

## Independent Social Security Handbook ONLINE

### -now available "free"\* in Queensland!!!

The Independent Social Security Handbook ONLINE is now available "free"\* for all community welfare sector workers and Government department employees in Queensland.

This has been made possible by the Department of Communities "Strengthening NGOs Project" which has taken out a bulk subscription to ensure that all community welfare agencies in Queensland have access to this important resource.

#### ▲ **What is the Independent Social Security Handbook?**

The Independent Social Security Handbook ONLINE is produced primarily for community workers so that they can help their clients with Social Security problems. The Handbook contains 47 chapters and provides information on all of the major Social Security payments as well as information about issues such as people's legal rights and appeal rights (see below for a list of chapters).

The Handbook ONLINE is fully updated every three months to take into account all the latest changes to Social Security law and policy and their administration by Centrelink.

#### ▲ **How can my organisation access the Handbook ONLINE?**

1. Simply go to the Department of Communities online resources website.
2. Click on the "Independent Social Security Handbook ONLINE" button on the homepage.
3. Register by entering your "user name" and your own "password".
4. Click on the chapter or topic you want and away you go! Once you are in a chapter you can click directly on the sub-headings in chapters or you can easily return to the contents page of the Handbook to access another chapter.

The first time you do this will take an extra minute or so as an initial password or access code will be sent to you by email. You will then be able to use this to change to your own password to use on all future occasions.

This simple registration process will not only give you ongoing access to the Handbook, but will mean that you will also receive an email bulletin every three months advising you of the most recent changes to Social Security / Centrelink provisions that have been incorporated into the Handbook.

## ▲ **Why use the ONLINE EDITION of the Handbook?**

If you are a community worker your job will probably require you to know a bit about Social Security and its administration. You will probably have clients who have had an adverse decision made about their Social Security payment by Centrelink.

With just a little information about Social Security provisions and Centrelink procedures, you will be able to help them immediately. All the information you need is included in the Handbook ONLINE. If you need to know about the appeals system, or how to get information under Freedom of Information (FOI) provisions, or if your client has had their Social Security payment reduced or cancelled because of a breach, then the Handbook ONLINE contains all the information for you to help them.

## ▲ **Self-help forms for easy use**

The Handbook also contains a number of simple, self-help forms to help with such things as:

- getting an appeal started, or
- getting a debt repayment reduced.

## The Independent Social Security Handbook

### Part I: An introduction to handling Social Security problems

- Chapter 1      How to use this Handbook
- Chapter 2      Centrelink and the departments (DFaCS, DEST and DEWR)  
-                      who does what
- Chapter 3      Helping clients, talking to Centrelink and starting appeals
- Chapter 4      Claiming, receiving and losing payments
- Chapter 5      Getting files and information from Centrelink
- Chapter 6      Giving information to Centrelink

### Part II: Claiming and getting paid

- Chapter 7      Proof of Identity
- Chapter 8      Waiting periods: why can't I get paid now?
- Chapter 9      Payments by Centrelink - to bank accounts, by cheque or EBT
- Chapter 10     Urgent and advance payments

### Part III: ABSTUDY

- Chapter 11     ABSTUDY

### Part IV: Unemployment

- Chapter 12     Payments for people seeking work: Newstart Allowance & Youth Allowance
- Chapter 13     The "activity test"
- Chapter 14     The "Job Network" and its services
- Chapter 15     Breaches and penalties

## Part V: Couples & separation, children and youth

- Chapter 16 Payments to young people
- Chapter 17 Who is a “member of a couple” or “Youth Allowance couple”?
- Chapter 18 Parenting Payment for single and partnered parents
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- Chapter 20 Maintenance and child support
- Chapter 21 Widow Allowance

## Part VI: Illness, injury and compensation

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- Chapter 23 Sickness payments
- Chapter 24 Disability Support Pension
- Chapter 25 Payments for carers
- Chapter 26 Compensation and Social Security payments

## Part VII: Special Benefit

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## Part VIII: Payments for those over 55

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- Chapter 29 Abolished payments for older unemployed people

## Part IX: Other payments

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- Chapter 31 Other payments

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- Chapter 33 Income tests: changes to income
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## Part XI: Debts and prosecutions

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## Part XII: Residence, migrants and overseas payments

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- Chapter 44 External appeals: the Social Security Appeals Tribunal
- Chapter 45 External appeals: the Administrative Appeals Tribunal
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**Please note:** This factsheet contains general information available at the time of printing. It does not constitute legal advice. If you seek legal advice about your Social Security entitlement, please contact your local Welfare Rights Centre service.

Welfare Rights Centres are community legal centres, which specialise in Social Security law, administration and policy. They are entirely independent of Centrelink. All assistance is free. April 2005.  
[www.welfarights.org.au](http://www.welfarights.org.au)