disabilities that do not meet

any of your criteria. She should be eligible eligible for the pension but she is too young. This HAS to change.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/24921>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 5:16 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8925)
[SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 5:15:40 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8925) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (2020/8925).

Regards

s22

s22

Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients, will receive an Economic Support Payment of \$750. From 31 March 2020, this payment will be automatically paid by Services Australia into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will also be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020. Eligible recipients do not need to contact Services Australia (Centrelink) to receive these payments.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: "s22" <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 11:20 am
To: "s22" <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8925) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22,

Is this one your team can respond to?

Thanks,
s2

s22
Executive Assistant s22
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 11:17 AM
To: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8925) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s2

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?
This is another one that could also sit with s22 branch but they are swamped with these requests.

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22@dss.gov.au into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks

s22

Pensions Executive

Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: s22 (02) s22 / s22 (02) s22

E: s22@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 10:24 AM

To: s22@dss.gov.au

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8925) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the income support supplement from s22 (2020/8925).

Please find the original complaint below, which provides background. The key concerns can be summarised as:

- Discrimination against DSP and Old Age Pensioners
- Inequality when compared to other welfare recipients, would like equal treatment

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

**A/g Assistant Director, Feedback Coordination Team
Audit and Assurance Branch**

Corporate and Governance Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 6:50 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Wednesday, 8 April 2020 - 6:50pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==

Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? No

==My Details==

Title: s22

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: Queensland

Email address: s22@gmail.com

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request? Not applicable

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method: Email

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): Centrelink

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au: Why do DSP and Old Age Pensioners not eligible for the Coronavirus supplement? We have higher expenses than dole bludgers, for exa6, medicines and funeral insurance and the higher cost of food because of price gouging by our major supermarkets during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words): Discrimination against DSP and Old Age Pensioners

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words): Inequality

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words):

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: Equal treatment for all centrelink welfare recipients

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose my personal information to any individuals or organisations, including third parties, involved in the complaint for the purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes
I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes
I wish to remain anonymous: No

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/24901>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 21 April 2020 11:41 AM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8918)
[SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Tuesday, 21 April 2020 11:40:55 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (2020/8918).

Regards,

s22

s22

Departmental Officer
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension and Disability Support Pension recipients, will receive two Economic Support Payments of \$750. The first payment was automatically paid by Services Australia (Centrelink) between 31 March and 17 April 2020. The second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 6:03 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Sorry I missed this one. Yes, we can take.

s22 [redacted] – can you please have a look?

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 1:21 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 [redacted],

Another one – are you happy to take this?

Thanks,
s2 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant s22 [redacted]
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <s22@dds.gov.au> **M:** s22 [redacted]

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 12:35 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 [redacted]

Can your branch please take this one since it mentions age pensioners first.

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 11:40 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 10:48 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

Pensions Executive

Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: s22 [redacted] (02) s22 [redacted] / s22 [redacted] (02) s22 [redacted]

E: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 9:20 AM

To: s22 [redacted]@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8918) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

The Feedback Coordination team has received an enquiry in relation to the income support supplement from s22 [redacted] (2020/8918).

Please find the original enquiry below, which provides background. The key concern can be summarised as:

- why are Age and Disabled pensioners not included in the \$550 supplement with Jobseekers and others.
- People in receipt of these payments are in the same situation and are also affected by the isolating and cost of living

Please review the enquiry and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22 [redacted]

**A/g Assistant Director, Feedback Coordination Team
Audit and Assurance Branch**

Corporate and Governance Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 [redacted] E: s22 [redacted]@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 6:23 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Wednesday, 8 April 2020 - 6:23pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==

Please choose from the options below: Enquiry

==My Details==

Title: s2 [redacted]

Your Name: s22 [redacted]

State/Territory: Victoria

Email address: s22 [redacted]@gmail.com

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?

My Preferred Language: English

==Feedback Details==

Details: I'm just wondering why Age and Disabled pensioners were not included in the \$550 supplement with Jobseekers and others. Their situation is the same and are also affected by the isolating and cost of living. Cheers.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/24876>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 5:35 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form 2020/8914 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 5:34:42 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: RE: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form 2020/8914 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Below is the cleared response to the complaint from s22 .

Regards,

s22
Assistant Director
Age Pension & Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Pensions Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension and Disability Support Pension recipients, will receive an Economic Support Payment of \$750 from 31 March 2020. This payment will be automatically paid by Services Australia into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will also be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

If you are having a difficult time financially, Centrelink has social workers who can assist in a number of ways. They can provide information or referral to financial counselling services. These services are free. You can arrange an appointment to see a social worker by phoning Centrelink on 13 2850.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 10:55 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Re: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form 2020/8914 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Yep it's us. s22 [redacted], can you please draft a response?

Thanks

s22 [redacted]

From: "s22 [redacted]" <s22@...@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 10:52 am
To: "s22 [redacted]" <s22@...@dss.gov.au>; "s22 [redacted]" <s22@...@dss.gov.au>; "s22 [redacted]" <s22@...@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form 2020/8914 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Does this sit with any of you?

Thanks,

s2 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant s22 [redacted]
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <s22@...@dss.gov.au> **M:** s22 [redacted]

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 10:42 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form 2020/8914 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?
This could also sit with s22 [redacted] branch but they are swamped with these requests so thought I'd test with your branch.

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

Pensions Executive

Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: s22 [redacted] (02) s22 [redacted] / s22 [redacted] (02) s22 [redacted]

E: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 8:31 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form 2020/8914 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the income support supplement from s22 [redacted] (2020/8914).

Please find the original complaint below, which provides background. The key concern can be summarised as:

- Aged pension and Disability Support pension not eligible for the income support supplement

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman safeguards the community in its dealings with the Australian Government. While they cannot override the decisions of agencies, they may be able to assist in resolving a dispute. If you consider an Australian Government agency has treated you unfairly or unreasonably you may wish to consider the information available [here](#)

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 5:35 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Wednesday, 8 April 2020 - 5:34pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Complaint

Have you approached the service provider about this complaint? No

==My Details==

Title: s2

Your Name: s22

State/Territory: Queensland

Email address: s22@bigpond.com

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?

My Preferred Language: English

==Address Details==

Preferred Contact Method: Email

==Complaint Details==

Please enter the details of the organisation or person you wish to complain about. (Include the name, address and contact details if known): Centrelink

Use the space below to provide a short summary of your complaint.

It is useful to include what happened, when it happened and who was involved. If you need more space, please attach separate documents below or send an email to complaints@dss.gov.au.: Persons on aged pensions and disability pensions should be receiving the addition \$550 (corona) a fortnight. They are our communities most vulnerable yet they do not receive this additional payment. What is the justification for youth allowance recipients receiving the additional payment but not aged and disabled?

Issue #1 (No more than 100 words).: Aged pensions and disability pension recipients should be receiving the additional \$550 a fortnight payment

Issue #2 (No more than 100 words).:

Issue #3 (No more than 100 words).:

If you would like to submit more details about your complaint and the issue of concern, you can upload more information below.:

The desired outcome I would like from my complaint is: Aged pension and disability pension recipients to receive the additional \$550 a fortnight payment

==Consent and Authorisation==

I give consent to the Department of Social Services to disclose my personal information to any individuals or organisations, including third parties, involved in the complaint for the purposes of looking into and reporting on my complaint.: Yes
I also give my consent to any individuals or organisations involved in the complaint to disclose my personal information to the Department of Social Services for the purpose of looking into and reporting on my complaint by the Department.: Yes
I wish to remain anonymous: Yes

I am the parent/guardian of the person making the complaint: No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/24861>

IP: s22

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 5:14 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8906)
[SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Monday, 20 April 2020 5:14:01 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy; s22
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 (2020/8906) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (2020/8906).

Regards

s22

s22
Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients, will receive an Economic Support Payment of \$750. From 31 March 2020, this payment will be automatically paid by Services Australia into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will also be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020. Eligible recipients do not need to contact Services Australia (Centrelink) to receive these payments.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 1:20 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8906) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

Is this one for your team?

Thanks.

s2
~

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant s22 [redacted]
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au> **M:** s22 [redacted]

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 12:15 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <s22@ds.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8906) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 [redacted] – given we are now getting swamped with complaints – as this one mentions age pension first, can you guys take this one.

thanks

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 11:32 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8906) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 10:09 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8906) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22 [redacted]

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?
This one could also sit with s22 [redacted] branch, if so please forward to her 😊

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au> into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

Pensions Executive

Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: s22 [redacted] (02) s22 [redacted] / s22 [redacted] (02) s22 [redacted]

E: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 3:31 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form - s22 [redacted] (2020/8906) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the income support supplement from s22 [redacted] (2020/8906).

Please find the original complaint below, which provides background. The key concern can be summarised as:

- Why are aged pension, disability and carers payments exempt from the income support supplement?

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22
A/g Assistant Director, Feedback Coordination Team
Audit and Assurance Branch
Corporate and Governance Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services
Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 4:59 PM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Wednesday, 8 April 2020 - 4:58pm Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Enquiry

==My Details==

Title: s22
Your Name: s22
State/Territory: New South Wales
Email address: s22@hotmail.com
Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?
My Preferred Language: English

==Feedback Details==

Details: I would like to know why aged pension disability and carers payments have been left out of the \$550 a fortnight. We are struggling just as much as parents on parenting payment and people on the original job seeker before this pandemic. My family 2 kids and 3 adults have been without as we can not afford to go into town 3 times a week with the supermarket restrictions I have not been able to source toilet paper for over 2 weeks. Please explain why we are not important enough to get this \$550 a fortnight payment.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/24831>

IP: s22 [REDACTED]

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 29 April 2020 10:54 AM
To: GMSG -s22
Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Wednesday, 29 April 2020 10:54:24 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: RE: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a response to a follow up complaint from s22 (2020/8901).

We received correspondence from s22 sent directly to the Minister where s22 was given as her title, which is why we have changed the title used.

Thanks,

s22
Departmental Officer
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22 ,

Australia's social security system is a non-contributory system designed to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation. It is a means tested, residence based system, designed to provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, unemployment or ill health, are unable to support themselves. As non-contributory social security payments, pensions are not based on past income or contributions, or taxes paid during a person's working life.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of the payments listed under the Coronavirus Supplement section at www.dss.gov.au/coronavirus. The Government is not expanding access to the Coronavirus Supplement at this time.

In addition to their main payment, pensioners can receive a range of benefits and concessions that increase their economic security, including:

- the exemption of the principal home from the assets test for homeowners;
- assistance for people who rent in the private rental market, through Commonwealth Rent Assistance;

- subsidised prescription medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme;
- subsidised health care and related products;
- subsidised aged care; and
- concessions provided by state and territory governments, which could include subsidised rates for homeowners, utilities such as electricity, gas and water, and public transport and vehicle registration fees. Concessions offered vary between states. It is up to each individual state and territory government to determine the type and amount of subsidies offered.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 24 April 2020 10:09 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 [redacted],

For response please.

Please see below follow up correspondence from ID 2020/8901 which you recently responded to.

Thanks,
s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant s22 [redacted]
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 [redacted] **E:** s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> **M:** s22 [redacted]

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 24 April 2020 8:50 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s2 [redacted],

A follow up correspondence from ID 2020/8901 who your team recently responded to (see below).

Thanks
s22 [redacted]

s22 [redacted]
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22 [redacted]
Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 24 April 2020 8:19 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au
Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning team,

Please see below further correspondence from s22 – ID (2020/8901).

Kind regards,

s22

From: s22 @gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 3:03 PM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

I still don't understand why someone on patenting payment is eligible for this payment they get just as much if not more per fortnight than the ones on dsp, carers or seniors, it is discrimination if one payment receives it than all payments should receive it, someone that hasn't worked or paid taxes in there life is receiving this payment over someone that has worked and paid taxes tell me this is just and fair

On Wed, 15 Apr. 2020, 11:42 am Complaints, <complaints@dss.gov.au> wrote:

Dear s22 ,

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients, will receive an Economic Support Payment of \$750. From 31 March 2020, this payment will be automatically paid by Services Australia into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will also be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

I hope this information is of assistance.

Kind regards,

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

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From: s22 [redacted] [@gmail.com](mailto:s22[redacted]@gmail.com)>

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 4:13 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Corona supplement

Can someone explain to me why seniors, carers and those receiving dsp are not receiving the \$550 per fortnight extra payment and how can this be changed, seems like a bit of discrimination

s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 8:52 AM
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: RE: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (ID 2020/8901).

Regards,

s22

Departmental Officer
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22 ,

Australia's social security system is a taxpayer-funded, targeted system in which applicants are subject to eligibility, income and assets tests, with assistance provided to those who need it most.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients, will receive an Economic Support Payment of \$750. From 31 March 2020, this payment will be automatically paid by Services Australia into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will also be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

The temporary \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement will apply to recipients of allowances such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment. In the long term, pensions are still paid at the highest rate of income support payments in the Australian social security system.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 3:54 PM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 @dss.gov.au>; s22 @dss.gov.au>; s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi team,

My branch will respond to this one.

Thanks,
s22

s22
Executive Assistant s22
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 11:28 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

Maybe one your team could answer? First mention is Seniors.

We're getting swamped!!!

☺

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 April 2020 9:55 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they will respond asap?

I have also checked against PDMS and there is no linked correspondence to the below.

Please cc s22 @dss.gov.au into your reply to the complaints team.

Thanks

s22

Pensions Executive

Pensions Group

Department of Social Services

P: s22 (02) s22 / s22 (02) s22

E: s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 2:48 PM

To: s22 @dss.gov.au

Subject: FW: Corona supplement 2020/8901 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to the income support supplement from s22 (ID 2020/8901)

Please find the original complaint below, which provides background. The key concern can be summarised as:

- Seniors, Carers and those receiving Disability Support Pension not eligible for the income support supplement

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred.

Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

s22

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 E: complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman safeguards the community in its dealings with the Australian Government. While they cannot override the decisions of agencies, they may be able to assist in resolving a dispute. If you consider an Australian Government agency has treated you unfairly or unreasonably you may wish to consider the information available [here](#)

From: s22 [redacted] [@gmail.com](mailto:[redacted]@gmail.com)>

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 4:13 PM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Subject: Corona supplement

Can someone explain to me why seniors, carers and those receiving dsp are not receiving the \$550 per fortnight extra payment and how can this be changed, seems like a bit of discrimination

s22

From: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 1:36 PM
To: GMSG - s22
Subject: FW: This promised assistance by Scot Morrison?? - ID (2020/8868) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s22
Sent: Wednesday, 15 April 2020 1:36:26 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
To: Complaints
Cc: s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; s22 ; Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy
Subject: FW: This promised assistance by Scot Morrison?? - ID (2020/8868) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

Please find below a response to the complaint from s22 (2020/8868).

Regards

s22

s22
Assistant Director
Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Dear s22

The Australian Government appreciates the important economic and social contribution senior Australians make to our community and is keen to ensure that pensioners' living standards are safeguarded by the Age Pension. Pensions such as the Age Pension are funded by taxpayers and targeted through the means test to those who need it most.

Australia's social security system is a non-contributory system designed to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation. It is a means tested, residence-based system, designed to provide income support to people who, for reasons such as age, unemployment or ill health, are unable to support themselves. As a non-contributory social security payment, the Age Pension is not based on past income or contributions, or taxes paid during a person's working life.

Pensions increase regularly. Base pensions are indexed twice a year, in March and September, to the higher of the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the increase in the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI).

PBLCI was introduced to ensure pension indexation better reflects changes to pensioners' costs of living. PBLCI takes into account the goods and services pensioners buy – not what the rest of the community buys. The PBLCI basket of goods and services is weighted to recognise that pensioners spend more of their income on essentials, including food, health, clothing, telephone calls and postage.

After indexing to price increases, base pension rates are then benchmarked to 41.76 per cent of Male Total Average Weekly Earnings for pensioner couples combined. The single rate of pension is 66.33 per cent of the combined couple rate.

These arrangements ensure pension rates are more responsive to pensioners' actual living cost increases and keep pace with community living standards as measured by wages.

The size of recent pension increases reflects slower growth in prices and wages than in previous years. If prices and wages increase at a faster rate, the indexation process will result in higher increases.

The Prime Minister has activated the Emergency Response Plan for the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The health of individuals is paramount to the Australian Government during this unprecedented pandemic. The Government wants everyone to stay safe by practising good hygiene and social distancing, limiting public gatherings and self-isolating when directed to do so. To stay up to date with current information on COVID-19, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. Additional financial support through the social security system is just one of the ways the Government is helping support individuals, communities and the economy during this health crisis.

Eligible pensioners, including Age Pension recipients, will receive an Economic Support Payment of \$750. From 31 March 2020, this payment will be automatically paid by Services Australia into the same bank account as the person's pension payment. A second Economic Support Payment of \$750 will also be paid to eligible pensioners from 13 July 2020.

Eligible recipients do not need to contact Services Australia (Centrelink) to receive these payments.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. It will continue to take a flexible and measured approach as the situation develops. Further information about the economic response to COVID-19 is available at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus.

If you are having a difficult time financially, Centrelink has social workers who can assist in a number of ways. They can provide information or referral to financial counselling services. These services are free. You can arrange an appointment to see a social worker by phoning Centrelink on 13 2850 for the cost of a local call. Please note that calls made from mobile phones may incur additional costs.

I hope this information is of assistance.

From: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 1:42 PM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@dss.gov.au>

Cc: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

Subject: FW: This promised assistance by Scot Morrison?? - ID (2020/8868) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22 [redacted],

Can you please have a look at the complaint and advise the complaint email if your Branch can respond.

Thanks,

From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 8 April 2020 1:32 PM

To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

Subject: RE: This promised assistance by Scot Morrison?? - ID (2020/8868) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon,

The Feedback Coordination team has received a complaint in relation to Age Pension from s22 [redacted] (2020/8868).

Please find the original complaint below, which provide background. The key concerns can be summarised as:

- Aged pensioner concerned he's been forgotten about.

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred. Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

s22 [redacted]

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 **E:** complaints@dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@skymesh.com.au>

Sent: Monday, 6 April 2020 8:08 AM

To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>; scott.morrison@aph.gov.au

Subject: This promised assistance by Scot Morrison??

To:-Whomever is supposed to be in charge.

I don't apologies for having no faith or confidence in the Government, that was lost a long time ago, Never forget ,we oldies, still know what we use to have, and have had taken away from us, By failed incompetent leadership, serving the Bankers not the people.

So.
Have the pensioners been forgotten Again, or are we last on the list?
If the money does not run out first,
as of the 6th of April,
I have not relieved any supposed financial help.
supposably promised to all Australians.
The supposed \$750 hand out. being paid as of the 31st of March, and a carrot on the stick on in June? (if we are still around)

I now have a Electricity bill not paid, and past its due date, as I put food, and essentials that I could get, first and now with,
just enough food to get by for a while, but some essential that seem to be vanishing,
"that we were assured were not running out. " but that is not quite true is it?.
Face masks and rubber gloves are very rare and quite expensive if you are lucky to come across one still in its wrapping.
Food and supplies are running out! and that which is around at present is continually rising in price,
some there is no reason for it to be happening - so why has meat skyrocketed in price? and some in short supply?
mince has nearly doubled, in price, bread and milk seem to be stable, which I suppose will soon be the diet of pensioners, (milk and bread)
flour is as rare as toilet paper, paper towels are none existent, hand sanitiser is none existent)
(even though they are now supposed to be limited to two items per customer in the shops around the area I live),
so obviously that nice speech about it being un-Australian to horde, as there were plenty of supplies of food and essentials,
but it's not Un-Australian to lie, if you are a politician.
So
was it just hot air :? by scot Morrison?
more worried by a failed economy, than Australian lies.

s22
CRN s22

Now in lockdown, on my own.
the forgotten Australians.



s22

Only in God can we trust:
Genesis 1:1 ~ Genesis 1:27 (KJV)

Notice, by Executor;

Private:

This is Not A Public Communication;

Be governed accordingly.

s22

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 11:49 AM
To: Complaints
Cc: Age Pension and Payment Rates Policy; s22
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22,

The following is the reply to s22, as cleared by Older Australians Branch Manager, s22. I'd be grateful if you could email it to the correspondent.

"Dear s22,

There is no official retirement age in Australia. Retirement decisions are a matter for each individual. There have been changes to the eligibility age for Age Pension. Australians are living longer than before. When the Age Pension was introduced in 1909, the average male life expectancy at birth was 55 and the pension age was set 10 years above the average male life expectancy. Average life expectancy has risen to 81 for newborn boys and 85 for newborn girls meaning the pension is now available at least 15 years below average life expectancy.

The 2015 Intergenerational Report found for every person aged 65 and over, the number of people aged between 15 and 64 has fallen from 7.3 people in 1975 to an estimated 4.5 people today. By 2055, this is projected to nearly halve again to only 2.7 people. This means that there will be fewer people paying taxes to pay for a larger proportion of people requiring the Age Pension.

If a person below Age Pension qualification age is unable to work, they may be eligible for an alternative social security payment. For example, they may qualify for payments such as the Disability Support Pension or JobSeeker Payment, subject to eligibility criteria.

I hope this information has been of assistance."

Regards,

s22
Assistant Director
Age Pension & Payment Rates Policy Section
Older Australians Branch
Pensions Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 @dss.gov.au

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 11:41 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks s22, cleared.

s22

A/g Branch Manager
Older Australians Branch
Pensions and Housing Group
Department of Social Services

P: (02) s22 E: s22 @dss.gov.au M: s22

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From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 11:34 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22 ,

For your clearance please. It is due on 23 April 2020.

We have not brought attention to the fact that the Age Pension age will be 67, and we have not included JobKeeper Payment information.

Thank you.

“Dear s22 ,

There is no official retirement age in Australia. Retirement decisions are a matter for each individual. There have been changes to the eligibility age for Age Pension. Australians are living longer than before. When the Age Pension was introduced in 1909, the average male life expectancy at birth was 55 and the pension age was set 10 years above the average male life expectancy. Average life expectancy has risen to 81 for newborn boys and 85 for newborn girls meaning the pension is now available at least 15 years below average life expectancy.

The 2015 Intergenerational Report found for every person aged 65 and over, the number of people aged between 15 and 64 has fallen from 7.3 people in 1975 to an estimated 4.5 people today. By 2055, this is projected to nearly halve again to only 2.7 people. This means that there will be fewer people paying taxes to pay for a larger proportion of people requiring the Age Pension.

If a person below Age Pension qualification age is unable to work, they may be eligible for an alternative social security payment. For example, they may qualify for payments such as the Disability Support Pension or JobSeeker Payment, subject to eligibility criteria.

I hope this information has been of assistance.”

s22 .

From: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 10:11 AM
To: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 @dss.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

We can have a go at this one.

s22 – can you please action?

s22 – what is the deadline? Two weeks from today or from 23 March?

Thanks

s22

From: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 9:54 AM
To: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Morning s22,

Is this one your team can respond to?

Thanks,

s22

s22
Executive Assistant s22
A/g Branch Manager Older Australians
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au> **M:** s22

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

From: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 9:53 AM
To: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Cc: s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hey s22

Can your branch please review the below correspondence and advise if they can respond asap?

Thanks

s22

s22
Executive Assistant to Group Manager, s22
Pensions Group
Department of Social Services
P: (02) s22 **E:** s22 <[redacted]@dss.gov.au>

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From: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 9:46 AM
To: s22 [redacted] <s22@redacted.dss.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Feedback Form - ID (2020/8590) [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning team,

We received this feedback on 23 March 2020 and I filed it as a wrong department and referred her to Services Australia.

I have since been advised that this should be directed to you guys.

Please review the complaint and advise as soon as possible whether you are able to provide a response. If you are able to respond, the timeframe for completion is two (2) weeks, although an earlier response is preferred. Cleared responses should be sent to complaints@dss.gov.au and will be issued accordingly. Alternatively, if you would prefer to send the response directly from your branch please ensure any responses include the aforementioned mailbox.

Sorry for any inconvenience caused!

Regards

s22 [redacted]

Feedback Coordination Team

Department of Social Services

P: 1800 634 035 **E:** complaints@dss.gov.au

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-----Original Message-----

From: online@dss.gov.au <online@dss.gov.au> On Behalf Of Australian Government Department of Social Services via Australian Government Department of Social Services
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2020 10:31 AM
To: Complaints <complaints@dss.gov.au>
Subject: Form submission from: Feedback Form

Submitted on Monday, 23 March 2020 - 10:31am Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

==Enquiry, Feedback, Compliment Or Complaint==
Please choose from the options below: Feedback

==My Details==

Title:

Your Name: s22 [redacted]

State/Territory: Victoria

Email address: s22 [redacted]@gmail.com

Do you have any special requirements we need to be aware of in order to manage your request?

My Preferred Language: English

==Feedback Details==

Details: The govt needs to consider lowering the retirement age so older australians, especially those with compromised health, could elect to cease work and free up lots of positions that could be filled by younger people and those who have just lost their jobs. Win win from both demographics and no added cost to the govt than some of the newstart packages

The results of this submission may be viewed at:
<https://www.dss.gov.au/node/33775/submission/24251>

IP: s22