

Support for grandparents, foster carers, kinship carers and other non-parent carers of children



Australian Government



Services
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Sometimes families find themselves in situations where parents are unable to care for a child. Instead, another carer takes responsibility for the child's care.

Information in this brochure is for grandparents, foster carers, kinship carers and other carers who are looking after a child under either:

- **formal arrangements**, when the care of the child is being managed by a state or territory welfare authority, or a family law parenting order is in place
- **informal arrangements**, when the non-parent carer has come to a private agreement about who provides care for the child.

If you're a non-parent carer of a child and live in the same house as a parent, you may not be eligible for payments from us. If you're in this situation, you can contact us to discuss your circumstances.

We have specialist staff who support formal and informal carers who provide ongoing care for children.



Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisers

Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisers support formal and informal carers who provide ongoing care for children.

They can help you with:

- tailored information about payments and support services based on your circumstances
- arranging appointments with specialist staff, including social workers, Financial Information Service Officers, Indigenous Service Officers and Multicultural Service Officers
- referrals to federal, state and community service providers
- accessing Medicare, Centrelink and Child Support information and payments.

Contact an adviser today to get tailored information about payments and support services. They're here to help, even if you aren't accessing services or payments from us.

For more information, go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentfosterkinship**
You can speak to an Adviser on **1800 245 965**.

Social workers

Our social workers can provide short term counselling and information to help you through a difficult time. Social workers can also connect you with other support and services to help you.

To speak to a social worker call **132 850** or visit a service centre.

Payments you may be eligible for

FAMILY TAX BENEFIT

Family Tax Benefit (FTB) helps with the cost of raising children. It's made up of two parts: FTB Part A and FTB Part B.

We pay FTB Part A for each child. The amount you get depends on your family's circumstances.

FTB Part B provides extra assistance to:

- single parents
- non-parent carers (including grandparents, foster and kinship carers)
- some coupled families with one main income earner.

If a child under one comes into your care or you adopt a child of any age, your FTB Part A may increase. This increase is Newborn Supplement and will last for up to 13 weeks. If you get Newborn Supplement you will also get Newborn Upfront Payment as a one-off payment.

For more information, go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/ftb

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Child Care Subsidy gives you assistance with the cost of child care. We pay it directly to your child care provider to reduce the fees you pay. Your child needs to be attending approved child care to be eligible.

Approved child care can include outside school hours care, family day care, vacation care, long day care, in-home care and some occasional-care services.

If you're eligible for Child Care Subsidy you may get extra help with the cost of approved child care. To get this you need to be one of the following:

- an eligible grandparent getting an income support payment
- transitioning from certain income support payments to work
- experiencing temporary financial hardship
- caring for a child who is vulnerable or at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (GRANDPARENT)

You may be able to receive additional assistance called Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent). It's for grandparents and great grandparents who:

- have 65% or more care of a grandchild or great grandchild
- receive an income support payment
- make the day to day decisions about the child's care, welfare and development.

It provides extra help with the cost of approved child care.

If you aren't on an income support payment you won't be eligible for Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent). However, you may still be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

For more information on Child Care Subsidy, go to **servicessaustralia.gov.au/childcaresubsidy**

DOUBLE ORPHAN PENSION

Double Orphan Pension helps with the costs of caring for children who are orphans, or who can't be cared for by their parents. There's no income or assets test for this payment.

For more information on Double Orphan Pension, go to **servicessaustralia.gov.au/orphanpension**

PARENTAL LEAVE PAY

Parental Leave Pay can support you if you're taking time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child. If you aren't the parent, or the parent's partner, you can only get Parental Leave Pay in exceptional circumstances.

Parental Leave Pay is paid at the rate of the national minimum wage. If eligible you could get either:

- 20 weeks for children born or adopted from 1 July 2023
- 22 weeks for children born or adopted from 1 July 2024.

For more information on Parental Leave Pay, go to **servicessaustralia.gov.au/parentalleavepay**

Extra assistance

CONCESSION AND HEALTH CARE CARDS

These cards give you access to some cheaper medicines under the:

- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
- medical services funded by the Australian Government.

You may also have access to other concessions provided by state, territory and local governments. You may already have a Health Care Card or a Pensioner Concession Card if you get a payment from us.

If you aren't getting a payment from us, you may still be eligible for a Low Income Health Care Card.

If you're caring for someone else's child, such as a grandchild or foster child, you may be eligible for a Foster Child Health Care Card. There isn't an income or assets test for the Foster Child Health Care Card. We issue it in the name of the child you care for. You must apply for a new card for any child coming into your care.

For more information on Concession and Health Care Cards, go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/concessioncards**

MEDICARE BENEFITS

You can claim Medicare benefits for a child you're caring for if you're the person who paid for the service. They don't need to be registered on your Medicare card.

To claim Medicare benefits for them, you need to provide us with:

- the child's Medicare number
- an account or receipt with the child listed as the patient
- your Medicare number.

Where you have high out-of-hospital medical expenses, the Medicare Safety Net may help you cover some of these costs. To be eligible to receive Medicare Safety Net benefits for a child, who is in your full time care, you must have legal authority for the child and the child must be registered in your Safety Net family.

The PBS Safety Net can also help your family with the cost of some medicines.

For more information about Medicare, go to [**servicessaustralia.gov.au/medicare**](https://servicessaustralia.gov.au/medicare)

CHILD DENTAL BENEFITS SCHEDULE

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) provides eligible children with benefits for basic dental services. From 1 January 2024 the CDBS benefit cap amount increased from \$1,052 to \$1,095 for each child over two consecutive calendar years.

Customers can claim the increased cap amount if they get their first eligible service in 2024.

You can confirm the eligibility and balance amount for a child in your care by accessing your Medicare online account through myGov and select History and Statement to view CDBS information and balances, or by calling **132 011**.

For more information about the Child Dental Benefits Schedule, go to [**servicessaustralia.gov.au/childdental**](https://servicessaustralia.gov.au/childdental)

CHILD SUPPORT

Non-parent carers may be able to receive child support from one or both parents of the children. It's important to know that we include child support as income when we calculate the rate of FTB we can pay you.

For more information about child support, go to **servicessaustralia.gov.au/childsupport** or call **131 272**.

OTHER ASSISTANCE

You may be able to access:

- Rent Assistance
- Carer Payment
- Carer Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- JobSeeker Payment
- Centrepay
- the Financial Information Service.

EVIDENCE OF CARE ARRANGEMENTS

We may need evidence to show your care arrangements.

This may be evidence of a formal care arrangement such as a Family Law Order, Parenting Plan or foster care placement. Or other evidence such as confirmation from family, friends or professional members of the community with regular contact with your family.

For more information about evidence of care arrangements, go to **servicessaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers**

If you want help making a parenting plan, you can contact a Family Relationship Centre. For more information, go to **familyrelationships.gov.au**

Next steps

For more information:

- go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers** and **servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers**
- call a Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser on **1800 245 965**
- go to a service centre.

Some information is available in audio CD/DVD, large print, Braille and e-text. Call us on **132 717** with your request.

If you're deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact us through a TTY phone on **1800 810 586**.

Help in your language

We have free interpreter and translation services.

We can translate your documents needed to access our payments and services. Our service officers will arrange this for free.

To speak to us in your language call **131 202** for help with Centrelink payments and services. Call **132 011** for Medicare and **131 272** for Child Support. Let us know if you need an interpreter, and we will arrange one for free. For information in your language about our payments and services go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/yourlanguage**.

Note: calls from your home phone to '13' numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

DISCLAIMER

This information is accurate as at August 2024. If you use this publication after that date, please check with us that the details are current.

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