



Answering your FAQs on JobKeeper

Queensland  Council of Unions

COVID-19
FACT SHEET

Wages
Subsidy
FAQs

Answering your questions about the JobKeeper Payment

The JobKeeper Payment is a wage subsidy which will keep more Australians in jobs through the course of the coronavirus outbreak. The payment will be paid to employers, for up to six months, for each eligible worker that was on their books on 1 March 2020 and is retained or continues to be engaged by that employer

From when does the JobKeeper Payment operate?

The program will commence on 30 March 2020, with the first payments to be received by eligible businesses on 1 May as monthly arrears from the Australian Taxation Office.

Who can access the JobKeeper Payment?

Workers:

- Currently employed (includes workers who have been stood down or rehired)
- Employed by the employer at 1 March 2020
- Full-time and part-time workers.
- Casuals who have been employed “on a regular basis” for more than 12 months also eligible.
- Australian citizens, permanent visa holders, protected Special Category Visa Holders, non-protected Special Category Visa Holders with 10 years or more continuous residence in Australia, or Special Category (Subclass 444) visa holders
- Not in receipt of a JobKeeper Payment from another employer
- At least 16 years old.

Employers:

- Businesses with a turnover of less than \$1 billion which has been reduced by more than 30 per cent relative to a comparative period a year ago
- Business with a turnover of more than \$1 billion which has been reduced by more than 50 per cent relative to a comparative period a year ago



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For further information,
contact the QCU via:

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- Includes not-for-profit entities (including charities) and self employed individuals (businesses without workers).
- Excludes businesses subject to the Major Bank Levy.

Does a worker have to actually work to get the payment and if so, how many hours?

No. If you have been stood down you will receive the \$1500 each fortnight.

Does it matter what I got paid before?

Existing workers will receive the \$1500 per fortnight regardless of what they were paid before. This means if a worker was earning less before, they will receive more, and if they were earning more they will receive the \$1500 and the employer may pay the difference.

What does it mean to be stood down?

The Fair Work Act enables an employer to stand down a worker without pay whenever the worker “cannot usefully be employed” for a range of reasons said to be beyond the control of the employer. Some employers have relied upon this provision in the Fair Work Act in the case of the downturn caused by COVID-19.



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How can we ensure that employers who have laid off or stood down workers do actually apply for the funding?

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) will administer the funding. At this stage it is unclear how workers will know if their employer has made application. There appears to be little disincentive for the employer to not make application as it is not an expense for them. Our advice at this stage is to simply ask your employer to make application, and in conjunction with your union encourage them to do so if they have not already.

What mechanism is in place to ensure that an employer who applied for funding actually passed it on to a worker?

As stated above, the ATO will administer the funding. In the case of a worker remaining in employment, it is a subsidy for the wages continued to be paid by the employer. Failure to pass on the payment will be fraud. In the event of this occurring, union members should speak with their union. We will update this advice as more information comes to hand.

If a person works for two or three employers, and the employer is responsible for making the application, which employer will make the application for a worker. If all three make the application for eligible workers, which one will receive the money for the worker as a result of the application?

A worker is entitled to payment in relation to their “primary” employer. Workers who have more than one employer are advised to notify the employer that is their primary employer. In the event of receiving payment from more than one employer our advice is to advise the employer or employers that are not the primary employer that you are already receiving the payment from another employer.

Is the Jobkeeper Payment taxed?

Yes, it has been described by the Government’s own documentation as “before tax”.

How is the tax on the Jobkeeper Payment deducted?

Your employer will withhold tax in the same way as it does for your wages.

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