



6 April 2020 (update to NFP threshold **in red**)

Government Stimulus Package – JobKeeper Support

Disclaimer

The information provided here is based on current advice as at 2 April 2020. It is important to note that this scheme is still subject to being legislated and there are a number of areas still to be clarified, such as the mechanics of the income test and the effect of the payment on fringe benefit arrangements.

Congregations in the NSW/ACT District and in the Qld District will need to contact their respective district offices for advice about how this package will apply in their circumstances before taking any of the steps outlined below.

Congregations in the other districts can manage their own applications, but may contact their respective district administrators for further assistance and advice, if necessary.

Summary

Many congregations should be eligible for a payment of \$1,500 per fortnight for each staff member (defined here as a pastor, lay worker or other employee) for up to 6 months. For this purpose, a staff member is someone currently called/employed by a congregation, including long term casuals (engaged on a regular basis for over 12 months as at 1 March 2020), and being paid on 1 March 2020.

Application process

The first step in the process to join the scheme is to register your interest with the ATO here: www.ato.gov.au/general/gen/JobKeeper-payment/?-redirected_JobKeeper. This process initially only requires congregations to provide your congregation's name, ABN, contact person, their phone number and email address.

The ATO will then be able to make contact with your congregation when the scheme is ready to be launched.

There will then follow an online application process, which will require congregations to provide the relevant information to the ATO regarding eligible workers and meeting the turnover test (see below).

Eligibility

This support package is available to employers whose businesses (and this includes not-for-profits and charities registered with the ACNC) have or will experience a decline in total income of more than 30%. **Update Monday morning 6 April, Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg has announced that the eligibility threshold for Not For Profit organisations/charities, is now reduced to a 15% decline in income. Also made clear 24th April that Pastors ARE eligible for JobKeeper.**

The reduction in income test is met when income has reduced by more than 30% compared with the same period last year. The minimum period to be compared is at least one month.

Eligible staff (pastors, lay workers and other employees) are people engaged as at 1 March 2020 on a full time or part time basis, or casuals who have been employed on a regular basis for at least 12 months as at 1 March 2020. This will therefore include any staff stood down since 1 March 2020.

Where staff have more than one employer, they must nominate their primary employer. They can only receive payments from this employer.

Payments

Eligible congregations will receive \$1,500 per fortnight per eligible staff member. Payments will be made monthly in arrears by the ATO (commencing from 1 May, but calculated from 30 March).

Each staff member will receive, as a minimum, \$1,500 per fortnight before tax. (If the person normally receives more than \$1,500 per fortnight they will continue to receive their normal pay and the congregation will retain the JobKeeper Payment. If the person normally receives less than \$1,500 per fortnight the parish must pay them the full \$1,500 per fortnight, less tax.)

Business Activity Statements

Congregations should note that the completion of the March Business Activity Statement (BAS) is due on 21 April 2020 (or if on a quarterly BAS, the due date is 28 April), is particularly important. It is expected that congregations completing the form electronically will have a customised input form. If the form is normally completed by hardcopy, the statement a congregation has received may not have all the relevant information in it. Further information is being sought and will be made available when received.

Further information about the scheme is available in the following fact sheets:

For employers: https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/Fact_sheet_Info_for_Employers_1.pdf

For employees: https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/Fact_sheet_Info_for_Employees_0.pdf

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