



Australian Government

Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs

Carer Adjustment Payment Fact Sheet

An Introduction to the Carer Adjustment Payment

The Carer Adjustment Payment is an ex gratia scheme providing one-off financial assistance to families in exceptional circumstances who do not qualify for Carer Payment (child).

Carer Payment (child) provides income support to people who, because of the demands of their caring role, are unable to support themselves through substantial workforce participation. Carer Payment (child) is income and assets tested and paid at the same rate as other social security pensions.

New measures totalling \$293.6 million will support carers of children with disability and respond to the *Carer Payment (child): A New Approach* report released in February 2008.

The measures include:

- a new assessment process for Carer Payment (child) based on the level of care required;
- more generous arrangements for carers of children in hospital and those with a terminal illness so they can keep their Carer Payment and/or Allowance while their child is in hospital;
- easier transitions between Carer Payment (child) and Carer Payment (adult); and
- around \$20 million over four years for carers who have experienced a catastrophic event involving a young child.

The new arrangements for Carer Payment (child) will start on 1 July 2009 and are expected to benefit around 19,000 carers of children with severe disability in the first year.

The Carer Adjustment Payment scheme is currently available to families where, following a catastrophic event involving a young child aged 0-6 years, the family is going through a period of significant adjustment as a result of the care needs of the child.

The Carer Adjustment Payment is to assist families with additional costs during their adjustment period immediately after a catastrophic event. To be eligible, at least some part of the immediate adjustment period must fall on, after, or close to 1 January 2007, the scheme's start date.

Examples of catastrophic events may include (but are not limited to) a serious or severe illness or medical condition such as childhood cancer or childhood stroke, or an event such as a car accident, fire, fall, poisoning, near drowning, or other type of accident.

The Carer Adjustment Payment is a one-off non-taxable payment available to families in exceptional circumstances. The amount payable to a family will depend on each family's individual circumstances. The maximum amount any family can receive is \$10,000 for each child in a single catastrophic event.

Who is Eligible

Families may qualify for assistance through the Carer Adjustment Payment where, following a catastrophic event:

- the child, aged 0-6 years, has a major disability, severe illness or medical condition; and
- the child has significant care requirements – that is, requires full-time care from the carer for a minimum of two months following the incident; and
- the child's carer qualifies for Carer Allowance in respect of the child; and
- the carer is not qualified for and receiving Carer Payment; and
- the carer and/or their partner is not qualified for and receiving an alternative income support payment; and
- the carer is able to demonstrate a very strong need for financial support during the adjustment period after the catastrophic event.

Making a Case

Applications for the Carer Adjustment Payment are considered on a case-by-case basis by an independent panel of experts with medical, carer and payment expertise. Carers will need to present their case by setting out their circumstances and the ways in which the family needs extra support and assistance during the adjustment period.

This may include disruptions to things like the carer's capacity to work and/or the care arrangements for the child or other children in the family.

More Information

You can obtain a Carer Adjustment Payment claim form by phoning Centrelink on 13 2717, by downloading a form from the Centrelink website at www.centrelink.gov.au or from your local Centrelink Office.

Completed claim forms can be lodged at your local Centrelink Office. [Questions and Answers on the Carer Adjustment Payment are also available for information at: \[www.fahcsia.gov.au/carers\]\(http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/carers\)](#)