

Centrelink online debts

What to do if you get a letter asking you to check your income.

1. Go online via your mygov account:
 - a. Find the pencil icon/symbol and then edit (using the action icon/symbol) the potential debt to show your version of when you were working, ceased working, what you think you were paid and any other details.
 - i. This may include editing the correct names if there are differences in the names the ATO has on record,
 - ii. This may include different dates of employment, or different dates when you were paid.
 - b. If you need more time, the online system will grant two extensions.
 - c. Centrelink will then reassess then information they hold and in some instances there will be no further action, ie no debt will be raised. However, you may get a call from a Centrelink officer wanting to check or confirm the information you have provided.
2. If you don't have a mygov account, go to your normal Centrelink office and ask for some assistance in generating one. You may need further assistance if you don't use computers and the internet. You need to have a 'mygov' account to correct any Centrelink omissions.

Recovery fees

3. Generally, a recovery fee can be applied when a recipient doesn't declare their income to Centrelink. If you don't respond to the letter asking you to confirm your income, Centrelink may apply a recovery fee. If there are any 'personal factors' you should say 'yes'. This may help Centrelink decided whether to apply a recovery fee or not. If you are not sure, press the '?' icon and check the examples of 'personal factors'.

What to do if you get a debt notice (ie that a debt has been raised against you).

4. If you receive a debt notice it means Centrelink has made a decision that you have not declared your income correctly and that you owe them money. If you think this is wrong, then you can appeal the debt to an Authorised Review Officer (ARO).
5. To find out how to appeal Centrelink debts:
 - a. contact SSRV on 9481 0355 or 1800 094 164,
 - b. email info@ssrv.org.au, or review our website <http://www.ssrv.org.au/>.
 - c. Contact Victoria Legal Aid on 1300 792 387
 - d. Or review their website <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/get-legal-services-and-advice/free-legal-advice>.