



Important information for your 2019-20 tax return

English

JobKeeper

If you have received JobKeeper payments from your employer you don't need to do anything different for your tax return. The payments will be included as salary and wages in your income statement.

Your income statement can be accessed via myGov and the information is generally automatically added into your tax return by the end of July. If you use a tax agent, they also have access to this information.

Sole traders who have received the JobKeeper payment on behalf of their business will need to include the payments as assessable income for the business. This information is **not** automatically included for sole traders, so **make sure you include any JobKeeper payments on your tax return.**

JobSeeker

If you have received JobSeeker, the ATO will include this information into your tax return at the *Government Payments and Allowances* question once it's ready. If you are lodging before this information is included for you, you will need to make sure you include it.

If you lodge your tax return without this information, it could impact how quickly your return is processed.

Stand down payments

Some employees may have received a one-off or regular payment after being temporarily stood down due to COVID-19. You should check that these payments appear as salary and wages in your income statement and in your tax return.

You also need to include income such as income protection, sickness or accident insurance payments, redundancy payments and leave payments in your tax return. The tax return instructions explain how to include these amounts.

Early access to superannuation (super)

If you received early access to your super under the special COVID-19 arrangements you do not need to declare it in your tax return. Any amount withdrawn from super under this arrangement is tax-free.

Working from home expenses

The ATO announced a temporary 'short cut method' that applies from 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2020.

The short cut method makes it easier for people who have had some expenses for working from home as a result of COVID-19. The short cut method means you can claim a deduction of 80 cents for each hour you worked from home. It covers all deductible expenses and can be used by multiple people working from home in the same house.

If you claim your working from home expenses using the shortcut method, you need to include the amount at the 'other work-related expenses' question in your tax return and include 'COVID-hourly rate' as the description. You need to keep a record of the hours you worked from home as evidence.

You can still choose to use the old methods to calculate your expenses for working from home if you prefer. However, if you use the shortcut method, you can't claim for any other working at home expenses.

Protective clothing

If you work in a job that requires physical contact with customers or clients during COVID-19 you may be able to claim a deduction for items such as gloves, face masks, sanitiser or anti-bacterial spray if you paid for the items and have not been paid back by your employer. This includes industries like healthcare, retail and hospitality.

Reduce claims that aren't relevant for part of the year

If you started working from home, reduced your hours, or stopped working this year, you may need to reduce your claims for other things like laundry or travel expenses.

To claim a deduction, you must have spent the money and not been paid back, it must relate directly to earning your income, and you must have a record to prove it.

More information

Visit the ATO website at ato.gov.au/otherlanguages.

You can also talk to a registered tax agent for help.

Resources (in English)

- [What is income?](#)
- [Deductions you can claim](#)
- [Lodging your tax return](#)
- [Finding a registered tax agent](#)
- [Records you need to keep](#)

Examples

Example 1 – Worker receiving JobKeeper

Joe is an employee who works in a café. After losing customers due to COVID-19, the café enrolled to receive JobKeeper payments on Joe's behalf.

The café continues operating as takeaway only and Joe is given some hand sanitiser for use during his shifts. He also purchases a face mask, which he is not paid back for. When he completes his tax return, he claims the cost of the face mask, making sure he keeps his receipt as proof of his purchase.

He also checks that his salary and wages on his income statement are up to date, including all JobKeeper payments made to him by the café. Joe needs to make sure his total salary and wages are included in his tax return. Generally, this will be automatically added into his return by the ATO by the end of July and will include JobKeeper payments.

Example 2 – IT contractor working from home

Chen is employed by a company that fixes computers. Sometimes Chen has to drive her car from the office to the client's premises and assist them on site. Due to COVID-19, Chen started working from home on 23 March and was only able to help clients over the phone. Chen purchased a new headset and stationery. She has additional phone and internet costs while working from home.

Chen decides to claim all her working from home expenses using the new short cut method of 80 cents per hour. She uses her time sheets to calculate the hours she worked from home between 23 March and 30 June.

When she completes her tax return, Chen makes sure she only claims a deduction for the car expenses she incurred when travelling from the office to clients' homes. As Chen worked solely from home for approximately three months of the year, mostly supporting clients over the phone, her claim for car expenses this year is less than her claim for last year.