

Severe financial hardship

Superannuation is designed to provide you with an income when you stop working, which means you can generally only access it once you reach your preservation age and have permanently retired. However, there are some circumstances when you may be allowed to access your super sooner, including severe financial hardship.

Severe financial hardship is defined by government legislation and means that you are “unable to meet reasonable and immediate family living expenses”. An immediate living expense refers to any outstanding debts and bills that are no more than three months old, as described on page 2. Future expenses are generally not considered.

Each claim is assessed by the Trustee on an individual basis and we do not guarantee payment.

Am I eligible?

There are two types of claims where you may be eligible for the early release of your super based on severe financial hardship. If you cannot meet the conditions of either claim type A or B below, we cannot authorise the release of your benefit on grounds of severe financial hardship.

Claim type A

You can apply for a financial hardship benefit under Claim type A if you are:

1. Under age 55, and
2. Have been receiving Commonwealth income support (from either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs) for a continuous period of 26 weeks. The types of eligible payments are listed below. However, Centrelink can tell you whether the particular payment you receive qualifies.

To confirm your eligibility, you will need to provide your Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) on your application. To obtain your CRN, you may need to contact Centrelink.

Eligible payments

Department of Veterans' Affairs service pensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Age service pensions ■ Partner service pensions ■ Invalidity service pensions ■ Carer service pensions
Social security pensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Age pension ■ Disability support pension ■ Wife pension/Carer payment ■ Parenting payment ■ Widow B pension
Social security benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Newstart allowance ■ Sickness allowance
Drought relief from 1 July 1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drought relief payment under the Farm Household Support Act 1992 ■ Exceptional circumstances relief payment under the Farm Household Support Act 1992
Income support supplements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An income support supplement paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (effectively replaces any social security age pensions paid to a war widow or widower from March 1995).

Non-eligible payments

- Family payments (formerly known as family allowance payments)
- Austudy/Abstudy or other youth allowance payments in relation to full time study.

3. Unable to meet reasonable and immediate family living expenses. Please note only specific types of expenses qualify, as outlined below.

Eligible expenses

- Household expenses (eg expenses for utilities such as gas, water and electricity)
- Urgent household repairs not yet commenced (eg a leaking water pipe – a bill or quote is required)
- Rent and rental bond
- Child support and child care
- Car repairs to make vehicle roadworthy (bill or quote required)
- Medical costs
- Veterinary bills
- School fees, uniforms, books
- Mortgage payments up to three months in arrears (accompanied by a letter from your lending institution)
- Overdue and minimum outstanding balance only on loans and credit cards
- Personal loans from family or friends that are:
 - Supported by a statutory declaration from the person making the loan;
 - Supported with evidence that you did receive the money from the person making the loan (ie bank statements and paid bills); and
 - Supported with evidence that the loan was needed to meet reasonable and immediate family living expenses.

Non-eligible expenses

- Business expenses
- Traffic and parking fines
- Discretionary items such as TVs, music systems, computers and internet access
- Legal fees
- Personal loans from family or friends that are:
 - Not supported by a statutory declaration from the person making the loan;
 - Not supported with evidence that you did receive the money from the person making the loan (ie bank statements and paid bills);
 - Not supported with evidence that the loan was needed to meet reasonable and immediate family living expenses.

How much of my super can be released?

Under current legislation, the amount released is at the Trustee's discretion but can be no more than one single lump sum between \$1,000 and \$10,000 (before tax) in any 12 month period. It's important to note that these payments will be subject to tax if you are under age 60.

How to apply

Before we can assess your financial hardship claim under claim type A, we require the following items:

1. A completed *Early release of super benefits on grounds of severe financial hardship* form. You can request a copy of this form by calling the Qantas Super Helpline on 1300 362 967. The form contains further information about the application process.
2. A Q230 letter from Centrelink/DVA confirming that you're currently receiving Commonwealth income support payments, and have been for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks.
 - ⚠ **TIP:** Check the date on the letter as it's only valid for 21 days after issue.
3. Copies of outstanding debts and bills that are no more than three months old and support one or more of the categories described above.
4. A certified copy of your current Driver's Licence or Passport.
5. Any other documents that support your application.

Certifying your documents

To protect your benefit and ensure your privacy is maintained, by law we require certified documentation verifying your identity before we can process certain requests.

This means each page of the copied document must be clearly labelled "True copy of the original" and signed by an authorised person such as a Justice of the Peace, a solicitor, an employee of Australia Post (with two or more years continuous service) or an officer of a bank, building society or credit union.

For a complete list of authorised persons and more information about getting your documents certified, please refer to the completing proof of identity section of the withdrawal form.

Claim type B

You can apply for a financial hardship benefit under Claim type B if you:

1. Have reached your preservation age plus 39 weeks (refer to the table below); and
2. Have been receiving Commonwealth income support for a period of at least 39 weeks since reaching your preservation age; and
3. Aren't gainfully employed on a full time or part time basis (on the date of your application).

Your preservation age

When you were born	Your preservation age
Before 1 July 1960	55
1 July 1960 to 30 June 1961	56
1 July 1961 to 30 June 1962	57
1 July 1962 to 30 June 1963	58
1 July 1963 to 30 June 1964	59
After 30 June 1964	60

How to apply

Before we can assess your financial hardship claim under Claim type B, we require the following items:

1. A completed *Early release of super benefits on grounds of severe financial hardship* form. You can request a copy of this form by calling the Qantas Super Helpline on 1300 362 967. The form contains further information about the application process.
2. A Q251 letter from Centrelink/DVA confirming that you have been receiving Commonwealth income support payments for a continuous period of 39 weeks since reaching your preservation age.
3. Certified copy of your current Driver's Licence or Passport.

How much can be released?

If you meet Claim type B's criteria, your total account balance can be paid to you.

Where to send your completed application:

Qantas Superannuation Plan
GPO Box 4303 Melbourne VIC 3001

When we have received your documentation, we will check them and come back to you if we require any further information.

i Important: Accessing your super early can impact your existing insurance. If you withdraw all of your super, you will automatically lose any insurance cover from the day you exit the fund.

This means if you die or become totally and permanently disabled, you or your family will not be able to make a claim with us in the future.

Compassionate grounds

If you don't qualify for early release of your superannuation benefits on the grounds of severe financial hardship, you may be eligible on certain compassionate grounds.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) administers compassionate claims on behalf of the Australian Government. This means before the Fund can pay your benefit, you need to gain permission from DHS for your superannuation to be released.

In order to qualify, you need to prove to DHS you're financially unable to meet the expenses associated with one or more of the following compassionate grounds:

1. Medical or dental treatment for yourself or a dependant or to pay for transport to the treatment;
2. Prevent your home from being sold by the lender that holds the mortgage;
3. Modify your home or vehicle to accommodate your own needs, or the needs of a dependant to accommodate severe disability;
4. Pay for palliative care for yourself or a dependent with a terminal medical condition;
5. Pay for expenses for a dependant.

If the DHS approve your application, you will then need to apply to Qantas Super where the Trustee will assess your claim.

For more information download our fact sheet *Accessing your super due to compassionate grounds* or contact DHS on 1300 131 060

Further information



For further information please visit us at www.qantassuper.com.au or call the Qantas Super Helpline on **1300 362 967**, Monday to Friday 8.00am to 7.00pm AEST/AEDT weekdays.

Contact us



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Before making a decision about the Qantas Superannuation Plan, consider your financial needs and read the Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) applicable to your membership.

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