

About Anglicare Australia’s COVID-19 Announcement Tracker .....	1
Key Area: Community Sector.....	2
Key Area: Disability .....	4
Key Area: Employment, Education and Training.....	6
Key Area: Families, Children and Young People.....	11
Key Area: Health and Mental Health .....	14
Key Area: Housing.....	17
Key Area: Indigenous.....	18
Key Area: Older People .....	19
Key Area: Tax and Superannuation .....	22
Key Area: Welfare and Social Services .....	23
Other Areas.....	26

## About Anglicare Australia’s COVID-19 Announcement Tracker

This document tracks announcements and measures relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes information about financial allocations, descriptions of key proposals, and links to the announcements themselves.

The tracker will be regularly updated and sent to members throughout the health crisis, to help keep track of announcements as they are made. This version is correct as of 18 May 2020.

### Contact Person

Maiy Azize  
Director of Media and Communications

Anglicare Australia  
PO Box 4093  
Ainslie ACT 2602  
T: 02 62301775  
E: [Maiy.Azize@anglicare.asn.au](mailto:Maiy.Azize@anglicare.asn.au)

**Key Area: Community Sector**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Boosting cash flow for employers</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 12 March 2020; updated on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is providing up to \$100,000 to eligible small and medium-sized employers, with a minimum payment of \$20,000. These payments will help with cash flow so they can keep operating, pay their rent, electricity and other bills and retain staff. This measure will benefit around 690,000 businesses employing around 7.8 million people, including around 30,000 community sector and not for profit organisations.</p> <p>Employers with aggregated annual turnover under \$50 million are eligible. Community sector and not for profit organisations with aggregated annual turnover under \$50 million will also be eligible. This will support employment at a time where NFPs are facing increasing demand for services.</p> <p>Employers will receive a payment equal to 100 per cent of their salary and wages withheld, with the maximum payment being \$50,000. The minimum payment is \$10,000. An additional payment is also being introduced in the July-October 2020 period. Eligible entities will receive an additional payment equal to the total of all of the Boosting Cash Flow for Employers payments they have received. This means that eligible entities will receive at least \$20,000 up to a total of \$100,000 under both payments.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Employment, Education and Training'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Coronavirus Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Guarantee Scheme will support up to \$40 billion of lending to SMEs. This includes charities and not for profits.</p> <p>Under the Scheme, the Government will guarantee 50 per cent of new loans issued by eligible lenders to SMEs. The Scheme will enhance lenders' willingness and ability to provide credit, supporting many otherwise viable SMEs to access vital additional funding to get through the impact of Coronavirus.</p> <p>The Scheme will be available for new loans made by participating lenders until 30 September 2020.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Employment, Education and Training'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Extension of grants for essential community services</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 9 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	More than \$64 million will be used to extend about 3000 grant agreements currently administered by the Department of Social Services for essential services to 31 March 2021 which had been due to cease over the coming months. This includes grants for family and relationship services, mental health counselling for parents, services for families and children experiencing the impacts of alcohol and drug misuse, and technology to keep women experiencing domestic violence safe.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Funding for relief services</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 29 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>\$200 million will be provided to support charities and other community organisations which provide emergency and food relief as demand surges as a result of coronavirus.</p> <p>The funding will boost support to services where demand is quickly increasing, including emergency relief; assistance for food relief; services through the National Debt Helpline; financial counselling; and expanding access no interest loans. Anglicare Australia is working with the Government to distribute these funds across the sector.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Welfare and Social Services'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>JobKeeper payment</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 30 March 2020; updated on 5 April
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Employers that have been impacted by the Coronavirus will be able to access a wage subsidy to continue paying employees. Employers will be able to claim a fortnightly payment of \$1,500 per eligible employee from 30 March 2020 for up to six months, if they have lost more than 30 per cent of their income.</p> <p>JobKeeper payments are open to community sector and not for profit organisations that experience a sharp drop in revenue. Anglicare Australia is working with the Government to broaden this scheme as it applies to charities and community organisations, because the structure of the subsidies is still seeing some charities excluded.</p> <p>On 5 April, the Government announced that charities would be able to apply for the scheme if they had lost more than 15 per cent of their income. Anglicare Australia said this was a good start, but that tied grants must be excluded from a charity's income.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Employment, Education and Training'

**Key Area: Disability**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Funding for Australian Disability Enterprises and Disability Employment Service providers</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 9 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>An extra \$24.5 million will be made available to Australian Disability Enterprises through the Temporary Viability Support program to help organisations transition to new opportunities to create jobs for people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. More than \$3 million will extend the Supported Wage System supplementation to 37 ADEs who currently use the system.</p> <p>Up to \$61 million will be available to Disability Employment Service providers as an advance payment of six weeks on service fees to ensure participants can continue to access support during this time.</p> <p>\$2 million will be used to establish a dedicated phone line to provide accessible information, and counselling and outreach services to assist people with disability.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Management and Operational Plan for COVID-19 for People with Disability</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 18 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>National Cabinet has agreed to release the Management and Operational Plan for COVID-19 for People with Disability.</p> <p>The Plan forms part of the national response developed by the Government and is aligned to the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Coronavirus (COVID-19) with representation from a range of backgrounds including people with lived experience, Disabled Peoples Organisations, the disability service sector, the research sector, the healthcare sector including medical practitioners and nursing, disability advocates, Australian Government officials, and state and territory government officials.</p> <p>The Plan addresses factors such as the reliance on close contact with carers and support workers, having a compromised immune system, and the presence of multiple underlying health conditions.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Priority home delivery services</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 5 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>A new service has been launched to help NDIS participants receive priority home grocery delivery during the coronavirus pandemic. Following collaboration between the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and major supermarkets, the Priority Home Delivery Service will be available to over 340,000 NDIS participants who are unable to do their shopping in their usual way.</p> <p>From Monday 6 April, every NDIS participant will receive an individual code via SMS or email which will give them access to the priority delivery offer. Upon completing an online shopping order, participants will be prompted to enter their code when choosing the home delivery option. Minister Robert said the service is another example of how the Government is collaborating with the private sector to develop whole-of-society efforts to help Australians in need and comes as the NDIA continues to implement its NDIS Pandemic Plan.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Sickness Allowance special arrangements</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 25 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Sickness Allowance recipients will not need to report if their employer closes, or if they're unable to study full time. If they still need financial support when your medical certificate ends, recipients can transfer to the JobSeeker Payment.</p> <p>From 27 April 2020, Sickness Allowance recipients can also get the temporary fortnightly \$550 Coronavirus Supplement. Additional information about the Supplement is available under 'Welfare and Social Services.'</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Health and Mental Health'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Suspension of Disability Support Pension participation requirements</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 25 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has suspended participation requirements for Disability Support Pension until 27 April 2020. Recipients of the payment are still required to report their income.</p> <p>The suspension was initially due to expire on 31 March, and has since been extended. Anglicare Australia expects there will be further extensions of the suspension period throughout the health crisis.</p>

**Key Area: Employment, Education and Training**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Boosting cash flow for employers</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 12 March 2020; updated on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is providing up to \$100,000 to eligible small and medium-sized employers, with a minimum payment of \$20,000. These payments will help with cash flow so they can keep operating, pay their rent, electricity and other bills and retain staff. This measure will benefit around 690,000 businesses employing around 7.8 million people, including around 30,000 community sector and not for profit organisations.</p> <p>Employers with aggregated annual turnover under \$50 million are eligible. Community sector and not for profit organisations with aggregated annual turnover under \$50 million will also be eligible. This will support employment at a time where NFPs are facing increasing demand for services.</p> <p>Employers will receive a payment equal to 100 per cent of their salary and wages withheld, with the maximum payment being \$50,000. The minimum payment is \$10,000. An additional payment is also being introduced in the July-October 2020 period. Eligible entities will receive an additional payment equal to the total of all of the Boosting Cash Flow for Employers payments they have received. This means that eligible entities will receive at least \$20,000 up to a total of \$100,000 under both payments.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Community Sector'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Coronavirus Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Guarantee Scheme will support up to \$40 billion of lending to SMEs. This includes charities and not for profits.</p> <p>Under the Scheme, the Government will guarantee 50 per cent of new loans issued by eligible lenders to SMEs. The Scheme will enhance lenders' willingness and ability to provide credit, supporting many otherwise viable SMEs to access vital additional funding to get through the impact of Coronavirus.</p> <p>The Scheme will be available for new loans made by participating lenders until 30 September 2020.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Community Sector'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 2 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>On 2 April 2020, the Australian Government announced the new Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package. From Monday 6 April 2020 weekly payments will be made directly to early childhood education and care services in lieu of the Child Care Subsidy and the Additional Child Care Subsidy, to help them keep their doors open and employees in their jobs.</p> <p>Payments will be made until the end of the 2019-20 financial year and families will not be charged fees during this time. These payments will complement the JobKeeper Payment announced by the Prime Minister on 30 March 2020.</p> <p>Early childhood education and child care services do not need to apply for the payments, they will be paid automatically.</p> <p>In addition, up to and including 5 April 2020, services can now waive gap fees for families due to the impact of COVID-19. This can go back as far as 23 March 2020 and is in addition to changes already announced.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Families, Children and Young People'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Increasing the instant asset write-off</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 12 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has announced measures to lessen the threat of actions that could unnecessarily push them into insolvency and force the winding up of the business.</p> <p>It is temporarily increasing the threshold at which creditors can issue a statutory demand on a company and the time companies have to respond to statutory demands they receive. The package also includes temporary relief for directors from any personal liability for trading while insolvent, and providing temporary flexibility in the Corporations Act 2001 to provide temporary and targeted relief from provisions of the Act to deal with unforeseen events that arise as a result of the Coronavirus health crisis.</p> <p>The ATO will tailor solutions for owners or directors of business that are currently struggling due to the Coronavirus, including temporary reduction of payments or deferrals, or withholding enforcement actions including Director Penalty Notices and wind-ups.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>JobKeeper payment</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 30 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Employers that have been impacted by the Coronavirus will be able to access a wage subsidy to continue paying employees. Employers will be able to claim a fortnightly payment of \$1,500 per eligible employee from 30 March 2020 for up to six months, if they have lost more than 30 per cent of their income.</p> <p>Unions have estimated that at least 1.5 million people will miss out on these subsidies. Workers only qualify if their employer opts in to the scheme, and casuals are only eligible if they have been in their job for a year or more. Anglicare Australia <a href="#">has expressed concern</a> about these aspects of the payment.</p> <p>JobKeeper payments are also open to community sector and not for profit organisations that experience a sharp drop in revenue. Further details are yet to be announced.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Community Sector'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Relief for financially distressed businesses</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 12 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has announced measures to lessen the threat of actions that could unnecessarily push them into insolvency and force the winding up of the business.</p> <p>It is temporarily increasing the threshold at which creditors can issue a statutory demand on a company and the time companies have to respond to statutory demands they receive. The package also includes temporary relief for directors from any personal liability for trading while insolvent, and providing temporary flexibility in the Corporations Act 2001 to provide temporary and targeted relief from provisions of the Act to deal with unforeseen events that arise as a result of the Coronavirus health crisis.</p> <p>The ATO will tailor solutions for owners or directors of business that are currently struggling due to the Coronavirus, including temporary reduction of payments or deferrals, or withholding enforcement actions including Director Penalty Notices and wind-ups.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Retaining apprentices and trainees</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 12 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has announced measures to help small business keep their apprentices and trainees. Eligible employers can apply for a wage subsidy of 50 per cent of the apprentice's or trainee's wage for nine months from 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020. Where a small business is not able to retain an apprentice, the subsidy will be available to a new employer that employs that apprentice. Employers will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$21,000 per eligible apprentice or trainee (\$7,000 per quarter).</p> <p>This measure will apply to 70,000 small businesses, employing around 117,000 apprentices.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Small business access to credit</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is providing a temporary exemption from responsible lending obligations for lenders providing credit to existing small business customers. This will help small businesses get access to credit quickly and efficiently.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Supporting business investment</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 12 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is introducing a time limited 15 month investment incentive (through to 30 June 2021) to support business investment and economic growth over the short term, by accelerating depreciation deductions. Businesses with a turnover of less than \$500 million will be able to deduct 50 per cent of the cost of an eligible asset on installation, with existing depreciation rules applying to the balance of the asset's cost.</p> <p>This measure will promote business investment and is estimated to lower taxes paid by Australian businesses by \$6.7 billion over the next two years. This measure will apply to over 3.5 million businesses (over 99 per cent of businesses) employing more than 9.7 million employees.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Supporting the flow and reducing the cost of credit</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 19 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) announced a package on 19 March 2020 that will put downward pressure on borrowing costs for households and businesses. This will help mitigate the adverse consequences of the Coronavirus on businesses and support their day-to-day trading operations. The RBA is supporting small businesses as a particular priority.</p> <p>The RBA announced a term funding facility for the banking system. Banks will have access to at least \$90 billion in funding at a fixed interest rate of 0.25 per cent. This will reinforce the benefits of a low cash rate by reducing funding costs for banks, which in turn will help reduce interest rates for borrowers. To encourage lending to businesses, the facility offers additional low-cost funding to banks if they expand their business lending, with particular incentives applying to new loans to SMEs.</p> <p>In addition, the RBA announced a further easing in monetary policy by reducing the cash rate to 0.25 per cent. It is also extending and complementing the interest rate cut by taking active steps to target a 0.25 per cent yield on 3-year Australian Government Securities.</p>

**Key Area: Families, Children and Young People**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Additional Child Care Subsidy absences</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 25 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Recipients of the Child Care Subsidy can now get 20 extra absences per child for the 2019-20 financial year. In total, recipients can get up to 62 absences. These absence days can be used for any reason. Recipients don't need to do anything for their subsidy to continue and Services Australia will not be requiring evidence.</p> <p>In special circumstances, recipients may be able to get the subsidy for more than 62 absence days. This would need to be discussed with the child care provider.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Domestic violence support</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 30 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>An initial \$150 million will be provided to support Australians experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence due to the fallout from coronavirus.</p> <p>The funding will boost programs under the National Plan to reduce Violence against Women and their Children including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counselling support for families</li> <li>▪ 1800RESPECT, the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling service</li> <li>▪ Mensline Australia, the national counselling service for men</li> <li>▪ Trafficked People Program to support particularly vulnerable cohorts</li> <li>▪ Support programs for women and children experiencing violence to protect themselves to stay in their homes, or a home of their choice.</li> </ul> <p>A new public communication campaign will roll out to support those experiencing domestic violence over this period and to ensure those affected know where they can seek help.</p> <p>A new COAG Women's Safety Council meeting is working with the states and territories how to best deliver this funding.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 2 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>On 2 April 2020, the Australian Government announced the new Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package. From Monday 6 April 2020 weekly payments will be made directly to early childhood education and care services in lieu of the Child Care Subsidy and the Additional Child Care Subsidy, to help them keep their doors open and employees in their jobs.</p> <p>Payments will be made until the end of the 2019-20 financial year and families will not be charged fees during this time. These payments will complement the JobKeeper Payment announced by the Prime Minister on 30 March 2020.</p> <p>Early childhood education and child care services do not need to apply for the payments, they will be paid automatically.</p> <p>In addition, up to and including 5 April 2020, services can now waive gap fees for families due to the impact of COVID-19. This can go back as far as 23 March 2020 and is in addition to changes already announced.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Employment, Education and Training'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Respite days for carers</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 25 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	Respite days are available for carers and care receivers who are separated due to coronavirus, or who are self-isolating. 63 respite days are available each calendar year to take a break from caring without payments stopping. Carers are still required to report whether they have taken a respite day online.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Urgent support for frontline domestic violence services</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 5 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	The Government will provide \$32.5 million to states and territories to immediately bolster frontline services to protect those most at risk of domestic violence as a result of living changes enforced due to the coronavirus pandemic. This follows a decision from the inaugural Council of Australian Governments Women's Safety Council. It was agreed that, as a priority, funding should be directed to safer housing and emergency accommodation, counselling and outreach, crisis support and helplines as well as men's behavioural change programs and other perpetrator interventions.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Waiving of income support payment waiting period</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Services Australia will waive some waiting periods from 25 March 2020 to 24 September 2020. This is if you're applying for one of the following payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ JobSeeker</li> <li>▪ Youth Allowance</li> <li>▪ Parenting Payment</li> <li>▪ Austudy</li> <li>▪ ABSTUDY</li> <li>▪ Farm Household Allowance</li> <li>▪ Special Benefit.</li> </ul>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Welfare and Social Services'

**Key Area: Health and Mental Health**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Bulk Billed MBS Telehealth Services</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 30 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) items will allow doctors, nurses, midwives and mental health professionals to deliver services via telehealth, provided those services are bulk billed.</p> <p>The new MBS items are designed to allow people to access essential health services in their home while they undergo self-isolation or quarantine, and reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for vulnerable people in the community.</p> <p>This is a temporary six-month measure. Should the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) recommend an extension, it will be considered by the Government.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Mental health support package</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 30 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>An initial \$74 million will be provided to support the mental health and wellbeing of all Australians. \$10 million will be provided to create a dedicated coronavirus wellbeing support line, delivered by Beyond Blue. \$14 million will bolster the capacity of mental health support providers who have experienced an unprecedented surge in call volumes with funding increasing their capacity, including \$5 million for Lifeline and \$2 million for Kids Helpline.</p> <p>\$10 million will be provided to the Community Visitors Scheme to support older Australians who are increasingly isolated. \$6.75 million will be provided to deliver the headspace digital work and study service and eheadspace. \$28.3 million will deliver psychosocial support to Commonwealth community mental health clients for a further 12 months.</p> <p>Health workers will get dedicated mental health support through digital platforms developed to provide advice, social support, assistance in managing stress and anxiety, and more in-depth treatment without having to attend in-person sessions.</p> <p>Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia will develop culturally appropriate mental health and wellbeing resources for Aboriginal and Torres Islander people.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Private hospital partnership</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 31 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has guaranteed the viability and capacity of the private hospital sector, in an agreement that will ensure over 30,000 hospital beds, and the sector’s 105,000 skilled workforce, is available alongside the public hospital sector.</p> <p>The Commonwealth will offer agreements to all 657 private and not-for-profit hospitals to ensure their viability, in return for maintenance and capacity during the COVID-19 response. State and territory governments will also complete private hospital COVID-19 partnership agreements.</p> <p>These facilities will be required to make infrastructure, essential equipment (including ventilators), supplies (including PPE), workforce and additional resources fully available to the state and territory hospital system or the Australian Government.</p> <p>They will also continue to support the needs of long-stay public hospital National Disability Insurance Scheme participants, and aged care patients and general needs patients.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme changes</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 31 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has approved a number of temporary changes to medicines regulation to improve access to medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) as the COVID-19 outbreak unfolds.</p> <p>The measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued dispensing arrangements for the ongoing supply PBS subsidised medicines without a prescription, extended to 30 June 2020.</li> <li>▪ A home delivery service for PBS and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) medicines.</li> <li>▪ Ongoing work with pharmacists, GPs and the States and Territories to allow medicine substitution pharmacists in the event of a shortage.</li> <li>▪ Restrictions on the quantity of medicines that can be purchased to prevent unnecessary medicine stockpiling.</li> </ul>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Sickness Allowance special arrangements</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 25 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Sickness Allowance recipients will not need to report if their employer closes, or if they're unable to study full time. If they still need financial support when your medical certificate ends, recipients can transfer to the JobSeeker Payment.</p> <p>From 27 April 2020, Sickness Allowance recipients can also get the temporary fortnightly \$550 Coronavirus Supplement. Additional information about the Supplement is available under 'Welfare and Social Services.'</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Disability'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Training more nurses for critical care</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 2 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Australian Government will fund up to 20,000 new online education places to enable Registered Nurses (RNs) to develop knowledge enabling them to assist in the delivery of care in intensive care and high dependency units across Australia.</p> <p>Up to \$4.1 million will be provided to e-learning provider, Medcast to provide the critical care education program free of charge to participants. The e-learning platform will deliver online learning modules that will assist currently employed RNs to develop their knowledge, so they can assist in high dependency and intensive care units.</p>

**Key Area: Housing**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Moratorium on evictions</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 29 March 2020; updated on 7 April
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>National Cabinet has agreed to a moratorium on evictions over the next six months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress who are unable to meet their commitments due to the impact of coronavirus. Anglicare Australia <a href="#">supports this moratorium</a> and was part of the push on the moratorium for renters that led to this announcement.</p> <p>The National Cabinet statement notes that tenants cannot be evicted because of financial distress, but in most parts of the country, tenants can still be evicted for no reason at all. Tasmania has already announced that it will halt all no-grounds evictions in the wake of this agreement and we hope other states and territories will follow this example.</p> <p>On 7 April, National Cabinet further agreed to a Code of Conduct for leases and to rent relief. However, this announcement excluded residential renters and was solely for businesses.</p> <p>Anglicare Australia <a href="#">has condemned the exclusion of residential renters</a> from the Code, noting that in some parts of the country, tenants are being evicted from public housing. Anglicare Australia has called on governments to lead private landlords by example, instead of making a mockery of the eviction moratorium.</p>

**Key Area: Indigenous**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Additional funding to get accurate information to Indigenous Australians</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 5 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	First Nations Media Australia (FNMA) will receive an additional \$234,500 this financial year to support their contribution to limiting the spread of the virus. This funding is aimed at helping the peak body of the Indigenous broadcasting and media sector to extend their production and transmission of health and safety messages during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Remote Point of Care Testing Program for remote and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 16 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>A rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) Remote Point of Care Testing Program is being established for remote and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Under the program, people will benefit from testing times being cut to around 45 minutes. In some areas, receiving a test result can currently take up to 10 days.</p> <p>Once fully rolled out, there will be 83 testing sites in place across Indigenous communities most at risk. The sites are being selected in conjunction with state and territory authorities. Sites will be confirmed rapidly as part of the rollout over coming weeks, with the aim to finalise rollout by mid-May.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Support for Indigenous businesses and communities</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 2 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Australian Government is making \$123 million available over two financial years for targeted measures to support Indigenous businesses and communities to increase their responses to COVID-19.</p> <p>The Government is providing up to \$50 million to assist Indigenous businesses. Up to \$25 million will be available to targeted regions and industries facing labour shortfalls to provide incentives to employers. The Aboriginal Benefit Account will deliver \$10 million across the four Land Councils in the Northern Territory to allow them to address immediate infrastructure needs and travel expenses associated with people returning to homelands.</p> <p>Community Night Patrols will receive up to \$10 million to extend their reach and ensure physical distancing requirements are adhered to. \$23 million will go towards delivery of critical social support programs. Up to \$5 million will be made available to expand the school nutrition program in the NT.</p>

**Key Area: Older People**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Aged care assistance package</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 10 March 2020; updated on 20 March
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>As part of its first stimulus package, the Government allocated \$2.4 billion directly to aged care. This funding was aimed at training for staff on infection control and other related issues, services for isolation and quarantine, and additional Medicare items.</p> <p>On 22 March, an additional \$444.6 million was announced to support staff retention in residential aged care and home care, as well as help with the viability of aged care facilities as the sector continues to provide care during the COVID-19 crisis. The aged care assistance funding includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ \$234.9 million for a COVID-19 ‘retention bonus’ to ensure the continuity of the workforce for aged care workers in both residential and home care. This includes a payment of up to \$800 after tax per quarter, paid for two quarters, for full time direct care workers. It also includes two payments of up to \$600 after tax per quarter, for two quarters, for full time home care workers. Payments will be delivered to providers to pay their full time workers - part-time and casual workers will be paid a pro-rata rate.</li> <li>▪ \$78.3 million in additional funding for residential care to support continuity of workforce supply.</li> <li>▪ \$26.9 million for a temporary 30 per cent increase to the Residential and Home Care Viability Supplements and the Homeless Supplement.</li> <li>▪ \$92.2 million of additional support for CHSP and home care providers.</li> </ul>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Arrangements for Commonwealth Home Support Programme providers</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 20 March 2020; updated on 2 April
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government announced \$92.2 million of additional support for home care and Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. \$70.2 million is for unsolicited proposals by CHSP providers (\$40 million in 2019-20 and \$30.2 million in 2020-21). Where there is significant impact on the ability of providers to continue delivering services, or where there are time-limited demand pressures to support additional clients due to COVID-19, providers may submit an unsolicited proposal for additional grant funding. They must first use the expanded flexibility provisions before submitting an unsolicited proposal.</p> <p>On 2 April, these provisions were expanded to allow providers to re-allocate funding across the Aged Care Planning Regions (ACPRs) in which they operate on a time-limited basis.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>COVID19 Aged Care Support Program</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 27 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The COVID-19 Aged Care Support Program is a grant program that will reimburse eligible aged care providers for expenditure incurred on managing direct impacts of COVID-19. The Program will run over two years from 2019-20 to 2020-21. The Program will assist Residential Aged Care, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program and Home Care Package providers that are subject to direct COVID-19 impacts.</p> <p>Eligible applicants can apply for funding for each impacted service for the periods between the date on which the resident, staff member or client is tested for COVID-19 and the date on which direct COVID-19 impacts are resolved (i.e. no infected or isolated residents, staff members or clients).</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Meal deliveries for older people</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 31 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Additional funding of \$59.3 million has been made available to support meal services. These include prepared meals, food staples and essential daily items. In total, \$50 million will fund 3.4 million meals for 41,000 people for six weeks – the equivalent of two meals a day. The remaining \$9.3 million will be used to buy 36,000 emergency food supplies boxes.</p> <p>The package will prioritise home delivery for senior Australians registered with My Aged Care, ensuring direct access to grocery suppliers via online and phone ordering. The initiative is designed to help older people follow COVID-19 restrictions and stay home.</p> <p>As part of the package, CHSP providers have been offered an immediate one off grant of up to 100% of their scheduled grant payments over the next six months to deliver more meals for existing and new clients.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>New guidelines and restrictions for aged care providers</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 10 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>A series of new guidelines and restrictions have been announced and regularly updated for aged care providers on issues ranging from visitor access, hygiene, staff wellbeing, training, protective equipment, and much more. Anglicare Australia encourages members to <a href="#">review this advice regularly</a> as updates are being announced multiple times a week.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Social security deeming rates</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 12 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has chosen to include a further cut to deeming rates as part of the latest stimulus package. Both the upper deeming rate of 2.5% and the lower deeming rate of 0.5% will be reduced by 0.25%. The new upper deeming rate will be 2.25%. The new lower deeming rate will be 0.25%</p> <p>Deeming rates are used to estimate the income received from financial assets. Centrelink uses both the income and the assets test to calculate pension entitlements, using the test that gives the lower pension amount when calculating payments. Not everyone will be affected by the deeming rate change because many people fall under the assets tests.</p> <p>The change will benefit around 900,000 income support recipients, including around 565,000 Age Pensioners who will, on average receive around \$324 more of the Age Pension in the first full year the reduced rates apply.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Welfare and Social Services'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Temporarily reducing superannuation minimum drawdown rates</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is temporarily reducing superannuation minimum drawdown requirements for account-based pensions and similar products by 50 per cent for 2019-20 and 2020-21. This measure will benefit retirees holding these products by reducing the need to sell investment assets to fund minimum drawdown requirements.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Older People'

**Key Area: Tax and Superannuation**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Temporary early release of superannuation</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	The Government is allowing individuals affected by the Coronavirus to access up to \$10,000 of their superannuation in 2019-20 and a further \$10,000 in 2020-21. Individuals will not need to pay tax on amounts released and the money they withdraw will not affect Centrelink or Veterans' Affairs payments.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Temporarily reducing superannuation minimum drawdown rates</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	The Government is temporarily reducing superannuation minimum drawdown requirements for account-based pensions and similar products by 50 per cent for 2019-20 and 2020-21. This measure will benefit retirees holding these products by reducing the need to sell investment assets to fund minimum drawdown requirements.
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Older People'

**Key Area: Welfare and Social Services**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>JobSeeker payment</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is temporarily expanding eligibility to income support payments and establishing a new, time-limited Coronavirus supplement to be paid at a rate of \$550 per fortnight. This supplement will be paid to both existing and new recipients of the eligible payment categories. These changes will apply for the next six months.</p> <p>The Coronavirus supplement will not be paid to Age Pensioners, Disability Support Pensioners, asylum seekers, international students, carers, and overseas workers who are unable to return to their home country. This is of great concern to Anglicare Australia. More details on eligibility are <a href="#">available here</a>.</p> <p>The Government has also expanded access for the payment, reduced means testing, and reduced waiting times.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Financial counselling funding</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 9 April 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>An additional \$20 million will be provided to current financial counselling services including the National Debt Helpline, Money Support Hubs and Problem Gambling to increase their capacity.</p> <p>Currently 115,000 Australians receive Commonwealth-funded financial counselling support each year and the additional injection will enable about 50,000 more to be supported.</p> <p>Financial Counselling Australia will work with training providers to develop a short-form financial counselling course, training new financial counsellors which will create new jobs for Australians and bolster the capacity of the National Debt Helpline.</p> <p>Good Shepherd will offer about 40,000 Australians access to safe, affordable financial products through the No Interest Loans Scheme. The Scheme provides up to \$1500 in immediate financial relief for everyday household products and bills as alternative to other high-risk, high-interest products such as credit cards and payday loans. Higher loan amounts may be available through this package following an assessment of client capacity to repay.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Funding for relief services</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 29 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>\$200 million will be provided to support charities and other community organisations which provide emergency and food relief as demand surges as a result of coronavirus.</p> <p>The funding will boost support to services where demand is quickly increasing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emergency Relief</li> <li>▪ Assistance for food relief</li> <li>▪ Services through the National Debt Helpline</li> <li>▪ Financial counselling</li> <li>▪ Expanding access no interest loans.</li> </ul> <p>Anglicare Australia is working with the Government to distribute these funds across the sector.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Community sector'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Payments to support households</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 12 March 2020; updated on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government is providing two separate \$750 payments to social security, veteran and other income support recipients and eligible concession card holders. The first payment will be made from 31 March 2020 and the second payment will be made from 13 July 2020. Around half of those that benefit are pensioners. These payments will help to support confidence and domestic demand in the economy. More details on eligibility are <a href="#">available here</a>.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Social security deeming rates</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 12 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has cut deeming rates as part of the latest stimulus package. Both the upper deeming rate of 2.5% and the lower deeming rate of 0.5% will be reduced by 0.25%. The new upper deeming rate will be 2.25%. The new lower deeming rate will be 0.25%</p> <p>Deeming rates are used to estimate the income received from financial assets. Not everyone will be affected by the deeming rate change because many people fall under the assets tests. The change will benefit around 900,000 income support recipients, including around 565,000 Age Pensioners who will, on average receive around \$324 more of the Age Pension in the first full year the reduced rates apply.</p>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Older People'

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Suspension of mutual obligation requirements</b>
<b>Announced</b>	First announced on 25 March 2020; with regular updates
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has suspended mutual obligation requirements for the JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance as a job seeker and Parenting Payment until 27 April 2020. The liquid assets waiting period has also been removed from 25 March 2020. During the exemption period, recipients won't need to attend appointments, look for work, or do any of the activities in their Job Plan.</p> <p>The suspension was initially due to expire on 31 March, and has since been extended. Anglicare Australia expects there will be further extensions of the suspension period throughout the health crisis.</p>

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Waiving of income support payment waiting period</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 22 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>Services Australia will waive some waiting periods from 25 March 2020 to 24 September 2020. This is if you're applying for one of the following payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ JobSeeker</li> <li>▪ Youth Allowance</li> <li>▪ Parenting Payment</li> <li>▪ Austudy</li> <li>▪ ABSTUDY</li> <li>▪ Farm Household Allowance</li> <li>▪ Special Benefit.</li> </ul>
<b>Note</b>	This item also appears under 'Families, Children and Young People'

## Other Areas

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Support for Coronavirus-affected regions and communities</b>
<b>Announced</b>	Announced on 23 March 2020
<b>About this initiative</b>	<p>The Government has set aside \$1 billion to support those regions and communities that have been disproportionately affected by the economic impacts of the Coronavirus, including those heavily reliant on industries such as tourism, agriculture and education.</p> <p>This will include the waiver of fees and charges for tourism businesses that operate in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the waiver of entry fees for Commonwealth National Parks. It will also include additional assistance to help businesses identify alternative export markets or supply chains. Targeted measures will also be developed to further promote domestic tourism.</p> <p>The ATO will set up a temporary shop front in Cairns within the next few weeks with dedicated staff specialising in assisting small business. In addition, it will consider ways to enhance its presence in other significantly affected regions, making it easier for people to apply for relief. The ATO is considering further temporary shop fronts and face-to-face options.</p>