Transcript of *Two new social security payments* video

**Excerpt 1**

Elizabeth Stehr: Hello, I’m Elizabeth Stehr. Today’s satellite broadcast is about 2 new payments starting in September this year – Home Child Care Allowance and Partner Allowance.

The program looks at what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in remote areas need to do to get the allowances. So, if you’re an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer, a SNAP Officer, a member of a Remote Visiting Team, or simply work in a regional office that services remote areas, this program should be of special interest to you.

Although it looks at situations in remote locations, you may also find it useful in other situations. Today’s format is a little different from usual. Rather than just give you some information, we want to give you something you could take away and use in telling people about these new payments. Very soon, we’ll ask you to record part of the show, so that you can use it in communities. You may also want to leave it with the Community Agent in your area. We’ll tell you when to start recording.

Later in the show, after you’ve seen the video segment, you’ll be able to phone in with your questions. If time permits, we may run the video segment again, and you’ll be able to record extra copies.

Okay, standby to record now. The video segment will run for 9 minutes.

Excerpt 2

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** The first one is called the Home Child Care Allowance. It starts from the 29th of September, and it could pay you up to $60 a fortnight.

Social Security is making the payments to help those parents who stay at home with their children. If you can answer ‘yes’ to these 3 questions, then you can probably get some money.

Do you have a partner?

Do you have a child under 16 years of age or at secondary school not getting ABSTUDY?

Do you make less than around $250 a fortnight?

Can you answer ‘yes’ to all 3? Let’s check them again to be sure.

One – do you have a partner? In other words, a husband or someone you’re living with?

Two – do you have a child under the age of 16, or who’s at secondary school, who doesn’t get ABSTUDY?

And three – is your own income less than $250 a fortnight? Don’t count your partner’s income, we’re only talking about your own income.

Excerpt 3

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** Just one or two more things you have to know – if you want your payments to start by the end of September, then you should get your form in pretty quickly, or else any time before the end of the year.

Apply only if you think you can get Home Child Care Allowance – that’s if you answered those 3 questions earlier on – or else, if you’re still getting family payment.

How much can you get? If your income is less than about $10 a fortnight, you’ll get $60 a fortnight. If your income is between $10 and $250 a fortnight, you’ll get some payment, but not the whole $60.

Excerpt 4

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** We’ll also be advertising Home Child Care Allowance on television. This is the ad we’ll be showing.

**Narrator:** Do you stay at home for your children? Then this simple quiz could get you $60 a fortnight. Firstly, do you have a partner? Have you a child under 16 or still at secondary school? And is your income – not your partner’s – less than $250 a fortnight? If you answered ‘yes’ to all these questions, you could be eligible for Home Child Care Allowance. Call for an application form.

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** That’s all on Home Child Care Allowance, but if you need to know more, just ask someone from Social Security.

Excerpt 5

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** Now this second payment I have to tell you about is called Partner Allowance.

Excerpt 6

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** Well, from the 20th of September, he’ll get about $265 and you’ll get $265. So the family amount stays the same, but your partner gets half and you get the other half, and your half is called the Partner Allowance.

Excerpt 7

**Malarndirri McCarthy:** If you don’t, after the 20th of September your partner will only get half his usual payment, and you’ll get nothing. This means that between the two of you, you will only get half of what you get now. So make sure you fill out the form as soon as it arrives, so that this doesn’t happen. Send it back or give it to your Aboriginal and Islander Liaison Officer or DSS Community Agent.

Excerpt 8

**Elizabeth Stehr:** Well our first question is a fax, which asks, ‘Will people have enough time to get their claim forms in before HCCA starts, because it takes a little while for mail to get to remote areas and an AILO or a Visiting Team mightn’t get there in time?’

**Karen Gauntlett:** Well it should have plenty of time. The forms have already been dispatched, and this effectively gives them 10 weeks to lodge their claims to get paid from the 29th of September. If, by some chance they don’t get them in time, then, as long as they are lodge before the end of December, we will backdate to the 29th of September as long as they qualify for the whole period.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** We’ll go to another question now, another question that’s been faxed in – ‘How will the forms be distributed in remote areas? Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in my area don’t read their mail if there’s not a payment in the envelope.’

**Eddie Hollingsworth:** In the remote areas, most of the invitations to claim Home Child Care Allowance and some of the Partner Allowance forms will be sent directly to the regional officers which service those areas. The AILO, SNAP Officers or Remote Visiting Teams in those regions will be able to take the forms out with them when they visit those communities, and that way they will be on hand on the communities to help people to fill in the forms and also to take the forms back to the regional office when they return. In some cases, regional officers may be able to leave the forms with the Community Agent if there is one in the community, and again, the Community Agent will be able to assist people in filling in the forms and arrange for the forms to be sent back to the regional office.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** And Ian, what will happen for Partner Allowance?

**Ian Sharples:** In most regions it’ll be a similar thing. Most regions have requested that the election forms are delivered directly to them rather than to clients, but a couple of regions in Western Australia have requested that they be sent to the clients. The thing I should add is, though, is that all regions will receive – all regions that service remote areas anyway – all regions will receive within the next couple of weeks – I hope the week after next – a listing of clients and a stock of manual or blank election forms and they can get a bit of a head start on the mail-out.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** We have a call on the line now from Ian in Area North, hello Ian.

**Ian (phone):** Yeah, hi, it’s Area North Australia actually.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** What’s your question Ian?

**Ian (phone):** Okay, mainly to do with the Partner Allowance data collection, we up here have several major concerns about it. Basically, we have somewhere between 3,500 to 5,000 people that we’re gonna have to approach about Partner Allowance prior to September the 29th. Now, they’re spread over 2 million square kilometres on many small communities as well as large communities. Now what we’re concerned is, we foresee that it would be nearly impossible for us to see all these people and get forms off all these people prior to September the 29th, and we’re concerned that remote area people are gonna end up missing out on money, admittedly only in the short term, due to a purely administrative matter.

**Ian Sharples:** Alright, it’s actually the implementation is September 20 not 29th, so that makes the situation a little worse, but what essentially will happen is that we are certainly not going to disadvantage remote area clients because regional offices haven’t, or visiting services haven’t been able to get to them. So there will be a bit of, be some discretion involved in back-paying, but having said that I should add that, as many claims that can be in before the 20th would be better because arrears will probably have to be paid manually.

Excerpt 9

**Ian (phone):** That’s probably it from my end.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** Okay, thanks Ian. We have another caller on the line now, Yvonne from Darwin, hello Yvonne.

**Yvonne (phone):** Hello, my question is about the Partner Allowance claim form. On the show it said that both partners needed to sign the Home Child Care Allowance claim form. Do both partners need to sign the Partner Allowance claim form too?

**Ian Sharples:** No they don’t.

**Yvonne (phone):** Okay, good, thank you.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** Okay, thanks. Okay, we’ve had another question faxed in – ‘Will anyone getting Partner Allowance be able to get Home Child Care Allowance?’

**Karen Gauntlett:** Most partner allowees won’t be able to get Home Child Care Allowance because their Partner Allowance will put them above the income threshold of $250.85 a fortnight. However, if their Partner Allowance and any other personal income is below $250.85 a fortnight, they would be entitled to some Home Child Care Allowance.

**Elizabeth Stehr:** Thanks. Thanks for your attention, and your questions.

We hope today’s program was useful to you. I’d also like to thank our guests for coming in today.

Lastly, keep in mind when using the recorded segment that not everyone will qualify for both payments. The target group for HCCA is women with children and a partner. The target group for Partner Allowance is women with partners getting Job Search, New Start, Sickness Allowance or Special Benefit. Those who get the full range of Partner Allowance will not qualify for HCCA.

We’re going to replay the tape for you now, so if you missed it earlier, start recording now.

That’s all from us, goodbye to you all.