

## This factsheet covers

- Newly Arrived Resident Waiting Periods (NARWP)
- Qualifying Residence Periods (QRP)
- Exemptions from residence periods
- Review and appeal rights

## What are residence requirements?

All Centrelink payments have eligibility criteria. For newly arrived residents you must generally have lived in Australia for a certain period of time as a permanent resident. The length of time required depends on the payment you are claiming and your circumstances.

There are two main types of residence requirements:

### 1. Newly Arrived Resident Waiting Periods (NARWP)

The Newly Arrived Resident Waiting Period (NARWP) is a waiting period that applies to most Centrelink payments, including JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment.

A waiting period affects when you can start receiving a payment.

### 2. Qualifying Residence Periods (QRP)

Some payments, including Age Pension and Disability Support Pension, have a qualifying residence period instead of a NARWP. These residence requirements operate differently and are explained later in this factsheet.

## Who may be subject to a NARWP or QRP?

A NARWP or QRP may apply to people who:

- hold a permanent visa
- have recently become an Australian resident
- hold certain temporary partner or humanitarian visas

## What about New Zealand citizens?

New Zealand citizens living in Australia are subject to different residence rules and eligibility requirements.

For more information visit: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/new-zealand-citizens-claiming-payments-australia>

## Newly Arrived Resident Waiting Periods

| Waiting Period      | Payments                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 years (208 weeks) | JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance, Parenting Payment, Special Benefit, Austudy, Mobility Allowance, Pensioner Education Supplement, Farm Household Allowance, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, Low Income Health Care Card |
| 2 years (104 weeks) | Carer Payment, Paid Parental Leave, Dad and Partner Pay                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1 year (52 weeks)   | Carer Allowance, Family Tax Benefit Part A                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| No NARWP            | Family Tax Benefit Part B, Child Care Subsidy                                                                                                                                                                                |

## Qualifying Residence Periods

Some payments have a Qualifying Residence Period instead of, or in addition to, a waiting period.

| Waiting Period       | Payments                                |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 2 years (104 weeks)  | Parenting Payment                       |
| 10 years (520 weeks) | Age Pension, Disability Support Pension |

Some payments have rules and exemptions that are specific to those payments, including under international social security agreements.

### For more information:

- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/residence-rules-for-age-pension>
- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/residence-rules-for-disability-support-pension>
- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/residence-rules-for-parenting-payment>

## Exemptions

You may not have to serve a Newly Arrived Residents Waiting Period or Qualifying Residence Period if an exemption applies.

### Who is exempt from a NARWP?

#### You may be exempt from a waiting period if you are:

- an Australian citizen
- a refugee or former refugee
- a family member of a refugee
- the holder of certain visa subclasses
- a single parent after becoming an Australian permanent resident

For detailed information visit: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/exemptions-from-newly-arrived-residents-waiting-period>

## Exemptions continued

### Special Benefit Exemption

You may be exempt from the waiting period for Special Benefit and the Low Income Health Care Card if:

- you experienced a substantial change in circumstances after arriving in Australia; and
- the change was beyond your control.

**For more information:**

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/special-benefit>

### Temporary Partner Visa Holders

A 2-year waiting period may apply to Special Benefit and the Low Income Health Care Card if you lodged an application for a subclass 820 or 309 visa before 1 January 2019.

The visa does not need to have been granted.

### Principal Carer / Lone Parent Exemption

You may be exempt from the waiting period for Parenting Payment, Youth Allowance and JobSeeker Payment if:

- you became a single parent after you became a permanent resident;
- you are not currently a member of a couple.

You may also be exempt from the 2-year Qualifying Residence Period for Parenting Payment.

### Low Income Health Care Card Exemption

People with a Family Tax Benefit child are exempt from the waiting period for a Low Income Health Care Card.

### Family Member of a Refugee Exemption

You may be exempt from the waiting period for all Centrelink payments (except those with a Qualifying Residence Period) if you are considered to be a dependant family member of a refugee or humanitarian visa holder including:

- a spouse;
- a child under 22 years of age that is in full time study; or
- another person who should be treated as a dependant family member of a refugee (e.g. older than 22, disability, non-related dependant).

You must have been a dependant family member at the time they became a refugee or humanitarian visa holder.

### New Zealand Citizens

Certain holders of a Special Category Visa (SCV) are exempt from waiting periods for:

- Family Tax Benefit Part A
- Parental Leave Pay
- Dad and Partner Pay.

### Disability Support Pension Exemption

You may be exempt from the 10-year Qualifying Residence Period if your continuing inability to work arose after you became an Australian resident.

### Carer Payment and Carer Allowance Visa Exemptions

Certain carers holding the following visas may be exempt:

- Subclass 104 (Preferential Family – Carer)
- Subclass 806 (Family – Carer)
- Subclass 116 (Carer)
- Subclass 836 (Carer)

### Orphan Relative and Remaining Relative Visa Exemptions

Exemptions may apply to holders of:

- Subclass 117 or 837 (Orphan Relative)
- Subclass 115 or 835 (Remaining Relative)

### If Centrelink Refuses Your Claim

If Centrelink refuses your claim or decides you do not meet the residence requirements, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed.

You should seek review as soon as possible. Time limits can affect your entitlement to back pay.

If you receive an unfavourable decision, contact Welfare Rights Centre for advice.

#### Need more information?

See our website for more factsheets:

[welfare-rights-centre.org.au](http://welfare-rights-centre.org.au)

#### Need help?

Call us on 9211 5300 or

FREECALL 1800 226 028

Monday or Wednesday, 9:30am to 12:30 pm