



Australian Government

Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs

Seniors

Changes to Utilities Allowance, Seniors Concession Allowance and Telephone Allowance

- From 20 March there will be increases to Utilities Allowance, Seniors Concession Allowance and Telephone Allowance.
- All allowance increases will be paid in the fortnight starting 20 March 2008.

Utilities Allowance

- The Utilities Allowance is paid to older Australians on income support to provide additional assistance with household bills.
- The Utilities Allowance will increase from \$107.20 a year to \$500 a year for singles and couples combined for all current recipients.
- It will also be extended to all recipients of the Widow B Pension, Wife Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment and Bereavement Allowance.
- Veterans and their partners under qualifying age receiving the invalidity service pension, partner service pension or an income support supplement will also receive the allowance for the first time.
- The Utilities Allowance will now be paid in quarterly instalments of \$125 for singles and couples combined to meet quarterly utilities bills.

Seniors Concession Allowance

- The Seniors Concession Allowance will increase from \$218 a year to \$500 a year for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card and certain Gold Card holders.
- It will be paid in quarterly instalments of \$125 on the same day as the Utilities Allowance.

Telephone Allowance for home internet connections

- The Telephone Allowance will also increase from 20 March 2008 for those with a home internet connection.
- For eligible seniors, the Telephone Allowance will increase by 50 per cent from \$88 a year to \$132 a year for singles and couples combined. It will be available for income support recipients of Age Pension age, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders and recipients of Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment where they or their partner have a home internet connection.
- For more information on these changes and payments visit your local Centrelink office, call 13 27 17, or visit the Centrelink website, www.centrelink.gov.au.

Improving the lives of Australians