



National Bushfire Recovery Agency

Contacts for emergency assistance

If you are in an affected Bushfire area please listen to the instructions provided by emergency services personnel. **If you need emergency assistance, ring triple zero (000).** Important messages are often played on your local ABC radio.

FEDERAL		
Disaster Recovery Payment and Allowance	180 22 66	https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/help-emergency/bushfires
Emergency	000	
New South Wales		
NSW Rural Fire Service – Bushfire information line	1800 679 737	https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/emergency-information
NSW Disaster Welfare Services Line	1800 018 444	https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/for-the-community/disaster-assistance/disaster-assistance.aspx
Victoria		
VicEmergency Hotline	1800 226 226	https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/
South Australia		
SA Recovery Hotline	1800 302 787	https://dhs.sa.gov.au/services/disaster-recovery
South Australian Government website		https://www.sa.gov.au/
Western Australia		
WA Emergency Information – Public information line	13 3337	https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/contactus/Pages/default.aspx https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/
Queensland		
Queensland Disasters and Alerts State Emergency Service (SES)	132 500	https://www.qld.gov.au/alerts?utm_source=qld.gov.au%20homepage%20hero%20feature&utm_medium=online&utm_campaign=Queensland%20bushfires
Health	13 HEALTH: 13 43 25 84	
Emergency housing assistance:	13 74 68	
Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors	1800 173 349	www.communities.qld.gov.au
Tasmania		
TasAlert	(03) 6232 7551	http://alert.tas.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx
Australian Capital Territory		
ACT Emergency Services Agency	132 281	https://esa.act.gov.au/



National Bushfire Recovery Agency

The Australian Government has established a dedicated agency with an initial \$2 billion for a recovery fund to coordinate a national response and help rebuild communities.

Priorities include primary producer grants for immediate and urgent needs such as fencing, additional support for small businesses, grants to bushfire affected Local Government Areas, a mental health package for first responders and communities, support to attract tourists back to the regions, infrastructure projects to support economic, community and industry recovery and resilience, and measures to support the environment and native wildlife.

The funding is in addition to funding available under existing natural disaster support mechanisms.

www.pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy/national-bushfire-recovery-agency

Disaster Recovery payment

The Department of Human Services is providing a one-off **Disaster Recovery Payment** of \$1,000 for each eligible adult and \$400 for each dependent child.

An additional payment of \$400 per child was announced on 15 January. Families with children who have already received the payment need not re-apply, their additional payment will follow over the course of next week.

Payments are for people who have been injured, who have lost an immediate family member or whose home has been significantly damaged or destroyed.

People who have lost income as a direct result of the fires may be eligible for **Disaster Recovery Allowance**. The allowance is an income support payment for up to 13 weeks for people who have lost income as a direct result of the fires. The payment is the equivalent of the maximum rate of Newstart or Youth Allowance.

To claim a payment call 180 22 66, between 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am - 5pm on Saturday and Sunday. These times are subject to change. The

payment is generally in people's bank accounts within 24-48 hours. For information about payments and eligibility, criteria visit the Human Services website.

www.humanservice.gov.au/disaster

Farm Household Allowance

Farmers and their partners in disaster-affected postcodes can claim Farm Household Allowance (FHA) with minimal information.

For information about payments and eligibility criteria visit:

humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/farm-household-allowance

Other financial support

Emergency Relief

The Australian Government is providing \$40 million to St Vincent de Paul Society and the Salvation Army to deliver emergency relief to bushfire affected communities, such as food parcels, clothing, vouchers and cash payments. You can call the Salvation Army Disasters Assistance team on 1300 662 217 or the Vincent de Paul bushfire assistance team on 13 18 12.

DisasterAssist

A range of additional relief and recovery assistance is available under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to bushfire affected communities, individuals, primary producers and small businesses. Depending on where you live, this assistance may include financial support for emergency assistance and housing damage, and recovery grants and concessional interest rate loans for small businesses and primary producers. DRFA assistance is administered by State Governments. Further information on the specific assistance available in each state is on the DisasterAssist website at www.disasterassist.gov.au.

Financial counselling for individuals

If you are experiencing financial hardship, you can talk with a financial counsellor or find a financial counsellor near you by calling the free National Debt Helpline on **1800 007 007** (Monday to Friday 9:30am-4:30pm) or www.ndh.org.au



Australian Defence Force support

The bushfire crisis is the ADF's primary focus. Several thousand troops have been deployed, including land, sea and air assets.

To manage the response, a Two-Star Emergency ADF National Support Coordinator has been appointed to work with state and territory authorities. More details can be found at on the Defence website.

<https://news.defence.gov.au/national/defence-boosts-bushfire-support>

NDIS

Any NDIS participant who needs assistance with their disability support due to the bushfire situation is encouraged to contact 1800 800 110 to discuss their circumstances.

Emergency accommodation

Defence has opened bases across bushfire affected regions for the use of people needing short-term evacuation assistance.

You can seek shelter at any Defence base in an emergency. A list of bases in each state can be found on the Defence website:

<https://news.defence.gov.au/national/defence-bases-open-to-evacuees>

Payments for volunteer firefighters

Volunteer firefighters may be eligible to access financial support for loss of income, where they have been called out for extended periods of service.

Payments of up to \$300 per day (up to a total of \$6,000 per person) are available for volunteer firefighters.

These payments are tax-free, will not be means-tested, and are in addition to any other forms of disaster support an individual may be eligible for.

State Governments are offering assistance for volunteer firefighters and can be contacted for further advice and assistance.

Dead or injured stock

Department of Agriculture officers are working with states and territories to provide support, which may include disposal of deceased livestock, and advice on pest and disease threats and mitigation with the movement of fodder.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/partnerships/nbc/nbepeg/interstate-deployment-arrangements>

Counselling and mental health support

The Australian Government is providing \$76 million for mental health support for individuals, families and communities, including emergency services personnel impacted by the bushfires. This response includes up to 10 free counselling sessions, expanded telehealth mental health services, increased funding to headspaces in affected communities, bushfire trauma response coordinators to link individuals and communities with the right mental health supports, and a package of measures to support the needs of emergency services personnel (including volunteers) and their families – both now and into the future.

Needing support in the wake of disaster is normal and not a sign of weakness. Contact your GP to find support in your local area that meets your needs. If you need to speak to someone immediately, you can contact Lifeline Australia for telephone or online support services (13 11 14 | www.lifeline.org.au). Children can be directed to the Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800 | www.kidshelpline.com.au).

More information on the mental health services that the Australian, State and Territory Governments are making available to support bushfire recovery is available at:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/information-for-australians-who-have-been-affected-by-bushfires>

Residential aged care

Aged care residents who are moved temporarily to a different residential home due bushfires will continue to receive all their services in the new location.



You can call the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422

Medicare

Even if you don't have your Medicare card or number, you can still see a doctor, visit your local hospital or buy prescriptions. Doctors and Hospital staff can call Medicare to obtain your relevant Medicare, Health Care Card and DVA card details. Pharmacists can call the PBS inquiry line on 132 290 (option 1) for assistance with Medicare or concessional details.

Lost or destroyed passports

Australians whose passports have been lost or damaged in a natural disaster may be eligible for a free replacement.

Affected passport holders should call the Australian Passport Information Service on 131 232.

Financial Counselling for primary producers

The Australian Government announced \$15 million to fund 60 more rural financial counsellors and support workers to assist primary producers on their path to recovery, over the next two years.

The Rural Financial Counselling Service provides free financial counselling to farmers, foresters, fishers and small related businesses, who are suffering financial hardship.

If you need support, please call the national referral hotline on 1800 686 175 or visit www.agriculture.gov.au/rfcs

Primary Industries Grants

Grants of up to \$75,000 will be available for farm, fish and forestry businesses in fire-affected regions. The grants will provide primary producers immediate support to manage essential needs such as caring for injured livestock, disposing of dead stock and damaged goods, repairing fences and outbuildings and replacing vital on-farm equipment.

For more information on the Emergency Bushfire Response in Primary Industries Grants Program please contact 1800 900 090.

Support for Small Business

The Australian Government has announced a Small Business Bushfire Recovery Package to help small businesses get back on their feet. If you are an affected small business, you may be eligible for a range of assistance, including grant funding, concessional loans and tax relief.

The Government is also establishing a Small Business Bushfire Financial Support Line to provide information on the assistance and support available, and provide financial counselling services.

While the specialist Support Line is being established, businesses can visit www.business.gov.au or 13 28 46.