

# CEPU SA COVID Pandemic Information

21 July 2021



## Stand Downs

An employer can stand down an employee during a period in which the employee cannot be usefully employed for reasons including any stoppage of work for any cause for which the employer cannot reasonably be held responsible.

This is different from being fired or being made redundant because you are still employed by the employer and still have some entitlements like annual leave.

In response to the Level 5 restrictions that are now in place in South Australia, many employers have stood down their employees.

### **Payment during a stand down**

Under industrial law, generally employers do not have to pay employees during a stand down, however your workplace may be different depending on your workplace agreement. If you have any questions about your agreement, call your organiser.

### **Can I be forced to use my leave entitlements?**

Generally, employers cannot force you to use your leave entitlements, you can elect to take paid leave or be stood down on unpaid leave.

### **Can I access my leave entitlements?**

If you have been stood down, you are still considered employed by your employer. This means you are still entitled to of your leave entitlements such as annual leave, or RDO accruals.

Employees stood down without pay are also still entitled to be paid for public holidays if you would normally have worked on that day. Some exceptions do apply.

## Terminations

If your employment has been terminated you are entitled redundancy payments, and can access any severance payments that are held in either ***BIRST*** or ***Protect***

## Financial assistance

**What financial assistance is available if I cannot work due to the COVID19 restrictions imposed in South Australia?**

### ***COVID -19 Disaster Payment***

The COVID-19 Disaster Payment is a lump sum payment to help workers when COVID-19 restrictions last for more than seven days. This includes a public health lockdown, a period of restricted movement or a declared COVID-19 hotspot.

### **Payments**

- \$600 per week if a person in paid employment has lost over 20 hours; or
- \$375 per week if they lost between 8 hours and less than 20 hours of work.

See ***Services Australia*** for more information.

## Eligibility

For workers who:

- Live or work in a Commonwealth declared **COVID-19 hotspot**
- Are in paid employment and cannot attend work and lost income on or after day 8 of COVID-19 restrictions
- Have no entitlement to relevant paid leave or have exhausted their entitlement
- Are an Australian resident or hold an eligible working visa;
- Are aged 17 years or older

Workers cannot receive payment if they are receiving any income support payment or the Pandemic Leave disaster Payment for the same period.

## How to apply

For Australian residents, the payment can be claimed online through your **myGov** account.

If you are an Eligible working visa holder, you will need to call Services Australia on **180 22 66** to make your claim.

## ***SA COVID -19 Cluster Isolation Payment***

In South Australia, if you are a worker required to self-isolate because of a public health direction from SA Health and mandatory COVID-19 testing, you may be eligible for the SA COVID-19 Cluster Isolation Payment.

**Payment** \$300

## Eligibility

For workers who:

- Are required to self-isolate due to public health directions from SA Health and mandatory COVID-19 testing.
- Do not have access to paid leave or other income support.

## How to apply

Via **online application form**

## ***Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment***

If you need to take time off work to self-isolate, quarantine or care for someone because of COVID-19, you may be eligible for the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment.

Funded by the Commonwealth, the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment is a \$1500 lump sum payment for each 14-day period a worker needs to self-isolate, quarantine or care for someone.

## Payment

\$1,500 for each 14-day period of self-isolation, quarantine or care.

## Eligibility

For workers who:

- Cannot earn income due to a requirement to self-isolate or quarantine because you have COVID- 19 or have been a close contact of someone who does (having been directed by a health official) or are

caring for a child who has COVID-19 or is a close contact of someone who does (note: in these circumstances a 14-day quarantine/self-isolation period would be required).

- Are aged above 17 years old
- Live in a state or territory
- Are Australian residents or hold an eligible working visa
- Have no entitlement to relevant paid leave or have exhausted their entitlement

### **How to apply**

Via telephone (by calling 180 22 66). Or by completing [this form](#)

### ***Protect severance account – COVID-19 Hardship payment***

To help counter the financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 Coronavirus, **Protect** has been granted approval by the Tax Office to make a hardship payment (stand down payment) from the severance account balance of some workers who have been stood down but **remain employed**. Where a worker is terminated and is unemployed, a termination or redundancy payment would apply.

Payments will be **deducted from your severance account balance** and rely on you having sufficient funds in your account.

#### **How much money can I access?**

An ATO ruling has allowed **Protect** to provide up to two payments of up to \$2,000 each, with five weeks between payments.

#### **How do I apply?**

Members will need to complete the hardship payment application form available [here](#).

Claims will be processed in three days

### ***BIRST severance account – COVID-19 Hardship payment***

BIRST is currently looking at required changes to the trust rules to allow for hardship payments to scheme members in the case of extended COVID lockdown. More information will be provided on this when it is available.

Please contact the CEPU SA Office on 82342130 or your Organiser on their mobile number if you have any questions.

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