

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

What **COVID-19** means for young people post-care and transitioning from care in Australia

## What do I do if I have lost my job?

There is help available.

The Australian Government announced on 30 March 2020 that you may be eligible for payments of \$1,500 from your employer if you've lost out on shifts or lost your job – if you have been in the job for 12 months or more.

Before applying for Centrelink, call your employer and ask if you're eligible for the JobKeeper payment to check this information. This is a payment that will come through your workplace, not from Centrelink. It's money given to businesses from the government to encourage them to keep their employees.

If you're not eligible for JobKeeper, there are two other payments you may be eligible for: the JobSeeker payment and the Coronavirus Supplement.

To contact Centrelink for more information, go to their website or call them on **132 850** if you are 22 years of age or over, or **132 490** if you are under 22.

If you need help with getting support from Centrelink, you can also contact your local after care service (for young people with a care experience) by visiting:

<http://createyourfuture.org.au/after-care-services-across-australia/>

or contact CREATE on  
**1800 655 105**



## What do I do if I am worried about paying my rent?

If you can't pay your rent, your first step should be to should contact your landlord or property manager as soon as possible to negotiate a new agreement such as rent reduction or deferral of payments.

Different states and territories have different help for renters at the moment. Visit the website below to find out what's available in your state. or call your local after care service:

<https://www.rent.com.au/blog/covid-19-rent-relief-packages-tenants>

New laws have been introduced in quite a few states and territories around Australia that state you can't be evicted if you are served a notice to vacate, if you can't pay your rent due to coronavirus (COVID-19). At this stage New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria have committed to this.

For more information see:

<https://www.rent.com.au/blog/covid-19-rent-relief-packages-tenants>

Please also see the information in this FAQ about Centrelink help that is currently available

## I have younger /older siblings in care, will I still get to see them at the moment?

This may be different for each person, but at the moment face-to-face contact with people outside your home will be kept to a minimum and online or telephone contact used instead.

Talk to your sibling's worker about how this impacts you. Children in care still have a right to have contact with important people in their life.

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What **COVID-19** means for children and young people in care in Tasmania

## What if I am supposed to transition from care in the near future, do I still have to? Or can I stay longer where I currently live?

CREATE has asked all governments around Australia to tell us the answer to this as we are very concerned that young people may have to find accommodation and set up independent living at this challenging time. The NSW, QLD, VIC, South Australian and Northern Territory governments have told us they are all committed to making sure young people transitioning from care get the support they need at this time.

In Victoria, the Department of Health and Human Services has committed funding to give young people turning 18 years old before December 2020 the option to remain with their kinship or foster Carer. Young people turning 18 can also transition to independent living arrangements with an allowance to cover costs associated with housing. Case work support will also be provided to these young people and their carers during this period.

For more information about what's happening in Victoria you can go to this statement from the Victorian Premier:

<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/supporting-victorian-young-people-leaving-care/>

For young people in residential care, because of legal issues around young people over 18 living with those under 18 in a residential home, you might not be able to stay where you are living but you should be receiving extra support during this time with finding a new place to live.



## What if I am supposed to transition from care in the near future, do I still have to? Or can I stay longer where I currently live? (continued)

For some information about what's happen with residential care and transitioning, please see this Department of Communities and Justice COVID-19 information for residential care services:

<https://create.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ITC-and-Resi-Care-COVID-19-Placement-Guidance-Over-18s.pdf>

All states have very clearly stated that any extension of placements or living arrangements is voluntary for young people and carers. The departments recognise the young person's legal standing as an adult in that process, and respect choices and rights they have. Contact your caseworker who will be able to talk about your situation and the help that is available to you, including the After Care service in your state:

<http://createyourfuture.org.au/after-care-services-across-australia/>

You have a right to get the help you need to transition from care to adulthood – don't be afraid to ask for it! If you are not getting the help you need from your caseworker, ask to speak to their manager or someone else in their team, and if you are still in need of help head to:

<https://create.org.au/something-not-right-speak-up/>

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## What if I have a transition to independence plan, but those options are not available at the moment because of COVID-19?

Contact your case worker about developing a plan with different options that are available at the moment, but it is also important to keep working with your case worker on your goals for the future.



## Can I still access TILA?

Yes, you can still access TILA. Information about TILA can be found at <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/benefits-payments/transition-to-independent-living-allowance-tila>

You can also contact the Department in your state to ask about TILA:

- **Australian Capital Territory** (Community Services Directorate) – (02) 6207 4579
- **Northern Territory** (Department of Children and Families) – (08) 8922 7097
- **New South Wales** (Department of Communities and Justice) – (02) 9716 2222
- **Queensland** (Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women) – (07) 3224 8045
- **South Australia** (Department of Child Protection) – (08) 8226 6037
- **Tasmania** (Department of Health and Human Services) – (03) 6233 2273
- **Victoria** (Department of Health and Human Services) – 1300 532 846
- **Western Australia** (Department of Communities - Child Protection and Family Support) – (08) 9222 2658.

## I am feeling really isolated what can I do?

CREATE understands that this is a big problem for young people and we are encouraging you to connect with your friends, family and us here at CREATE to chat about how you are feeling.

There are a lot of activities on Youtube, ways to stay connected online, and CREATE also has activities scheduled for your state - so why not reach out to us about when our next event is on? You can email [create@create.org.au](mailto:create@create.org.au) or message us on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook.

If you feel you need extra support and want to talk to someone you can also contact:

Beyondblue - 1300 224 636 or [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800 or [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

1800RESPECT - 1800 737 732 or [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

Headspace- [www.headspace.org.au/](http://www.headspace.org.au/)  
Lifeline - 13 11 14 or

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Suicide Call Back Service - 1300 659 467 or [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)



To read Coronavirus messages in different languages please go to:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/translated>