

As outlined by the Australian Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan, confirmed by the Australian Taxation Office (See ATO: [Tax bonus payment](#)) and Centrelink ([Centrelink: Australian Government Bonus Payments](#)), after some changes, the Household Bill 2009 has received Royal Assent on 18th February 2009 with a resultant \$50 reduction of some bonuses, what is the end result for you?

Confirmed in the Treasurer's Media Release the cash bonuses fall into five main categories: ⁱ

1. [Tax Bonus for Working Australians](#)
2. [Single Income Family Bonus.](#)
3. [Farmer's Hardship Bonus](#)
4. [Back to School Bonus](#)
5. [Training and Learning Bonus](#)

Tax Bonus for working Australians ^{ii iii iv}

The Tax Bonus for working Australians is being paid through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to eligible Australian workers earning up to \$100,000. You do not need to apply for the payment; it will be automatically determined and paid.

1. *Am I eligible?*

The ATO will use your 2007-08 income tax return to determine eligibility and method of payment for the Tax Bonus. Eligibility criteria for the tax bonus payment include

- ✓ lodgment of your 2007-08 income tax return before 30 June 2009
- ✓ A 2007-08 taxable income of not more than \$100,000
- ✓ An adjusted tax liability for 2007-08 is greater than nil, and
- ✓ Australian residency for tax purposes (or were an Australian resident at during 2007-08).

N.B. Some conditions apply for people under 18 years old.

2. *How much will I get?*

- ✓ \$900 bonus for taxable incomes up to and including \$80,000
- ✓ \$600 bonus for taxable incomes not exceeding > \$80,000 and < \$90,000
- ✓ \$250 bonus will be paid if you have a taxable income over \$90,000 and under \$100,000

3. *When will I receive the payment?*

Your 2007-08 income tax return must be lodged with by 30 June 2009. Payment of the bonus can then be finalized with the first round of payments due to commence beginning 6th April 2009. Clients whose returns have already been lodged and assessed will be among the first to be given their payments.

4. *How will I receive the payment?*

By using information in your 2007-08 tax return the Australian Taxation Office will work out if you are eligible and the best way to get the payment to you. If you have not already lodged your 2007-08 tax return, call your nearest office and make an appointment. By lodging with a tax agent you will be taking advantage of the extended lodgment period without penalty and faster lodgment through our Electronic Lodgment Service.

For your nearest office see our website www.q-tax.com.au

Need to update your details?

Payments will be made faster if we have your correct bank account details. Check that we have your current details prior to the middle of March.

Administration

PO Box 6 Kippa Ring Qld 4021
272 Anzac Avenue, Kippa Ring Qld 4021
Ph: 07 3283 2222 Fax: 07 3284 1396

Registered

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Centrelink Bonus Payments

Some of the payments are being administered by Centrelink. Details of these payments are outlined below.

Single Income Family Bonus ^v

In his Media Release ^{vi} the treasurer Mr. Swan announced that a Single Income Family Bonus will be provided as an up-front, one-off bonus payment of \$900 to families who receive Family Tax Benefit Part B, for families with children that have one main income earner. The payments will be made automatically by Centrelink commencing from 11 March 2009.

FAQ

1. Am I eligible?

Payments are made to families who are receiving or entitled to receive Family tax Benefit Part B as at 3 February 2009.

2. How much do I get?

The payment is a once off payment of \$900 per family. It is not taxable. You don't need to declare this income on your 2009 tax return. It is not taxable and is not included for social security income-testing purposes.

3. When and how will it be paid?

Payments will be automatically paid by Centrelink beginning from the fortnight commencing 11 March 2009 for families who receive their family assistance as fortnightly installments.

For families who claim their Family Tax Benefit as a lump sum payment each year, they will receive their Single Income Family Bonus from Centrelink in with the rest of the FTB Part B payment. The timing of this will depend on when families make their claim for FTB Part B.

4. What if you are separated parents?

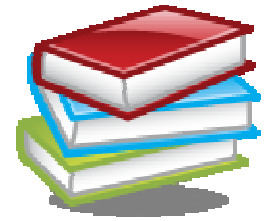
Family Tax Benefit is paid to the parent who is the primary carer of a child. This payment will go to that parent. Normal rules that apply to the sharing of Family Tax Benefit will apply to this payment, that is, where there is shared care, and a parent has at least 35 per cent of care, the payment will be shared according to the percentage of care. For further information please contact Centrelink. Contact details can be obtained at www.centrelink.gov.au or by phoning 13 61 50

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Back to School Bonus^{vii}

1. Am I eligible?

The \$950 per child back-to-school bonus, is a one-off bonus paid to families receiving or eligible for Family Benefit Part A as at 3 February 2009 for each eligible child of school age (4-18 years as at 3rd February 2009) to assist with the costs of education in the 2009 academic year. This payment is separate from the Education Tax Refund.

Families with children in receipt of Youth Allowance, Austudy or Abstudy, or with full-time students aged 21-24 years eligible for FTB Part A, see the Training Learning Bonus.

Students aged 19 or 20 will be eligible to receive a \$950 payment through an administrative scheme, as they are not eligible for the Back to School bonus or the Training Learning Bonus.

2. How much do I get?

The payment is a once only payment of \$950

3. When and how will I be paid?

Eligible recipients will receive their payments through Centrelink beginning the fortnight of 11 March 2009.

Families receiving FTB Part A as a lump sum payment will be paid with their usual lump sum payment after processing of their 2008-09 tax return. Payment dates may vary dependant on date of claim.

For further information on Family Tax Benefit Part A please contact Centrelink on 13 61 50 or see the Centrelink website www.centrelink.gov.au or the Family Assistance website <http://www.familyassist.gov.au/>

4. What if I have more than one child of school age?

You will receive the payment for each child eligible for the payment. For example a family with two children of school age, eligible for FTB-A on 3 February 2009 will receive \$1900.

5. How does this interact with the Education Tax Refund?

It does not affect the Education Tax Refund. They are separate payments. The Back to School Bonus is in addition to assistance for education expenses that is available through the Education Tax Refund (ETR).^{viii}

The Back to School Bonus will not affect eligibility for the ETR.



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Farmers Hardship Bonus^{ix}

1. Who is eligible?

The Farmers Hardship bonus is paid to around 21,500 drought affected farmers and farm dependent small business owners receiving exceptional circumstances related income support.

Eligible recipients will be those who on 3 February 2009 are in receipt of:

- ✓ Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment for Farmers;
- ✓ Interim Income Support for Farmers;
- ✓ Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment for Small Business;
- ✓ Interim Income Support for Small Business;
- ✓ Transitional Income Support; and
- ✓ Farm Help Income Support.

2. How much do I get?

The payment is a once only payment of \$950 for each recipient. A single bonus is paid to eligible households, irrespective of the rate they are paid at.

The payment is not taxable or is not counted as income support.

3. When and how will I be paid?

Payments are made automatically by Centrelink beginning the fortnight commencing 24 March 2009. You do not need to apply for this payment.



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Training and Learning Bonus^x

The Training and Learning Bonus is a one-off bonus eligible social security recipient for costs of studying in the 2009 academic year, where students are undertaking approved courses. It is also paid to students and people outside of the workforce returning to study to help with the costs of education and training.

The Training and Learning Bonus consists of two categories, Category 1 and Category 2.

CATEGORY 1

Students receiving Youth Allowance (Students and apprentices), Austudy, ABSTUDY or other student related payments. If a student attracts the Government's Back to School Bonus they are not eligible for the one-off \$950 Learning and Training Bonus.

CATEGORY 2 (APPLIES FROM 1 JANUARY 2009 TO 30 JUNE 2010)

A temporary supplement to the Education Entry Payment (EdEP) of \$950. This is in addition to the existing EdEP payment of \$208. EdEP is currently paid to a range of social security recipients who are commencing study, including Newstart Allowance and Parenting Payment Partnered recipients.

1. How much is the payment? When and how will it be paid?

Eligible Category 1 recipients will receive a lump sum payment of \$950 by Centrelink for the beginning fortnight 24 March 2009.

Eligible Category 2 receiving Education Entry Payment will receive \$950 in addition to the existing Education Entry Payment. Those who have already received the Education Entry Payment will receive the bonus from 24 March 2009.

2. Who is eligible for the Training and Learning Bonus?

Category 1:

Eligible recipients who receive Youth Allowance (student and apprentices); Austudy; ABSTUDY; Payments under the Veterans' Children Education Scheme (VCES); Payments under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme (MRCAETS); or Families entitled to Family Tax Benefit Part A (FTB-A) for each eligible dependent full-time student aged 21 to 24 years, (as at 3 Feb 2009). The one-off bonus will also be available to recipients of Sickness Allowance and Special Benefit (under Age Pension age).

Category 2:

From 1 January 2009 until 30 June 2010 recipients of the Education Entry payments (EdEP) will receive an additional \$950 payment on top of the standard Education Entry Payment they would have received. Eligibility to EdEP will be extended to Youth Allowance (other) recipients and the qualifying period for all eligible recipients will be reduced from 12 to 1 month.

3. What happens if I enrol in full time study after 3 February 2009?

Under the provisions of the Household Stimulus Bill, the Minister will be able to grant a payment to those that sit within the intent of the legislation through an administrative scheme.

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The administrative scheme's intent is to ensure that all those who enrol in and commence full time study this semester who are granted one of the qualifying student income support payments (that is, Youth Allowance, Austudy or ABSTUDY Living Allowance) after 3 February 2009 receive a bonus. This will assist students intended to be in scope who have not qualified for a Bonus under the legislative provisions.

The Government will also ensure that full time postgraduate students receiving Australian Postgraduate Awards (stipends) this semester receive a Training and Learning Bonus payment through an administrative scheme.

4. *Can an individual receive both the Back to School Bonus and the Training and Learning Bonus?*

No. You can't receive both bonuses. However eligibility for either bonus does not impact your eligibility for the Education Entry Payment. Further details of the Education Entry Payment can be found at Centrelink website, www.centrelink.gov.au

5. *Can the recently unemployed get a bonus?*

If an individual has been on Newstart or Youth Allowance (other) continuously for 1 month they may be eligible to receive the bonus, if they intend to commence a course of education.

6. *How will the payments be treated for taxation and social security purposes?*

Category 1 payment is non-taxable and will not be treated as income for social security purposes.

Category 2 This supplement is non-taxable and will not be treated as income for social security purposes. The base Education Entry payment of \$208 will remain taxable and treated as income for social security purposes.

Have you considered working in Taxation – we are looking for bookkeepers and offer a Tax Training School. Our day class and correspondence classes still have vacancies. For more information see our website www.q-tax.com.au and click on the Tax Training School link.



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Sources and References.

- ⁱ Source: Treasures Website Media releases 2009 No 010 <
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