

## **Centrelink payments that disappear from 20 March 2020**

From 20 March 2020, JobSeeker Payment replaces Newstart Allowance as the main working age payment. As part of the Government's welfare reform package, many payments cease from 20 March 2020.

The following payments will cease on 20 March 2020:

- Newstart Allowance
- Sickness Allowance (closed to new recipients from 20 March 2020 and ceases on 20 September 2020)
- Widow Allowance (closed to new recipients on 1 July 2018 and ceases on 1 January 2022)
- Partner Allowance (ceases on 1 January 2022)
- Widow B Pension
- Wife Pension
- Bereavement Allowance

### **Newstart becomes JobSeeker**

JobSeeker is effectively the new name for the Newstart Allowance from 20 March 2020 and it becomes the main working age Centrelink payment. Newstart Allowance recipients do not need to do anything and will automatically transfer to the JobSeeker Payment. Individuals continue to receive the same rate of payment and continue to hold the health care card, providing their circumstances do not change.

From 20 March, eligible individuals can receive JobSeeker Payment if they satisfy at least one of the following requirements:

- they are looking for work
- cannot temporarily work or study due to sickness or injury
- have recently lost their partner

## Changes from 20 March 2020 onwards

The following table illustrates the outcomes for individuals receiving various payments from 20 March 2020.

<b>Individuals currently receiving</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Individuals currently receiving Newstart Allowance</b>	<b>Outcome</b> Newstart Allowance ends on 20 March 2020 and the individual transfers to the JobSeeker Payment. There are no changes if the individual continues to satisfy the requirements.
<b>Individuals currently receiving Sickness Allowance</b>	<b>Outcome</b> The individual continues to receive Sickness Allowance until the medical certificate expires. After expiry, the individual may be able to transfer to the JobSeeker payment. No new claims of Sickness Allowance accepted from 20 March 2020.
<b>Individuals currently receiving Widow Allowance</b>	<b>Outcome</b> Widow Allowance was closed to new recipients on 1 July 2018. The payment ceases on 1 January 2022 when the last of the existing recipients transfer to the Age Pension.
<b>Individuals currently receiving Partner Allowance</b>	<b>Outcome</b> Partner Allowance ceases on 1 January 2022 when the last of the existing recipients transfer to the Age Pension.
<b>Individuals currently receiving Widow B Pension</b>	<b>Outcome</b> Widow B Pension recipients will automatically be transferred to the Age Pension from 20 March 2020. Please note, no new Widow B Pensions have been granted since 20 March 1997.

Individuals currently receiving	Outcome
<p><b>Individuals currently receiving</b> Wife Pension</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Wife Pension ends on 20 March 2020 and the individual will then have three options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Transfer to Carer Payment – if they live in Australia and receive both the Wife Pension and the Carer Allowance on 19 March 2020 (and they continue to qualify for Carer Allowance).</li> <li>2. Transfer to Age Pension – if at 19 March 2020, they are Age Pension age, receive the Wife Pension and do not receive the Carer Allowance.</li> <li>3. Transfer to JobSeeker Payment – if they live in Australia, receive Wife Pension on 19 March 2020, are under Age Pension age and do not receive the Carer Allowance.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Individuals currently receiving</b> Bereavement Allowance</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Bereavement Allowance recipients at 19 March 2020 continue to receive payment until the end of their bereavement period which is generally 14 weeks. There are no new claims of Bereavement Allowance from 20 March 2020.</p>

### Information relating to some of the ceasing payments

- **Sickness Allowance** is an income support payment for individuals who are temporarily incapacitated for work or study and do not have adequate levels of income support. The individuals must be able to resume their employment or return to their studies once they have recovered from their incapacity.
- **Widow B Pension** is a payment for a widow who did not get a Parenting Payment, has limited money and lost the financial support of their partner. No new claims of Widow B Pension have been granted since 20 March 1997.
- **Wife Pension** is an income support payment for female partners of people receiving an Age Pension or Disability Support Pension as of June 1995. No new claims of the Wife Pension have been granted from 1 July 1995.
- **Bereavement Allowance** provides short term financial assistance of up to 14 weeks for recent widows.