

COST-OF-LIVING RELIEF FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST

2 August 2023

Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) welcomes the passage through Parliament today of the *Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment (Strengthening the Safety Net) Act 2023*, which will provide targeted cost-of-living relief to around 2 million Australians that need it most.

CSSA, and other key advocates, have long highlighted the inadequacy of social security payments and the urgent need to raise these payments to at least \$76 a day, which would meet the poverty line.

From 20 September, the base rates for JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance, Parenting Payment (Partner), Austudy, ABSTUDY Living Allowance, Disability Support Pension (Youth), and Special Benefit will increase by \$40 per fortnight.

Additionally, indexation will be applied to some payments that were not previously indexed, including the JobSeeker Payment. JobSeeker Payment will be increased by a further \$16 per fortnight, taking it to an additional \$56 per fortnight from 20 September.

The Commonwealth Rent Assistance maximum rates will also increase by 15%, with around 1.1 million households better off by, on average, \$24 per fortnight.

The [Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee](#) report, which brought together social security academic experts, business peak bodies, advocacy organisations, and unions, recommended Jobseeker Payment and related working-age payments as a priority.

Minister for Social Services Amanda Rishworth said, "These changes would benefit close to two million Australians, including 580,000 women, 318,000 young people (under 25), 150,000 First Nations Australians, and 245,000 mature-aged Australians.

Monique Earsman, Executive Director of CSSA, said, "This is very good news for Australians trapped in a cycle of disadvantage; we hope it relieves some of the pressure they are facing. We call upon the Government to continually review their response, listen to the experts and work towards a providing a payment that helps people escape poverty."

Media Contact | Anne Aziz-Parker | 0403 628 669

Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) advocates for the Church's social service ministry. It is the national peak body for Catholic social service providers. The CSSA's network operates across all Australian States and Territories and has a combined total of around 600 sites.