



STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY FOR JOBSEEKER PAYMENT (FORMERLY NEWSTART ALLOWANCE)

Full article: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-24/coronavirus-how-to-apply-for-centrelink-jobseeker-newstart/12083948?fbclid=IwAR3X3jEHoafvxV1JJhmc9oi3xFJ0d8P1sAKeJCG3X9XX1DHh3Bqho2QMpc>

If you've lost your job, been stood down or suddenly find your business without customers due to the coronavirus pandemic, you might be tackling Centrelink for the first time, or the first time in a long time.

And you're not the only one.

On Monday, so many people tried to access the Centrelink website at once that it mimicked a cyber attack, triggering alarms and causing the website to crash.

Centrelink is not known for being easy to navigate at the best of times.

In this climate — facing increased demand, just days after a long-planned change saw the Newstart Allowance become the Jobseeker Payment, and as staff rush to implement new coronavirus stimulus packages — [it's going to be harder than ever](#).

So the first thing to know is the process probably won't be easy and it will likely get frustrating. And there may be some kinks and hiccups (or major malfunctions) in the system along the way. But here's some guidance that may help reduce the stress a little bit.

Don't ring the hotline, don't go into a service centre, try to do as much as you can online.

Click on the links in this step-by-step guide for more information.

Step one:

Go online and [log in to your existing MyGov account or create a new one](#).

Step two:

Create a Centrelink account.

If you've ever received Centrelink payments in the past, including as a young person or while studying, you may already have one. If so, jump to step three.

If you don't have an online Centrelink account, but you've received payments in the past, try to track down any old concession cards, letters or emails from Centrelink to find your Customer Reference Number (CRN) or Customer Access Number (CAN).

If you can't find this information, you can [call Centrelink and they'll ask you some questions to get your CRN](#). (number is 13 28 50, open 7.30am-7.30pm)

And yes, we know, that's easier said than done. You may be on hold for a long time.

If you've never received money from Centrelink, you'll need to set up an account for the first time.

This *normally* involves proving your identity by [showing three original documents to prove your identity to Centrelink](#) (they do not accept certified copies).

This is *usually* done in person at a service centre, but **importantly that has now changed**.

Social Services Minister Anne Ruston said on Tuesday **you can now ring up Centrelink and identify yourself over the phone**.

"You are no longer required to attend a Centrelink site to provide proof of identity," Ms Ruston said.

"We'll take your word for it, understanding these are exceptional circumstances.

Centrelink staff will then give you a validation over the phone, meaning you can go online and register through MyGov without the need to provide proof of identity documents in person.

Step three:

Log in to your MyGov account and ['link' it to your Centrelink account](#). Once this is done, you'll be able to log into the MyGov portal and click through to your Centrelink account.

Step four:

If you're still working but there's a reduction in your hours, [you'll need a letter from your employer confirming this](#).

In the past when someone lost their job, they needed to [fill in an employment separation certificate](#) for every employer they'd worked for in the past 12 months — but this requirement will be waived from April 27.

You will need to upload other documents throughout the claims process, but we're not going to tell you which ones because everyone's circumstances are different.

You'll find out which ones you need as you complete your claim.

But from April 27, Centrelink will also waive the requirement to provide proof of rental arrangements or verification of relationship status.

Step five:

It's time to make a claim.

If you're super organised, now is the time to get out that important documents folder you keep in the study and smugly pat yourself on the back.

Or, if you're a normal person, mentally prepare to spend the next few hours digging through drawers searching for paperwork.

Log in to MyGov and go to **Centrelink**.

Select **Payments and Claims** from the menu, then **Claims**, then **Make a claim**.

Choose the category that best describes your circumstance and click **Get started**.

You'll have to submit any **required documents** online now, but you'll have 14 days to submit any **supplementary documents**.

Step six:

As part of the claim, you'll need to book a phone appointment. Some people have reported problems with the website at this point (among others).

You'll need to make a note of your appointment time and make sure your phone is with you.

They'll call from a private number. Answer it!

Step seven:

Wait. Centrelink will let you know if your claim has been approved.

If it is, they'll tell you when you need to report.

This may come through your MyGov inbox or the Express Plus Centrelink app (if you've downloaded it) or by post.

Reporting just means letting Centrelink know how much money you earned over the past 14 days and confirming you've stuck to the mutual obligations laid out in your job plan (more on this in the next section).

You'll have to report every two weeks.

If you don't report, you won't get paid. If you're late reporting, your payment will be late.

You can report online or over the phone.