Community Agent Program (CAP) Handbook

Handbook for the Guidance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Agents

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Background to the Community Agent Program

What is a Community Agent?

Agents are employed by community organisations using funds provided by the Department of Social Security.

Role of the Agent

What does a Community Agent do?

The agreement or contract between Social Security and the organisation provides for an agent to be employed by the organisation for an agreed number of hours per week to handle a variety of tasks:

* answering simple enquires about Department of Social Security (DSS) programs and seeking answers from DSS on more difficult cases;
* giving out DSS forms and pamphlets to people asking them and keeping enough stocks on hand;
* accepting and date stamping any claim and review forms and other correspondence lodged; assist people to fill in forms where necessary (The Agent is not required to and should not make any decisions about whether a person can get a payment);
* sighting and photocopying paper supporting claims;
* sending to DSS the forms and papers lodged;
* referring people to other Departments and welfare agencies where necessary; and
* telling DSS of community reaction to our programs/services.

Training for Community Agents

What do Agents need to know?

* Most of the information you will need to have to do your job is in this handbook. If there is something that is not clear to you after you read this book, you can ask for help from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer (AILO) at the nearest DSS Office. If the AILO is not in the office, the Regional Manager can help.
* When you take on the job of community agent you will be offered a visit to the nearest DSS office. DSS will arrange a place for you to stay while you are being trained at the office. If after your first week of training you feel you might need more training then you can talk to the AILO to arrange it.
* If necessary, the AILO or a person from DSS will visit you in your community to help with anything you are unclear about.
* It is better to ask about anything you do not understand rather than give out information to people which you are not sure about. If the AILO is not available other people in the DSS office will help you.

Proof of Identity

Anyone who wants to get a Social Security payment must give information to prove who they are. This is called Proof of Identity.

You will see that Proof of Identity is needed under the heading "Forms needed to Claim" for each Pension, Benefit or Allowance.

This is to make sure that each person gets the right payment, that no one gets paid twice using different names, and no one can use someone else's name wrongly to get extra money.

A list of documents that can be used for Proof of Identity is shown below. It is best to send in three documents. There are some that cannot be used and they are shown below.

If a person does not have these documents, they should get a special Proof of Identity form for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients (RA10) filled in by the council Chairman, or other official person such as a Government worker who can vouch for them.

The following documents can be used for Proof of Identity:

* Australian passport;
* original Australian birth certificate or Australian birth extract issued more than twelve months ago;
* Australian Armed Services discharge documents;
* original Australian marriage certificate issued by a government department;
* apprenticeship indenture papers;
* trades person's certificate;
* rate notice showing current address;
* tax assessment notices;
* electricity, Telecom or gas account which has been paid and shows current address;
* prison discharge certificate;
* reference from employer who can be contacted;
* driver's licence or car registration showing current address;
* group certificate or termination notice;
* school reports or exam results; and
* bankbook more than twelve months old.

The following documents **CANNOT BE USED** for Proof of Identity:

* birth certificate or extract issued less than twelve months age;
* provisional drivers licence or learners permit;
* employment ID card;
* student card;
* baptismal certificate;
* plastic bank cards or credit card;
* library card;
* Medicare card;
* Video club card; and
* Shooting or fishing licence.

Reviews and Appeals

If a person disagrees with a decision made by Social Security, they can take the matter further.

Firstly, the person should get in touch with Social Security, or they can ask the Community Agent or AILO to do this on their behalf.

They should speak to the person who made the decision. An AILO can handle the case if the person would prefer it.

They should find out the reason for the decision.

If there has been a misunderstanding or wrong information, this can usually be sorted out fairly quickly.

If the matter cannot be settled, or the person still disagrees with the decision, an Authorised Review Officer can have another look at the matter.

The Authorised Review Officer is someone who has not worked on the case before and they will have a fresh look at the case.

If the Authorised Review Officer decides not to change the first decision, and the person still disagrees with the reasons for the decision, he or she can appeal to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal. The Tribunal will have another careful look at the matter and decide whether or not the decision should be changed.

Appeals can be written in a letter or using the Appeal Against a Decision form (TRI004).

The Appeal should contain as much information as possible about why the person thinks the decision is wrong. Any papers or other evidence to support their case should be included with the Appeal.

Pensions

Claiming a Pension

Each claim should be made on a Pension Claim Form (SA 2).

As well as the Claim Form, there are "Modules" that is, separate pages with extra questions. These are used when more information is needed to decide the person's proper entitlement.

The modules to use for Pensioners are:

**A**  if any assets are owned;

**F**  if the person has been self-employed or involved in a business;

**C**  if there is a claim for compensation or damages;

**H**  if the person pays Board or Board and Lodgings;

**I**  if the person gets any income or has any money invested;

**LA** if the person shares a home with anyone else except their children;

**M**  for maintenance and child details;

**Md**  when a person claims Disability Support Pension;

**P**  for a married person when their partner is not claiming a pension;

**R**  if any real estate (land) is owned; and

**S**  when a person is claiming a pension because they are separated.

There are more details about Modules in the section for each pension.

Each claim must have Proof of Identity.

There are some requirements for some pensions. These are covered in the section for each pension.

Payment of Pensions

Pension is paid every second Thursday.

Payment is sent by cheque in remote communities unless the pensioner asks for it to be sent to a bank account. Pensioners living in or near a town usually have their pension paid into a bank account unless they have a special reason for wanting cheque payment.

Entitlement starts from the Pension payday on or after the claim gets to the Social Security office.

Husbands and wives get separate cheques in their own names.

Extra pension for the children is usually paid to the mother, but can be paid to the husband, if the mother is not living with the family because of sickness.

The amount of pension paid depends on if the pensioner is single or married, how many children they have, and if they have any other income.

The pensioner might be able to get Rent Assistance, if they pay rent to anyone except the Housing Commission, Housing Trust, Department of Community Services or Housing and Construction. The amount of Rent Assistance depends on how much rent is paid.

If a pensioner cannot look after their own money matters (for instance, too old or sick), their pension cheques can be paid to another person to handle for the pensioner. The pensioner must give written permission. A form SS269, "I want my payments to be made to another person,' is the best way to do this, but any written request is alright if both parties sign.

When pensioners change their address or the amount of rent they pay, they must tell Social Security within two weeks. This can be done by phone or by completing form SS290 Change of Address/Rent Details.

Pension Reviews

* From time to time, Review forms are sent to pensioners to make sure they are paid the right amount.
* It is important for these forms to be returned quickly, or payments might stop.
* The most common reviews are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pension Entitlement Review | * A general check of all details such as address, rent, children in care, income/assets and so on.
 |
| Sole Parent Review | * Sent to sole parents four weekly for first three forms, then twelve weekly. **Very important** to return **on** the due date, not early and not late.Forms sent in early cannot be used and another one will be sent out. If forms arrive at Social Security late, payments stop automatically. After six weeks, a new claim is needed and back payment might not be made.
 |

Other reviews and questionnaires are sometimes sent out to check individual details or to clear up a point which is not clear from the person's file.

It is very important to answer all the questions and send the forms back to Social Security straight away. If the forms are not returned, payments might stop.

Sole Parents Pension

Sole Parent Pension covers single, separated and widowed parents.

Who can claim

Single people who have a child in their care.

The child must be:

* Under 16 or getting Child Disability Allowance ; and
* a) the person's natural child; or
* b) the person's legally adopted child; or
* c) in the person's legal custody; or
* d) was in the person's care at the time of separation; or
* e) has been in the person's care for at least twelve months and is likely to stay in their care permanently or for a long time.

If none of the children in the person's care meet these conditions, the person should claim Special Benefit.

A "single" person can be:

* not married;
* separated from their legal or spouse/defacto husband or wife:
* a widow or widower;
* a person whose spouse/defacto has died;
* a person whose husband, wife or partner has been put in jail for more than
* fourteen days;
* a person who cannot live with their husband, wife or partner in their home because their partner is ill. The illness must not be likely to get better in the near future, and must prevent the partner from looking after any children; and
* a divorced person.

"Separated" includes married or spouse/spouse/defacto couples who are living apart because:

* their relationship has broken down;
* one partner is in jail; and
* one partner has to live away from the house for a long time because of illness.

"Separated" does not include couples living apart because:

* one partner has gone away to work; and
* one partner has gone away for other reasons such as visiting relatives or for medical treatment.

When to claim

As soon as possible after the event that causes the person to become a "single" parent, for example, the birth of a child, separation from of death of a partner.

Forms needed to claim

* Pension claim form
* Module M
* Module S (if separated)
* Proof of Identity
* Child Support Application
* If the person has just separated, a statement from a person such as an AILO or Chairperson is needed to verify separation.

Child Support

Every person who claims a Sole Parent Pension, except widows, must apply for maintenance. If they don't, their pension might stop. They apply by filling in a Child Support Agency form (CSA 101). More details are given on page 19.

Child Support

The Child Support Agency works with Social Security and the Tax Office to collect and pay maintenance.

The Child Support Agency looks into each case and decides if maintenance should be paid. They will decide how much should be paid, make arrangements to get the money from the other person and pay it to the Sole Parent.

If a sole parent has a baby or separates from their partner after 1 October 1989, they must fill in a Child Support Agency form (CSA 101 ). They do not need to know where their partner is and won't have to go to court.

For cases where the child was born before 1 October 1989 you should talk to your AILO.

Some sole parents can be excused from filling in a CSA 101. These are:

* when there is fear of violence from the other person;
* when there has been rape or incest; and
* when the father of the child is unknown (this must be proved).

All sole parents who have a baby or separate after 1 October 1989 must lodge a CSA 101 or apply to be excused within twenty eight days after they lodge a Pension claim.

If they don't do one of these things their pension might stop.

This must be done even if the other parent is working on CDEP or getting Social Security money.

Other people (eg, Grandmother, Aunty) who are getting extra Pension for a child born after 1-10-89 must claim maintenance from the natural mother and father of the child.

If a couple separates and each partner takes one child and then claims Sole Parent Pension, they must claim maintenance from each other.

In some cases it isn't very likely that the other person will have to pay maintenance and the Child Support Agency looks at all the details before deciding if anything does have to be paid.

You should speak to your AILO if the person does not want the CSA to collect the maintenance.

Widow’s Pension

Who can claim

Women who were born before 1 July 1937, have no children in their care, and who are "Widows".

A "widow" can be:

* a woman who was legally married and her husband has died;
* a woman who lived with a spouse/defacto for three years or more, and was living with him when he died;
* a woman whose legal husband has left her without any cause on her part or she had good reason to leave him. She must be separated for six months before Widow's Pension can start;
* a divorced woman; and
* a legally married woman whose husband has been in jail for six months.

A woman getting Sole Parent's Pension whose last child turns 16 or leaves her care, can get a Widow's Pension if she was born before 1 July 1942.

If a woman is a widow but is not entitled to Widow's Pension or Sole Parent's Pension, she might be able to get Job Search Allowance, Sickness Allowance or Special Benefit.

When to claim

Straight away after her husband dies or six months after separation.

Forms needed to claim

* Pension claim form
* Module S if separated
* Any other module to suit case
* Proof of husband's death or proof of divorce
* Proof of Age
* Proof of separation (usually letters from other people who know about the separation, or the Chairperson).

Widowed Person’s Allowance

Who can claim

A person whose husband, wife or spouse/defacto dies.

A person getting Job Search Allowance, Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance can only apply for Widowed Person's Allowance if their partner dies. Their allowance will stop while the Widowed Person's Allowance is paid.

When to claim

As soon as possible after the partner's death. If the claim does not arrive at Social Security within one month of the death, there is no back-payment.

If the claim arrives more than fourteen weeks after the date of death, no payment is made, unless it is from a pregnant woman.

If a woman is pregnant when her partner dies, she might be entitled to some payment even if the claim arrives late. (See "Other Information" below).

Forms needed to claim

* Pension claim form
* Proof of Identity
* Proof of death of partner
* Modules that apply to the person.

Other information

Widowed Person's Allowance is paid for fourteen weeks at the most ( except for pregnant women).

If a woman is pregnant when her husband dies, Widowed Person's Allowance can be paid until either:

* The baby is born;
* The pregnancy ends in another way (eg miscarriage); and
* Twelve weeks after the partners death.

Payment is made until the later of these dates.

If the person needs Social Security money after this time, they should put in a claim before the fourteen weeks is up. The type of payment claimed will depend on the circumstances, but the claim should be sent in to make sure they are not left with out money.

Bereavement Allowance

Bereavement Allowance is the name of a special payment made to some people when their partner or child dies.

The payment is made to help with the funeral costs and give the person some time to get over the death before they have to worry about Social Security matters.

Bereavement Allowance can be paid when:

* one of a married or spouse/defacto pensioner couple dies;
* a Sole Parent's only child dies;
* a person getting Additional Family Payment for a child, and the child dies; and
* a single person dies.
1. When one of a married or spouse/defacto Pensioner couple dies:
* the remaining partner gets extra money which means that they will still get as much as both partners got before;
* payment is equal to both partner's Pension for seven Pension Pays after the death;
* couples who were living together or those who were living apart only because of sickness are entitled to Bereavement Allowance;
* the extra money is sent out in the name of the surviving partner. It is sent out in one big Cheque once Social Security has been told about the death.
* it is not necessary for the surviving partner to claim Bereavement Allowance. It is paid automatically;
* any cheques sent out in the name of the person who has died can be returned to Social Security and will be sent out in the name of the surviving partner;
* women who were getting Wife's Pension might not be entitled to a Pension any more because their partner has died. They will still get Bereavement Allowance, but won't be paid after the seven Pension Pays; and
* Carer's Pensioners will get their own pension for seven Pension Pays after the person they were looking after has died. They won't be paid anything extra.
* It is important to make sure that both Wives and Carers claim another type of payment before the Bereavement Allowance runs out so that they are not left without any money.
1. A sole parent whose only child dies:
* will get seven more payments at the single rate before their payments stop;
* will also be paid the amount of extra payments for their child which are explained in paragraph 3; and
* does not have to apply for the Bereavement Allowance. Social Security will work out the payment and sent it when they are told about the death.
* It is important to make sure that Sole Parents in this situation claim another payment before the Bereavement Allowance runs out, unless they work on CDEP. Usually this will mean Job Search Allowance unless there are some reasons why they cannot work.
1. When a child dies, and a person was getting Additional Family Payment for that child:
* the person will be paid the amount of all payments they were getting for the child for another seven paydays after the death;
* the whole amount will be sent in one big cheque. This will be sent as soon as Social Security is told about the death; and
* people do not have to apply for this payment. Social Security will send out the Bereavement Allowance once they have been told about the death.
1. When a single person dies:
* one pension payment is sent out after the person dies. The payment goes to their usual bank account. The can use the money to help with the deceased's funeral costs; and
* no extra money is paid.

Age Pension

Who can claim

Women aged 60 years. The age that a woman can claim Age Pension is gradually increasing to 65. Talk to your AILO to get an update on the age required.

* Men aged 65 years.
* Australian Residents with at least 10 years residency.

When to claim

* up to 3 months before the 60/65th birthday

Payments start from pension pay day on or after the birthday, unless the claim arrives at Social Security after this date. Back pay is not made if a claim arrives later.

Forms needed to claim

* Pension Claim Form.
* Extra modules to suit case.
* Proof of Age (payment cannot begin until this is provided).
* Proof of Identity.

If it seems likely that there will be trouble proving a person's age, they should claim Special Benefit if they need money to live on in the meantime.

Disability Support Pension

Who can claim

A person over 16 years old who:

* has a health problem which is bad enough to stop them doing full time work for at least the next two years; or
* is permanently blind.

When to claim

As soon as it is clear that the illness or problem is not likely to get better and that the person won't be able to work again.

Forms needed to claim

* Pension Claim Form.
* Module Md.
* Any other module that suits the case.
* A report on Form SA 12 from the person's usual doctor. (NOT necessary if it is the Flying Doctor)
* Proof of Identity.

Other requirements

* Normally a person has to be examined by a Commonwealth Medical Officer, or the Flying Doctor who writes a report for Social Security before a decision is made. However, Commonwealth Medical Officer examinations may not be required if people live in remote communities. Check with the AILO.
* It can take several weeks before a Disability Support Pension claim, so the person should claim another allowance. This could be Job Search Allowance or Special Benefit and may be paid during the time it takes to decide the Pension claim.

Other information

* Persons under the age of 21 years without children, who claim or become qualified on or after 12 November 1991 will receive the same basic rate of payment they would receive if on Job Search or Newstart Allowance plus a youth disability supplement equivalent to child disability allowance.
* A person who has received a Social Security payment continuously for twelve months may qualify for a $200 Employment Entry payment if they return to work.

Carers Pension

Who can claim

* A person who:

spends most of their time looking after a sick person at home. They must both live in the same house or next to each other; and

cannot get another sort of Pension.

* The person being looked after must:

be getting an age or Disability Support Pension or payments from Veterans Affairs;

have an illness which means they need help with daily activities such as, eating, dressing, bathing, toilet etc or constant looking after so that they don't hurt themselves or someone else ; and

be likely to need looking after in this way for a long time. This usually means more than six months.

When to claim

Straight away after spending most of the time looking after the sick person.

Forms needed to claim

* Pension Claim Form.
* Any modules which apply to the person.
* Additional Questions for Carers (SA 1 OA).
* Medical Report on person being cared for (SA75).
* Proof of Identity.

A person who spends most of their time looking after someone who is not getting Age or Disability Support Pension, or who is looking after them for a short time, should claim Special Benefit.

Wife’s Pension

Who can claim

* The wife or spouse/defacto of a man who is receiving or claiming a pension, if they are living together and she cannot get another sort of pension.
* If a man is getting Carer's Pension, his wife or spouse/defacto cannot get Wife's Pension. She might be able to get Job Search Allowance or Special Benefit.
* Wife's Pension is not payable if either the wife or husband is under 21 and there is no dependent children. They might be able to get Job Search Allowance or Special Benefit.

When to claim

At the same time as her husband claims his pension or when she marries or starts living with a man who is already getting a pension.

Forms needed to claim

* Pension Claim Form.
* Any modules that apply to the person.
* Proof of Identity.
* Proof of marriage.

Job Search Allowance, Special Job Search Allowance conditions for under 18 years olds, Job Search Allowance in remote areas, Newstart Allowance, Sickness Allowance, Special benefit & Young Homeless Allowance

General Information

Claiming an Allowance/Benefit

The Claim Form that should be used depends on the type of Allowance/Benefit being claimed.

The claim forms are:

* Job Search Allowance SU2
* Newstart Allowance SU2
* Sickness Allowance SU3
* Special Benefit SU4
* Partner Allowance sus
* Homeless Allowance SUB

As well as the Claim Form, there are "Modules" that is, separate pages with extra question. These are used when a person answers "yes" to questions on the claim form, and more information is needed to decide their entitlement.

The modules that might be needed for a benefits claim are:

**A**  if any assets are owned;

**B** if the person has been self-employed or involved in a business;

**C**  if there is a claim for compensation or damages;

**E**  for people who are studying, going to study or have just finished their schooling; if the person gets any income or money invested;

**J**  for ALL people claiming Job Search Allowance under the age of 18 (and some former students aged 18 - 21 years);

**LA**  if the person shares a home with anyone of the opposite sex, except their children;

**M**  if the person has children from a past relationship;

**Md**  if the person is claiming Sickness Allowance;

**O**  overseas module;

**P**  for anyone who has a married or spouse/defacto partner not meeting the qualifications for partner allowance;

**R** if any real estate (land) is owned; and

**S**  When a person has recently separated;

Module J should be filled in by the parents or guardians of 16 and 17 year olds who claim a benefit or allowance.

Each claim should be made by filling in the suitable claim from, and necessary modules.

Each claim must have Proof of Identity.

There are other requirements for some payments. These are covered in each section.

Once a claim arrives at the Social Security Office, it is checked to make sure all the necessary information has been provided: if more information is needed, a letter will be sent telling what is needed. No payment can be made until all this information arrives at Social Security, so it is important to answer any mail as soon as possible.

If no letter or payment arrive after two or three weeks, it is a good idea to get in touch with an AILO at Social Security and make sure there are no problems. The person can call themselves or ask a community agent to speak on their behalf.

Payment of Allowance/Benefit

The date payment start will depend on the circumstances of each case. In most cases, there is a one week waiting period for which no benefit is paid.

It usually take two or three weeks for the first payment to be made.

Payment is made every two weeks. The pay day will depend on which day the person was first entitled to payment.

Some allowances/benefits need to have forms lodged for payment to continue. There is more about this under each section.

Payment is usually sent by cheque to people in remote communities, but can be sent to a bank account if this is requested. For people living in or near a town, payment is sent to a bank account unless the person has special reasons for wanting cheque payment.

The amount paid depends on a number of factors eg the person's age, if they are married or single, if they live in a remote area and if they are doing a training course.

**Remote Area Allowance** can be paid to people who live in Tax Zone A or special taxation zone B. The amount paid depends if a person is single or married or spouse/defacto, and if there are any children.

**Allowances and Benefits are taxable income.** Tax can be taken out from payment and sent to the Tax Department. People usually do this when they work for part of the year and will have to pay tax. If a person has no income for the whole financial year, they should not have to pay tax. People can request, by a written statement, for tax to start or stop being taken out of their payments.

Tax File Number

When a person claims Job Search Allowance or Sickness Allowance, they will be asked for their Tax File Number and their partner's Tax File Number.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living in remote communities may not have to provide a Tax File Number. They should contact the Department if they are unsure.

Anyone who has filled in a Tax Return will have a file at the Tax Office. If they have a Tax Assessment Notice, their Tax File Number will be on it.

Anyone who has lodged a Tax Return but has lost their Assessment notice can apply to the Tax Office to find out their number.

Anyone who does not have a tax file number may apply to the Tax Office to get one. They can do this themselves, or the department can do it for them.

Social Security can send the form to the Tax Office and the Tax Office will give the number straight to Social Security to put on their record.

Job Search Allowance

Who can claim

* Men aged 18-64 and women aged 18-59 who have been registered for less then twelve months and all unemployed people aged 16-17, and some 15 year aids. From 1/1/95 people under 18 will receive the Youth Training Allowance.
* They must be:

out of work;

looking for work;

fit for suitable paid work both full time and part time;

willing to do any suitable work;

registered for work at the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES); and

willing to accept referral by the CES to training or any other suitable activity to improve their job prospects.

* Job Search Allowance cannot be paid to people who are:

getting a pension from Social Security or the Department of Veterans' Affairs;

on strike or stood down because of industrial action; and

getting an ABSTUDY/AUSTUDY payment.

When to claim

* As soon as a person becomes unemployed or leaves school.

How to claim

* Clients need to register at the CES. In remote areas, this is either done by telephone or in some areas Social Security will do this for the client. Check with an AILO how it is done in your area. A claim form for Job Search Allowance will be issued to you.
* Post or fax the completed claim form to Social Security. If an AILO is visiting in your area at the time a claim is being made a client may get help in filling it in or just hand the completed form to the AILO.
* People in remote areas can post their claim form to Social Security and register at the CES by phone or letter.
* Where one or both of a married or de facto couple are under 21 years of age, they will need to claim separately, unless they have children.

Forms needed to claim

* Claim for Job Search Allowance (Form SU2).
* Abbreviated claim form SU417 for those reclaiming with thirteen weeks of last being paid Job Search Allowance.
* Employment separation certificate (SU1) filled in by the employer if client was working.
* Module E if finished studying in the last six months.
* Module J (Parental Income Test) for those under 18.
* Proof of Identity.
* Any other modules that apply to the person.

Date of Commencement of Job Search Allowance

People claiming Job Search Allowance usually have a waiting period of one week for which no benefit is paid. This means that the first payment is for one week only, even though the first fortnightly form is for two weeks.

People may not have to serve a one week waiting period if:

* they are in financial hardship;
* they have already served a waiting period in the last thirteen weeks; or
* they are transferring from another DSS payment.

In other cases, people might have to wait longer before payments start. The most common cases are:

* education leavers. The waiting period is up to six weeks for people over 21 and thirteen weeks for people under 21;
* people who voluntarily left their job without sufficient reason, or were sacked because of bad behaviour, might have to wait up to two weeks or longer if they have done this before; and
* people who received annual leave payments when they left their last job.

Continuation form

After lodging the claim form, a person must lodge another form every two weeks for payments to be made. This form is called the Application for Payment of Job Search Allowance (SU19J) and asks questions about the person's circumstances during the past fortnight.

The SU19J must not be filled in before the due date. However, it is important to return the SU19J on the due date or as soon as possible after. Payment can be stopped if it is returned late.

All questions must be answered. The form must be signed and dated. Changes of address, casual work, or family circumstances (eg. new baby) must be advised on the form.

The SU19J asks about the person's efforts to find work or do training in the past two weeks. I is important to answer this question, because payment for that fortnight might be stopped if no efforts are written down.

Normally people must personally bring in their fortnightly form to the Social Security Office however, people who live a long way from the office may be able to post the form.

Anyone who has trouble returning forms should contact Social Security to talk about it.

If one or both of married or spouse/defacto couple is under 21 years old, they each have to lodge a separate SU19J. They will be paid separately.

People who fall sick normally stay on Job Search Allowance unless it is likely that their sickness will last over thirteen (13) weeks. If this happens, then they should claim Sickness Allowance.

If your Social Security Office is in the Northern Territory, the continuation form (19T) only needs to be lodged every 4 weeks. If you are not sure, please ask your AILO or phone your Regional Office.

Employment Separation Certificate

When a person stops work and claims Job Search Allowance, that person has to get an Employment Separation certificate (SU1) filled in by his or her last employer.

Where people have trouble getting a certificate, they should tell Social Security straight away, because their benefit payments usually won't start until one is provided. In some cases, a person can be excused from getting a SU1. This must be talked over with Social Security.

Education Leavers

An "Education Leaver" is anyone who finishes a full time study course which lasts longer than six months. It doesn't matter what age the person is.

Many education leavers who claim Job Search Allowance within six months of stopping education have to serve a longer waiting period, called a "Deferment Period".

The longest deferment period is thirteen weeks for people less then 21 years old, and six weeks for people 21 or older or with children.

It is important to register at CES as soon as studies cease. This is because the deferment period can only start from the date of CES registration, except for secondary school leavers. For school leavers, subject to the 13 week deferment period, payment commences on 15 February of the following year or 13 weeks after finishing studies, which ever is earlier.

The deferment period may be reduced by any full time or part time employment the person has done.

Module E is required to get the information to work out the correct deferment period.

If a person has just finished schooling and has no money to live on, deferment period might be able to be waived.

The rules for wavering deferment in this situation are fairly strict, but anyone who might be entitled should fill in a claim and let Social Security look at their case.

The deferment period can usually only be waived from the day the person asks at Social Security about it.

Conditions for under 18 year olds claiming Job Search Allowance

When a person is single and has no children, the amount of Job Search Allowance paid will depend on their parents' income.

Some under 18 years olds can be excused from the parental income test, including those:

* whose parents are on a pension, benefit or allowance;
* who are not living with parents, have not lived with them for at least 18 weeks continuously and have worked full-time for thirteen weeks or more, or registered with the CES for 13 weeks;
* who are homeless; or
* who are married/spouse/defacto or have dependent children.

Those who are not married and have no children should all complete Module J, which ask for details about the parents' income.

Module J is needed to get the information to work out the person's correct rate. Unless Module J is filled in, the person might only be paid $28.95 per week.

Married or spouse/defacto couples without children each get paid separately. Couples with children get the same as adults.

Continuation forms

Under 18 year aids getting JSA have to return fortnightly forms (if in the NT 4 weekly forms) the same as other age groups.

However, there are some differences between the treatment of forms for under 18 years old and other age groups.

Married or spouse/defacto couples have to lodge separate forms for each partner (this applies in all cases when one or both spouses are under age 21 ).

SU19J forms for under 18 year aids need to be stamped by the CES before being taken to Social Security. People who live a long way from the CES do not have to do this.

The rules about lodging forms on the due date or after are the same as for other age groups.

People who get sick stay on Job Search Allowance and do not change to Sickness Allowance for the first 13 weeks.

Where people are sick they should get a doctor's certificate and send this into Social Security with their form. They should keep sending in their fortnightly forms to Social Security They do not have to get the forms stamped by the CES or bring them personally to Social Security while they are sick.

Job Search Allowance in remote areas

Remote area claim form

For clients in some remote areas in the Northern Territory, there is a special REMOTE AREA CLAIM form ( RA3 ) to get Job Search Allowance. The answers to the questions on the form tell Social Security all about them, their husband and wife and their children.

Social Security must know these things so that they can pay them the right amount of money and so that no other person can get payments by using their name.

They must answer all the questions on the form so that Social Security will be able to pay their money quickly. If there are no answers for some questions, then their payment can be stopped while this information is found out.

**REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE PENALTIES IF A PERSON DOES NOT ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IF THEY CAN OR IF THEY GIVE THE WRONG ANSWER DELIBERATELY**.

Once a person has filled in the **REMOTE AREA CLAIM** from, they must send this form to Social Security.

**CLIENTS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY PROVING WHO THEY ARE SHOULD ALSO FILL OUT A SPECIAL "PROOF OF IDENTITY FOR PEOPLE IN REMOTE AREAS" FORM.**

What forms need to be filled in

* Remote Area Claim for Job Search Allowance (RA3).
* Proof of Identity for People in Remote Areas (RA10).

Remote area continuation form for Job Search Allowance

In some remote areas in the Northern Territory, there is also a special Remote Area Continuation form for Job Search Allowance (19T).

The 19T form is sent out every four weeks. This form asks questions about the person's circumstances during the past four weeks.

Payment of Job Search Allowance

In most cases there is a one week waiting period for which no payment is made.

It usually takes two to three weeks for the first payment to be sent out.

Partner Allowance

From September 1994 a Partner Allowance will be paid directly to the partner of a person receiving Job Search, Newstart or sickness allowances if they are over 21.

They must lodge a claim for Partner Allowance to be paid.

From July 1995 Partner Allowance will only be paid to those born before 1 July 1955 and have no dependant children and little or no work experience. Partners of allowees and pensioners with children under 16 will be paid Parenting Allowance. Anyone aged over 40 with no dependant children and recent work experience will need to claim Job Search, Newstart, Sickness Allowance in their own right.

Newstart Allowance

Who can claim

* Men aged over 18 but below Age Pension age and women aged over 18 but below Age Pension age. They must have been unemployed for twelve months or more.
* They must be:

out of work;

looking for work;

fit for full time work;

willing to do any suitable work;

registered for work at the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES); and

willing to accept referral by the CES to training or any other suitable activity to improve their job prospects.

* Newstart Allowance cannot be paid to people who are:

getting a pension from Social Security or Veterans' Affairs;

on strike or stood down because of industrial action; and

getting an ABSTUDY/AUSTUDY payment.

When to claim

Job Search Allowance is not payable beyond twelve months for those 18 and over:

* If clients have been unemployed for twelve months, they will need to claim Newstart Allowance.

How to claim

* After eleven months on Job Search Allowance, clients will be issued with a claim for Newstart Allowance.
* They then take the completed form to Social Security.
* People in remote areas can post their form to Social Security and register at the CES by phone or letter.

Forms needed to claim

* • Claim form for Newstart Allowance Form SU417 for those transferring from Job Search Allowance but still registered as unemployed with the CES for more then twelve months.

Newstart Activity Agreement

All those claiming Newstart Allowance must go and see the CES to develop a plan of suitable activities to help them find work. This plan must be written down and agreed to by both the client and the CES, is called a Newstart Activity Agreement.

Suitable activities under the Newstart Activity Agreement include:

* actively seeking suitable work;
* training courses and work experience approved by the CES;
* voluntary work; and
* job search training courses.

People must keep to this plan in order to continue receiving Newstart Allowance.

The activity agreement takes into account the special needs of clients in remote areas, where there is often a lack of jobs and training opportunities. People will not be expected to apply for jobs which do not exist. As part of their agreement, clients themselves will be able to propose a wide range of activities to maintain their work skills.

**Continuation forms**

To continue receiving Newstart Allowance, people are usually required to lodge an "Application for Payment of Newstart Allowance" from (SU19N) every fortnight. Some people over 50 years of age only have to lodge a form every 12 weeks. You should ask your AILO about this. The same conditions of lodgement apply as for Job Search Allowance.

However, those who fall sick can stay on Newstart allowance for up to 13 weeks.

Mature Age Allowance (MAA)

To qualify for MAA a person must:

* be over 60 years of age, but less than age pension age.
* be unemployed;
* be registered at the CES in an unemployed category for 12 months prior to the claim; .
* have been receiving Social Security or Veterans Affairs payments continuously for the previous 12 months;
* have been a resident of Australia for 10 years; and be in Australia.

Sickness Allowance

Who can claim

* Men over 16 and below age pension age.
* Women over 16 and below age pension age.
* They must:

be temporarily unfit for work ( ie usually less then twelve months);

be unable to do their job (if they have a job);

be unable to work for more than eight at any job (if they are unemployed);

* and have lost income because of illness.

When to claim

* As soon as possible after getting sick.
* Back-pay can usually be paid if the claim gets to Social Security within five weeks of the sickness starting.
* People on Job Search Allowance who get sick should claim Sickness Allowance if they are going to be unfit for work for more than thirteen weeks.
* People on Newstart Allowance should claim Sickness Allowance if they are sick for more then thirteen weeks.

Forms needed to claim

* Claim for Sickness Allowance (SU3).
* Medical Certificate signed by a doctor which says the type of sickness, whether it stops them from working, when it started and how long he or she thinks it will last. In remote areas the hospital matron or sister can sign the medical certificate if the Flying Doctor will not be back for quite a while.
* Module Md.
* Proof of Identity.
* Module C if there is likely to be a compensation or damages claim.
* Proof that the person was earning an income which has now stopped because of the sickness, for instance, a letter from the employer which says the date the person last worked and was paid up to, and if any sick pay is owing, and if there is likely to be claim for Worker's Compensation.

Date of commencement of Allowance

There is a one week "waiting period" for which no benefit is paid. The first payment is for one weeks' benefit. This means that the first payment is usually made two weeks after the medical certificate starts. Sometimes it can take longer for the first payment to be sent.

If the claim gets to Social Security more than five weeks after the medical certificate starts, benefit is paid from the day the claim arrives. Back-pay can only be paid in some special cases.

Continuation of Sickness Allowance Payment

If a sickness lasts longer then the medical certificate said, and the person still wants Sickness Allowance, they will have to get another medical certificate. The new certificate should start from the date the old one finished.

If a new certificate is not received at Social Security before the old one runs out, Sickness Allowance will be stopped. If the person is still sick, they must complete a new claim form for Sickness Allowance and send this to Social Security with a new medical certificate.

Sickness Allowance Reviews

If a person is still getting Sickness Allowance after thirteen weeks, they will get a review form and a form to be filled in by their doctor. It is important to get these forms completed and send them to Social Security as soon as possible. Payment might stop if the review form is not returned.

If a person stays on Sickness Allowance for longer, there will most likely be more review forms sent to them. It is important to fill in all review forms and send them back to Social Security straight away to make sure there are no delays in payment.

Special Benefit

Who can claim

* People who:

can't get another type of allowance, benefit or pension;

can't work or support themselves in some way; and

are in hardship because of this.

There are many different reasons why people claim Special Benefit. Some of the more common reasons are:

* in the waiting period for another type of benefit; eg Sickness Allowance;
* a pregnant woman when her baby is due within twelve weeks;
* waiting for a pension claim to be decided;
* caring for a sick person, but can't get Carer Pension;
* caring for a child, but get Sole Parent Pension;
* too young for Job Search Allowance; and
* victims of natural disasters such as cyclone, flood or bushfire.

These are only some of the times that Special Benefit can be paid. Anyone who can't get a pension or other benefit and is having trouble because they have no money or income should claim Special Benefit straight away so that Social Security can look at their case.

When to claim

As soon as it is clear that the person won't have any way of supporting themselves and it seems that they won't be able to get another Social Security payment.

Forms needed to claim

* Claim for Special Benefit (SU4).
* Proof of Identity.
* Most people will have to be interviewed by Social Security in person, probably by the AILO or Social Worker to find out more details about their situation. Interviews can be done by phone for remote areas. It will help to include a written statement about the person's situation with their Claim Form.
* There are other requirements for some types of Special Benefit. Some are covered later in this section. There could be other requirements for different situations. It is best to check with the Benefit Section or the AILO at Social Security.

Date of commencement of Special Benefit

Payment usually starts from the day the claim arrives at Social Security.

It takes two weeks for the first payment to be made in most cases.

If a person is in severe hardship, ask Social Security if they can be paid straight away. This can be done in some cases.

Special Benefit reviews

Special Benefit will be reviewed either four weekly or three monthly, depending on the type of situation.

A review form will be sent out to the person.

The four weekly review form will have a date that it is due to be returned. The form should be kept until the due date, then filled in and sent to Social Security.

The three monthly review form should be completed and returned straight away.

It is important to complete and return these review forms because payments will stop if they are not returned.

More information about situations where Special Benefit might be paid

**In the waiting period for another type of allowance, Special Benefit:**

* can be paid during the waiting period for Sickness Allowance or the deferment period for Job Search Allowance, Newstart Allowance;
* must be claimed before the waiting period has finished,
* claimants must be interviewed. This can be done by phone for remote areas;
* cannot be paid during a longer waiting period because a person voluntarily left a job, or was sacked due to misbehaviour; and
* claimants must have little or no money to live on until their other Allowance starts. This criteria should be checked with your AILO or Social Security office.

**A pregnant woman - when her baby is due within Twelve Weeks.**

* Special Benefit can be paid for up to twelve weeks before the baby is born and six weeks after.
* A medical certificate is needed. It must state the date the baby is expected, and that she cannot look for work.
* She should let Social Security know as soon as possible after the baby is born, and claim Sole Parent Pension if she still needs a Security payment.
* Special Benefit will stop six weeks after the baby is born.
* Must be unable to claim any other payment and have no other means of support.

**Waiting for a Pension Claim to be decided**

* Can be paid when a person has claimed a Pension, and it is likely to take some time to decide if the pension can paid (for instance, if someone claims an Age Pension but cannot prove their age).

**Caring for a child - but cannot get Sole Parent Pension**

* Special Benefit can be paid to someone looking after a young child but who doesn't qualify for Sole Parent Pension.
* Must be the only person available to care for the child, especially during the day.
* Usually only paid when the child is under school age, unless the child has special needs which take up the carer's time during the day.
* People looking after school-age children would usually be expected to be available for work during the day and to claim Job Search Allowance.
* If there are reasons why the carer cannot look for work, all the details should be sent to Social Security with the claim so that this can be into account.

**Too Young for Job Search Allowance**

People under 16 years old can get Job Search Allowance if:

* they have been employed, and are now unemployed;
* they meet the requirements for Job Search Allowance or Sickness Allowance, except for their age, and are not being supported by their parents; or
* they are a full time student without any other support, and meet the requirements for Young Homeless Allowance.

The requirements for this category are very complicated. It would be best to contact Social Security if a case like this comes up as there are different requirements for different situations.

Usually, Special Benefit cannot be paid to anyone who is younger than the legal school leaving age, unless they have written approval from the Education Department not to go to school.

**Caring for another person - but cannot get a Carer Pension**

* Can be paid to someone caring for another person at home, when the situation does not meet the requirements for Carer Pension.
* Must be unable to work or earn a living because they spend most of their time looking after the person.
* There must be no-one else available to provide the care.
* Can be paid for a short time in an emergency or for longer where a person has a permanent or long term illness.

Homeless Allowance

Who can claim

* Less than 18 years old.
* Eligible for Job Search Allowance (Youth Training Allowance from January 1995), Sickness Allowance or Special Benefit.
* Unable to live at home with their parents because:

they do not have a parental home (for instance, their parents are

dead);

their parents will not let them live at home under any circumstances;

they cannot live at home with their parents because of violence,

sexual abuse or some other serious trouble;

of real troubles getting on with their step parent; or

they have a six month history of family quarrels.

* Not getting any support from their parents or a guardian.

When to claim

* Homeless Allowance can be claimed any time after the person leaves home.
* Payment cannot start until the person has been living away from home for two weeks. In some cases, this waiting period does not apply.

Forms needed to claim

* Application for Homeless Allowance (SU8 and SU2 or SU4 if they are not receiving a payment).
* Request for information - Homeless Allowance (SU9)

People claiming Homeless Allowance have to be interviewed by someone from Social Security. This is usually by the social worker, but might be the AILO or someone else from the office. The interview can also be by the AILO on a trip to the community, or by phone.

Young Homeless Allowance

Social Security has to try to get proof of the reasons which made the person apply for Young Homeless Allowance before payment can start.

It will also help if the person can give names of anyone who can be a witness to the situation, and give as much information as possible with the claim form.

If people have reasons why they don't want Social Security to contact some of the people involved, this should be spelt out on the claim form.

Basic Family Payment, Additional Family Payment, Child Disability Allowance, Orphan’s Pension, Bereavement Payments

Basic Family Payment

Who can claim

* People who have one or more dependent children living with them.
* Children must be under 16 years old.
* Sometimes the allowance can be paid for students aged 16 - 24.
* The mother or female guardian should claim. The man can claim if he is a sole parent or if there are special circumstances.
* There is an income test for Family Payment.

When to claim

When a child is born.

As soon as a new child comes into the family.

Payment only begins from the time the claim arrives at Social Security. Back payment is not made except for newborn babies. In these cases back payment is made if the claim arrives at Social Security within thirteen weeks of the birth.

Forms needed to claim

Claims for Family Payments (SC1)

Claims for Family Payments (SC202).

For new babies the birth must be proved before the payment can start. The quickest way to do this is to get the doctor or midwife to fill in a certificate (SC2) and stick it to the claim form.

If a certificate can't be provided, the claim should be sent in anyway. Social Security will then check with the Registrar of Births. This is one reason why new babies should be registered as soon as possible.

Payment of Family Payments

Family Payments are paid fortnightly.

People living in remote communities can have their payment sent by cheque, or it can be paid into a bank account.

The amount paid depends on the number of children and the parent's income.

Review of Family Payments

The parent's income is reviewed each year, in about October or November, and this is only sent to people who are being paid Family Payments on the income estimate they told Social Security.

A review form will be sent out asking the amount of income in the last tax year. **It is important to fill in and return this form as soon as possible because payments will stop if it is not returned.**

Additional Family Payment (AFP)

In January 1993 Additional Family Payment replaced Family Allowance Supplement and Additional Pension Benefit. Additional Family Payment is paid to the female partner or wife on the family allowance payday of each fortnight.

There are two types of AFP. These are:

* auto AFP, this is paid automatically to people on benefit or pension that have eligible children (this replaced Additional pension/benefit); and
* Income and Asset tested AFP, this is paid to people who qualify under an income test (this replaced Family Allowance Supplement).

Who can claim

* Working families with dependent children under 16 or students aged 16 to 24.
* They must be getting Family Payments for the children.
* AFP should be claimed by the person getting Family Payments. This is usually the mother or female guardian unless the male is a sole parent or there are special circumstances.
* There is an income and an asset test to decide who is entitled to AFP.
* Most families working on CDEP are entitled to AFP.
* AFP cannot be paid again to people who already receive AFP for the children, from Social Security or another Commonwealth Government Department.

Forms needed to claim

* Claim form for Family Payments SC1 or SC217 if a client has just come off benefits).
* Tax assessment Notice from last Tax year or letter from employer to show the taxable income.

Payment of AFP

* AFP is included in the Family Payments payment each fortnight.
* The amount paid depends on how many children and how much income the family has.

Rent Assistance

* Rent assistance will usually be paid if rent is paid to a private person, the Community Council or a Housing Co op. The rent paid must be over a certain fortnightly amount. This amount will change depending on a person's family situation. Check with your AILO.
* Rent Assistance cannot be paid if the rent is paid to the Government, for instance Department of Community Services, Housing Commission, Housing Trust or Housing and Construction.

Reviews of AFP

* Review forms are sent out once a year, in about October or November. The form asks about the parent's income in their last tax year.
* It is important to fill in this form and send it back as soon as possible. AFP payments will stop if the form is not returned.

Child Disability Allowance

Who can claim

People, who have a child with them who:

* has a physical, or mental illness or disability;
* needs a lot more looking after because of the disability than a child the same age usually needs; and
* is likely to need looking after for a long time.

When to claim

As soon as a disabled child comes into their care or as soon as it is clear that the child will be disabled for a long time.

Forms needed to claim

Claim for Child Disability Allowance (SGS).

Part B of the claim form, "The Medical Report" should be filled in by the Doctor who usually sees the child.

Payment of Child Disability Allowance

Child Disability Allowance is included with the fortnightly Family Payments payment.

There is no income test on Child Disability Allowance.

Orphan’s Pension

Who can claim

People caring for an "Orphan" under 16 years of old or a student aged 16 to 18.

An "Orphan" is a child whose parents are both dead, or one parent is dead and the other is:

* missing and no one has any idea where they are;
* in Jail for 10 years or more; or
* in a nursing home or mental hospital for a long time.

When to claim

As soon as possible when the Orphan comes into the family

Family Payments should also be claimed for this child.

Forms needed to claim

Claim for Orphan Pension (SC3).

Proof of parent's death (death certificate or from community records).

Payment of Orphan Pension

Orphan Pension is included with the fortnightly Family Payments payments.

There is no income test on Orphan Pension .

Bereavement Payments

Bereavement Payment is the name of a special payment made if a person is getting Additional Family Payments for a child, and the child dies.

If this happens:

* the person will be paid the total amount of all the payments they would have got for the child for another seven paydays after the death;
* the whole amount will be sent in one big cheque. This will be sent as soon as Social Security is told about the death; and
* people do not have to apply for this payment. Social Security will send out the Bereavement Allowance once they have been told about the death.

When a sole parent dies, there are special arrangements for their pension. More details are on page 8 of the Pensions chapter.

Bereavement Allowance can also be paid if a person is only getting Family Payments and the child dies.

If this happens:

* The person will be paid two fortnightly payments of Family Payments.

This is not the same as the "lump sum" payment.

Home Care Child Allowance (HCCA)

Introduction

From 29 September 1994 a new payment known as "Home Child Care Allowance" (HCCA} was paid by the Department.

This new payment will replace the Dependent Spouse Rebate (DSR} available through the taxation system to couples with dependent children. The DSR for couples with children will be abolished from the date of introduction of HCCA. It will not be possible for couples to choose between the two payments.

Through the tax system, people will be able to claim the DSR for the period 1/7/94 to 28/9/94. This is because HCCA only starts from 29/9/94.

This new payment is made fortnightly to eligible people. It will have an income test based on only the claimants income. Their partner's income does not affect their entitlement. HCCA has no assets test. HCCA is not taxable and is designed to recognise the contribution made by a parent who chooses not to work full time in order to care for the children.

HCCA will be more responsive to parents' needs. That is, when a parent leaves the workforce they may obtain the allowance immediately. For the DSR they must wait until the end of the financial year. HCCA will also provide independent income to dependent partners while out of the paid workforce.

HCCA will be paid at a higher maximum rate than the DSR.

Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)

The Community Development Projects (CDEP) Scheme

The following is a description of the assistance people on CDEP can

get from DSS, and what they can't get.

Job Search/Newstart Allowance

People have to give up Job Search/Newstart Allowance (JSA/NSA) before they can join CDEP. Once they are on CDEP, they cannot claim JSA/NSA.

They need to tell Social Security that they are joining CDEP by filling out a CDEP LIAISON ADVICE FORM. The CDEP co-ordinator should have copies of this form.

In some cases, partners of CDEP workers may not be offered a job. If no CDEP position is available, they may be able to claim Job Search Allowance. They will not be able to claim Partner Allowance.

However, as at July 1995 people may be able to continue on Partner Allowance if their partner changes over from JSA/NSA to CDEP. Partner's who are not offered a CDEP job because they are looking after kids should claim Parenting Allowance when it is introduced in July 1995.

Pensions

Social Security Pensioners may have to give up the pension if they want to join CDEP. Sole Parent Pensioners are the only ones who can keep their pension and take part in CDEP. However, CDEP is counted as income and will reduce the amount of pension they can get.

Family Payments

People on CDEP may be able to get the following family payments from Social Security, provided that they meet the normal conditions:

* Basic Family Payment;
* Additional Family Payment;
* Child Disability Allowance; and
* Home Child Care Allowance.

Other Assistance

CDEP workers will normally be able to get a Health Care Card from Social Security.

CDEP workers who receive ADDITIONAL FAMILY PAYMENT for their children may also be able to get a rent assistance payment.

CDEP workers without children are unable to get rent assistance.

Joint DSS/ATSIC Visits

Although CDEP is run by ATSIC, DSS needs to take a close interest in how the scheme is run.

DSS and ATSIC usually do a joint visit to the community when a CDEP is being set up. They also do follow-up visits from time to time.

During these visits, DSS ensures that:

* people joining CDEP are taken off JSA/NSA;
* people on CDEP are not "double dipping" by getting both a CDEP wage and JSA/NSA; and
* people on CDEP get their entitlements as low income earners from DSS such as Additional Family Payment and Health Care Cards.

In between joint DSS/ATSIC visits, DSS and ATSIC continue to monitor CDEP communities by using:

* lists of CDEP workers (Participant Schedules) which are prepared by CDEP communities every 3 months and sent to ATSIC; and
* CDEP Liaison Advice Forms which are sent by communities to DSS when a person joins the CDEP scheme, so that he or she can be taken off JSA/NSA.

The Role of Community Agents

Community agents on CDEP communities can assist DSS and ATSIC by:

* helping people on CDEP get their DSS entitlements such as Additional Family Payments and Health Care Cards;
* letting people know what they can't get from DSS (if there is any doubt, talk to the AILO);
* helping people joining CDEP to fill out and send a CDEP Liaison Advice Form to DSS so that they can be taken off JSA/NSA; and
* working closely with DSS and ATSIC officers when they do joint visits to CDEP communities.