



SPECTRUM
FINANCIAL

TAX BONUS FOR WORKING AUSTRALIANS

The Australian Tax Office has announced that preparations are under way to make one-off payments to taxpayers from early April as part of the government's \$42 billion stimulus package.

The Tax Bonus is calculated based on your income shown on your 2008 Tax Return.

One off tax bonus to be delivered from early April: ATO

- February 18, 2009

The Australian Tax Office says preparations are under way to make one-off payments to taxpayers from early April as part of the government's \$42 billion stimulus package.

Tax Commissioner Michael D'Ascenzo said people won't have to do anything to receive the payment - up to \$900 for those earning under \$100,000 - if they have already lodged their 2007-08 tax return.

"However, there are some people who need to take action," Mr D'Ascenzo warned.

"If you haven't already lodged your 2007-08 return with us don't leave it any longer. Unless you already have an extension of time to lodge in place, you must lodge by June 30, 2009 to receive the bonus."

Payments will be made to the bank account or address people nominated as their preference for the 2007-08 tax return.

He said the ATO has also made special arrangements for people who have not lodged and have been affected by the Victorian bushfires and the North Queensland and NSW floods.

People in those areas can lodge as late as June 30, 2010 if they haven't already done their tax return.

"When people are ready to focus on this we can help them or their agent with their return," he said.

"This includes helping people who no longer have any, or few records, by using information we already have, including the past year's tax return to make a reasonable estimate of their assessment."

Mr D'Ascenzo also warned about email scams claiming to be from the ATO.

"We are worried that unscrupulous people will use the interest surrounding the payments as an opportunity to try the usual scams," he said.

"The Tax Office never sends emails asking people to provide personal information including bank account or credit card details and you will not be charged fees by us to receive the payment."

He said any emails claiming to be from ATO should be deleted immediately.

Australian Government one-off bonus payments for families

On 3 February 2009, the Australian Government announced the Household Stimulus Package as part of the Government's Nation Building and Jobs Plan to provide widespread assistance to low and middle-income households. The Household Stimulus Package includes one-off bonus payments for families, students, farmers and working Australians. These payments are non-taxable and are not considered income for social security purposes.

The bonus payments available for families are:

- Single Income Family Bonus
- Back to School Bonus

Other bonus payments available include:

- Farmers Hardship Bonus
- Training and Learning Bonus
- The Education Entry Payment Supplement
- Tax Bonus for Working Australians

Single Income Family Bonus

The Single Income Family Bonus is a payment of \$900 per family to provide additional assistance to families with one main income earner. You can get the Single Income Family Bonus if you were eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part B on 3 February 2009.

What if I receive my Family Tax Benefit as a lump sum at the end of the financial year?

If you claim your Family Tax Benefit Part B as a lump sum at the end of the financial year, the payment will be made after your actual income for the 2008-09 year is known.

Please note: If you were eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part B on 3 February 2009 and you would like the Single Income Family Bonus earlier, you can change to fortnightly payments.

You can change the way you get your payments by:

- using [online services](#).

- visiting your nearest Family Assistance Office, located in Medicare Australia offices and Centrelink Customer Service Centres. To find your nearest office, use the [office locator](#).
- calling the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50.

Will I get a bonus payment if I share the care of my child?

If you share the care of your child or children and have at least 35 per cent care you may be entitled to a portion of the payment. The payment will be shared based on the Family Tax Benefit percentage of each child.

When will I get the bonus?

The bonus will be paid between 11 and 20 March 2009. You can check if you have been paid the payment using the [view your payment history](#) service. If you have not received your payment by this date, and believe you are eligible, please contact the Family Assistance Office.

For more information on the Single Income Family Bonus, please visit the [Centrelink Website](#).

Back to School Bonus

The Back to School Bonus is a payment of \$950 per eligible child to assist families with the costs of school for their children. You may receive the payment if, on 3 February 2009, you were eligible to receive:

- Family Tax Benefit Part A for a child who was aged 4-18 years (inclusive) on 3 February 2009, or
- Carer Payment or Disability Support Pension and were aged less than 19 years old on 3 February 2009.

Can I still claim the Education Tax Refund if I receive a bonus payment?

The Back to School Bonus is designed to help meet education costs for the 2009 academic year and is in addition to and separate from the Education Tax Refund.

For more information on the Back to School Bonus, please visit the [Centrelink website](#).

For more information on the Education Tax Refund, please visit the [Education Tax Refund website](#)

Farmers Hardship Bonus

The Farmers Hardship Bonus is a payment of \$950 to support farmers and small businesses that have been affected by drought. For more information about the Farmers Hardship Bonus visit the [Centrelink website](#).

Training and Learning Bonus

The Training and Learning Bonus is a payment of \$950 to support students with the costs of education and training. For more information on the Training and Learning Bonus visit the [Centrelink website](#).

Education Entry Payment Supplement

The Education Entry Payment Supplement is a payment to assist people returning to study or training. For more information on the [Education Entry Payment Supplement](#) visit the [Centrelink website](#).

Tax Bonus for Working Australians

The Tax Bonus for Working Australians is a payment of up to \$900 paid to every eligible Australian worker earning \$100,000 or less. For more information on the Tax Bonus for Working Australians visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#).

Hoax email warning

There has been a number of reports about hoax emails in relation to the Household Stimulus Package. Centrelink and the Australian Federal Police are investigating.

If you receive an email claiming to be from Centrelink that suggests you need to provide bank details to receive a bonus payment, do not respond.

Centrelink already has the information it needs to process bonus payments to eligible customers and will never ask people to provide personal information via email.

If you receive an email about the bonus payments that you believe to be a hoax you can call Centrelink on 1800 050 004.