

Red Tape... ALERT!

THINGS YOU MIGHT WANT TO KNOW...

Many Centrelink payments can now only be taken overseas for six weeks

From 1 January 2013, the maximum portability period for most payments will be reduced from 13 weeks to six weeks for temporary absences.

Pension Supplement will be reduced to the basic rate after six weeks, and concession cards will be cancelled after six weeks.

People who are outside Australia on the date of implementation (1 January 2013) will retain their 13 weeks portability until they return to Australia.

Age Pension will continue to be paid overseas indefinitely; however, the rate of payment after 26 weeks will depend on the length of Australian residence when they were aged between 16 and

age pension age.

There are a few exceptions:

- People from countries that Australia has an International Agreement with - portability in these circumstances will depend on the particular country's agreement
- Students studying overseas as part of their full-time Australian course
- DSP recipients granted indefinite portability due to severe and permanent impairment and with no future work capacity
- DSP recipients who are severely disabled and are required to accompany family members posted overseas by their Australian employers.

Single Parents Protest: 5th February 2013 11am Parliament House

Single parents, their children and supporters plan a National Protest on 5th February 2013 as the impacts of the government's controversial legislation forcing some parents onto Newstart Allowance, starts to hurt families. Moving house, giving up the family car, cancelling children's sport, relinquishing the family pet, skipping meals and not filling medication scripts are some of the harsh outcomes.

The National Protest will commence at Old Parliament House @ 9.30am with a united walk to Parliament House arriving at 11am.

Simultaneous action will be held around the nation.

In Melbourne, there

will be an 11am gathering at Parliament House.

Parents' concessions may also be lost

Under the tighter income test applied to Newstart, some single parents affected by the 1 January changes who have higher earnings have lost eligibility for income support altogether and have therefore also lost their entitlement to a Pensioner Concession Card.

Because these parents lost eligibility for Parenting Payment Single due to the age of their children, and never qualified for Newstart because of their income, they were ineligible to hold onto their PCC for an extra 12 weeks under the provisions described above.

[Taken from FlagPost - information and research from Australia's Parliamentary Library]

Schoolkids Bonus

Parents or carers of **primary or secondary school students**, and sometimes students themselves, may be eligible for the Schoolkids Bonus if **age, education and payment requirements** are met.

This payment is made in two instalments per year of \$205 for each primary school student, and \$410 for each secondary school student. The first instalment is paid in January, and the second is paid in July.

Students must be under 20 on the 'test date' - 1 January for the January payment, and/or 30 June for the July payment.

Parents or carers must be receiving one of the following payments *on behalf of the student*, on the test date.

Alternatively, the student must be receiving one of the following payments *on their own behalf*, on the test date:

- Family Tax Benefit Part A
- Youth Allowance
- Disability Support Pension
- ABSTUDY Living Allowance

- Carer Payment
- Parenting Payment
- Special Benefit

In addition, the following Veteran's Affairs Education Allowances are included:

- Veterans' Children Education Scheme

Eligibility that starts after the test date will only give rise to payment from the next test date, assuming that eligibility still exists on this next date.

Family Tax Benefit Part A recipients have a maximum of two years from the end of the financial year in which the test date occurs to make a claim. Students receiving income support or education allowances have a maximum of 13 weeks from the test date to make a claim.

Schoolkids Bonus may be shared between separated parents in the same way as is Family Tax Benefit.

Eligibility is *not* determined according to responsibility for the student's educational expenses.