

WHAT IS The Income Maintenance?

MARCH 2026

An income maintenance period (IMP) is a length of time you must wait before you receive an income support payment. Depending on your circumstances, you may receive an income support payment at a reduced rate during this period.

How does it work?

An IMP applies where you or your partner are:

- in continuing employment but on leave and entitled to receive a leave payment, or
- have had your employment terminated and receive a termination payment.

During the period, these amounts are assessed as ordinary income for payments impacted by the IMP.

Termination payments include:

- unused leave entitlements (e.g., unused long service leave, annual leave, sick leave, personal leave and payments for untaken maternity/paternity leave).
- payments made under contract for early termination
- redundancy payments
- gratuity payments
- payments in lieu of notice

Which payments are impacted by an IMP?

An IMP applies if you apply for:

- JobSeeker Payment
- Partner Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- Youth Allowance
- Austudy
- Disability Support Pension.

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What the waiting period will be

The waiting period is calculated based on how much an employer has paid you or your partner, whether employment has ceased and what the amount represents.

For example, a 12-week redundancy payment may result in a 12-week IMP. The period starts from the date you or your partner receive the payment.

You may receive a partial social security payment during an IMP, depending on the amount of the payment from an employer.

Applying for waiver

If you are experiencing severe financial hardship, the IMP may be reduced or waived. For more information, visit Services Australia at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au and search 'Severe financial hardship'.



Case study

Emily has been made redundant and on the date she left her employer, she received a $85,000 redundancy payment consisting of:

Description	Value counted towards IMP
5 weeks annual leave	5 weeks
10.5 weeks long service leave	10.5 weeks
$25,500 gratuity payment	25 weeks*
4 weeks payment in lieu of notice	4 weeks
Total	**44.5 weeks**

*Calculated as $25,500 / $1,000 (Emily's gross weekly earnings) rounded down to the nearest whole number.

To work out ordinary income apportioned over the period:

$85,000 / 44.5 = $1,910 per week of apportioned income assessed over a 44.5-week period starting from the date she received the amount from her employer.

As this income exceeds the Income test threshold for JobSeeker Payment, Emily will not be eligible for the payment for at least 44.5 weeks and will need to fund her living expenses from her own resources during this time.

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