



Primary Industries Workers Regional Travel and Accommodation Support Scheme

The Primary Industries Workers Regional Travel and Accommodation Support Scheme will provide targeted assistance to farming, fisheries and food processing businesses in regional areas experiencing labour shortages as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The scheme will provide new opportunities for WA job seekers, encourage regional work and travel, and help people access jobs in the regions.

Application Guidelines

Who can apply for funding

A person living in Western Australia who:

- has the right to work in Australia; but
- is not in Australia as a Working Holiday Maker, Seasonal Worker Program or Pacific Labour Scheme participant;
- has relocated more than 100 kilometres from their usual home address to take up an employment opportunity in regional WA.
- has taken up employment in an eligible agriculture, fisheries and food processing job for a primary producer, a labour hire or contracting business since the 9 September 2020.
- has worked for at least 2 consecutive weeks for the same employer in regional WA;
- has met all other criteria outlined in these guidelines.

Activities that can be funded

The funding will provide an accommodation allowance of \$40 per night from 21 September 2020 plus a travel allowance to eligible and approved applicants.

Funding amounts

An approved applicant can apply for:

- An accommodation allowance of \$40 per night (\$280 week) for each night living away from home to take up eligible employment in regional area, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

and

- A one-off travel allowance with the payment amount based on the region in which they have taken up employment being:

- an allowance of \$150 to eligible applicants taking up employment in the Peel, South West, Great Southern, Wheatbelt, Mid-West and Goldfields-Esperance regions.
- an allowance of \$350 to eligible applicants taking up employment in the Gascoyne or Pilbara regions.
- an allowance of \$500 to eligible applicants taking up employment in the Kimberley region.

Eligibility Requirements

Application eligibility

To be considered for funding through this program an applicant must meet **ALL** of the following eligibility criteria. You must:

1. have taken up employment in a primary production business, or a labour hire or contracting business with a current Australian Business Number (ABN);
2. be working in an eligible WA region in one of the following job roles:
 - a. On-farm planting, maintenance, harvest, grading or packing of crops.
 - b. Off-farm grading or packing of horticultural fresh produce.
 - c. On-farm breeding and caring of livestock (including shearing and aquaculture activities).
 - d. Time-critical primary food processing of fresh, perishable produce.
 - e. Commercial fishing on vessel, or onshore time-critical processing and packing of seafood;
3. be in paid employment under the relevant Award and cannot be working as a volunteer;
4. be a citizen or permanent resident of Australia, or hold a valid work visa except those listed in eligibility criteria number 5 (below).
5. not be in Australia on a Working Holiday visas (subclass 417 and 462); Seasonal Worker Program or Pacific Labour Scheme visas (subclass 403) or a COVID-19 Pandemic visas (subclass 408);
6. have an account with an Australian commercial bank or credit union;
7. be able to provide all requested details of the business employing you including the ABN, a valid email address and contact telephone number of your employer, and the physical addresses where the work was undertaken;

8. be able to provide evidence that you have relocated more than 100 kilometres from your usual place of residence; being the address in Western Australia where you live as an owner, tenant or border, or where you reside with your family;
9. be able to provide the address, name and contact details of the owner or business where you are living whilst working in regional WA;
10. have taken up employment in the South West, Peel, Great Southern, Wheatbelt, Goldfields-Esperance; Mid-West; Gascoyne; Pilbara; or Kimberley region as defined in the *Regional Development Act 1993*;
11. have worked for more than 2 consecutive weeks for the same employer, since 21 September 2020, where an offer of employment was made on or after 9 September 2020.
12. have worked full-time, being that same number of normal work days or shifts as a full-time employee in that role and industry would normally work, in the weeks that you claim the allowance.

Note:

This is a limited pool of funds and the program will cease when funds are fully committed. Applications will be assessed in the order they are received. The submission of an application does not guarantee the applicant will receive support.

Application

Applications can be submitted online from 5 October 2020 and applicants must answer all questions and have uploaded the required evidence/verification documents to progress to assessment.

Eligible applicants are able to submit an application at any time after completing more than 2 consecutive weeks of full time work for the same employer.

As there is a limited pool of funds applicants are encouraged to submit applications monthly – noting that a maximum of 12 weeks accommodation allowance can be claimed, and a travel allowance will only be paid once.

What you will need to provide

Applicants will need to provide:

1. Evidence of their usual home address; being where they live as an owner, tenant, border or where they reside with their family. Acceptable evidence includes:
 - Copy of current WA Drivers Licence or WA Photo Card; or
 - Copy of recent Bank Statement showing name and address; or
 - Copy of rental agreement; or
 - Copy of Local Government rates notice.

Applicants unable to provide any of the above should contact the Program Manager by email at workforce@dpird.wa.gov.au before submitting an application for consideration of other acceptable evidence of usual place of residence.

2. The address of where they are living whilst working in regional WA, together with the name and contact details of the owner (or business name) of the accommodation provider.
3. evidence that they have the right to work in Australia and meet the eligibility criteria for this program being:
 - copy of Australian Passport; Birth Certificate (or extract); Citizenship Certificate; or Certificate of evidence of resident status;
 - or
 - copy of a current, valid New Zealand Passport
 - or
 - copy of overseas Passport and evidence of holding a valid visa with current work rights – except Working Holiday visas (subclass 417 and 462); Seasonal Worker Program or Pacific Labour Scheme visas (subclass 403) or a COVID-19 Pandemic visas (subclass 408).
4. details of the type of work performed, the dates worked, the employers name, Australian Business Number, email address and the physical addresses where work was undertaken.

Assessment and Payment

Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted until all allocated funds have been exhausted.

A travel allowance can be claimed by a person who relocated on or after 9 September 2020 being the date this scheme was announced.

An accommodation allowance can be claimed by a person on or after 21 September 2020 being the announced opening date of the scheme

Incomplete applications, or applications where required documents have not been uploaded will not be assessed and applicants will be notified.

Assessors must be able to contact employers to verify work claims and applicants must provide correct contact details and a valid ABN for their employer.

Employment can be at different physical locations or farms in regional WA, but must be for the same employer for a minimum of 2 consecutive weeks.

Applicants can change employers after the 2-week minimum, and claim an accommodation allowance if they continue to meet all eligibility criteria including working for a new employer for a minimum of 2 consecutive weeks.

A travel allowance is only payable once; and applicants who change employers cannot claim another travel allowance payment.

The accommodation allowance is paid for a maximum of 12 weeks, which can be consecutive or non-consecutive, providing 2 -week minimum criteria is met with each employer.

Applicants should allow up to 4 weeks for assessment and processing of claims.

Payments are made on a weekly basis as soon as possible after assessment and approval of claim. Payments are made electronically to nominated bank account.

DPIRD reserves the right to review and amend the list of eligible jobs, industries, regions or visa holders if required to address critical labour shortages in regions or industries.

No advocacy or lobbying will be accepted on behalf of individuals, industries or regions.

Tax information

Rebate payments under this scheme are outside the scope of GST, and applicants are encouraged to seek tax advice on the potential implications of obtaining this rebate.

Personal Information and disclosure of information

Applicants are informed that DPIRD is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)*, which provides a general right of access to records held by the State Government agencies and local governments.