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MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND NATIONAL
RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

**SENATOR THE HON LINDA REYNOLDS CSC
MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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**COVID-19 Disaster Payment changes as NSW reaches 80% fully
vaccinated**

The temporary COVID-19 Disaster Payment will wind down in New South Wales, with 80% of that state's population now fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Since it was introduced in mid-2021, the COVID-19 Disaster Payment has supported more than one million people in New South Wales, who have received a combined \$7 billion. Across Australia, 2.3 million people have been supported by the COVID-19 Disaster Payment, totaling more than \$11 billion.

Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, welcomed the news and explained the changes.

"The people of New South Wales have shown great resilience and commitment to reach this important milestone," Minister McKenzie said.

"Now that 80% of New South Wales' population aged 16 years and older have been fully vaccinated, changes to the payment will come into effect.

"It has been encouraging to see restrictions easing and businesses re-opening in New South Wales.

"There has already been a downward trend in the number of COVID-19 Disaster Payment claims as more people return to work.

“While it’s fantastic to see people in New South Wales returning to work, the payment will remain available to workers who continue to be impacted by restrictions for another two weeks.”

People need to apply each week to ensure they remain eligible, and the payment rate will decrease over a two week period before it stops.

In the first week after a state or territory reaches the 80% milestone, people can apply for:

- \$450 if they have lost 8 hours or a full day’s work or more;
- \$100 if they are getting a Centrelink or Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) payment and have lost work.

In the second and final week after reaching 80%:

- the rate decreases to \$320 for those who have lost 8 hours or a full day’s work or more;
- the payment stops for people getting a Centrelink or DVA payment.

Minister for Government Services Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC encouraged people who are still unable to work in New South Wales to re-apply for the payment.

“I would like to reassure people that support is available,” Minister Reynolds said.

“People whose income is still affected are encouraged to reapply for the COVID-19 Disaster Payment while it is available and consider the other longer-term support if they need it.

“Claiming the COVID-19 Disaster Payment online through myGov remains the quickest and easiest way – more than 90% of claims are made online and some are processed within hours.

The exact payment and claim date people need to be aware of differed, depending on where in New South Wales claimants were located.

“Please visit the Services Australia website for detailed information on when you can claim the COVID-19 Disaster Payment again and when the payment will cease in your area,” Minister Reynolds said.

“As the payment winds down for people in New South Wales, you may be eligible to claim an income support payment if your hours have reduced or you have lost your job entirely.

“There are also other payments available to people who are in severe financial hardship, such as the Crisis Payment.

“People who haven’t returned to the workforce, or can’t get enough hours’ work, should test their eligibility for other support through the Services Australia website.”

More information is available at: servicesaustralia.gov.au/covid19disasterpayment