



# COVID-19 SENIORS FACT SHEET

CURRENT AS AT 18 MARCH 2020

## Will concession card holders receive any additional support to help with household costs?

The McGowan Government is doubling the Energy Assistance Payment (EAP) in 2020-21 to support vulnerable Western Australians, including pensioners.

The payment will increase from \$300 to \$600 for eligible concession card-holders. The EAP supports eligible concession card holders towards the cost of their energy bill each year.

## Will I receive the Federal Government's one-off payment?

6.5 million people are expected to receive the payment, including 2.4 million pensioners.

This includes people on the Age Pension, Newstart, the Disability Support Pension, Carers' Allowance, Youth Allowance, Veterans' Affairs payments, Family Tax Benefit and those holding a Pensioner Concession Card or Commonwealth Senior Health Card.

People who already receive these payments or hold these cards will get the cash automatically. You don't need to do anything.

To find out if you're eligible, visit:

[www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/news/750-one-economic-support-payment](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/news/750-one-economic-support-payment)

## Are there provisions to help older and vulnerable people do their shopping?

For one month starting 17 March 2020, Coles and Woolworths have been granted temporary extended trading hours to help pensioners, the elderly and people with disabilities.

The special arrangements which will be managed by Coles and Woolworths will allow pensioners, the elderly and people with disabilities to shop without other people in the store.

### Woolworths:

Monday to Saturday: 7am to 8am

Sunday: 10am to 11am

### Coles:

Monday to Friday 7am to 8am

Most other supermarket shopping hours should remain the same.

## Who should I call if I need additional support at home, with shopping and getting medication?

If you have a home care service provider you should call that provider and ask if they can assist.

Local Government might also be able to assist by pointing you in the direction of good local services.

## Is there any other cost of living help on offer?

The McGowan Government has frozen household fees and charges, effective immediately and in effect until at least 1 July 2021.

The freeze will apply to the entire 'household basket' including electricity, water, motor vehicle charges, emergency services levy and public transport fares, meaning rates will stay the same until at least 1 July 2021.

## Am I at risk of serious infection?

Based on what we know about coronaviruses, those most at risk of serious infection are:

- people with compromised immune systems (such as people who have cancer)
- elderly people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (as they have higher rates of chronic illness)
- people with chronic medical conditions
- people in group residential settings

## How can I protect myself and those around me?

The best thing we can do to protect ourselves is quality personal hygiene - as we would in the winter flu season. It is important that the community follow the instructions given by health professionals anyone who is instructed to self-isolate must take the request seriously, stay home and not put others at risk.

### HEALTHY HYGIENE HABITS:



**Wash your hands regularly**  
for at least 20 seconds, using  
soap & water or alcohol-based gel



**Cover your mouth/nose  
when you cough/sneeze**  
using a tissue or flexed elbow



**Avoid shaking hands**  
or making other unnecessary  
physical contact with others



**Stay home if you are sick**  
don't go to work or school  
if you have symptoms



**Avoid close contact  
with others** try to keep  
at least 1.5 metres away

## What should I do if I think I have Coronavirus?

COVID-19 testing in WA will only be available to individuals who:

1. Have a fever (temperature of 37.5 deg or above) or respiratory illness AND
2. Can provide evidence of recent overseas travel (for example, airline ticket or passport stamp) OR have had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case OR are a health or aged care worker, with direct patient contact.

Dedicated COVID Clinics have been set up in three major metropolitan public hospitals and Bunbury (from 19 March) to test and support people at risk of COVID-19.

People in regional areas who meet this criteria with documented evidence should contact a public hospital, GP or health service. People should ring ahead and let staff know immediately upon arrival.

All patients are required to bring proof of recent travel or identify the confirmed case they have been in contact with.

## Where can I go for more information?

**We have launched a new page which includes official information regarding COVID-19 in Western Australia** - [www.wa.gov.au/covid19](http://www.wa.gov.au/covid19)

**WA Department of Health information** – [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus)

**Coronavirus information hotline** – 1800 020 080

**Smartraveller** – information regarding travel advice for Australians - [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

**Information on self-quarantine and self-isolation** - [https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Coronavirus](https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus)