

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT



Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Status Resolution Support Services Payment

Policy Document

This document prescribes policy for officers of the Department of Human Services (DHS) responsible for administering payments under the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) framework. SRSS is managed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP).

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12. Management of debts

12.1 Reasons for debts

A debt may also occur if an SRSS Recipient has received an amount of SRSS Payment for which they were not eligible. A debt can occur for several reasons:

- income from employment, investments or other sources which has not been considered when calculating the SRSS Payment made to them.
- changes in care of dependent children.
- changes in relationship status.
- loss of entitlement to the SRSS Payment, e.g. non-engagement, in prison, departed Australia, assets over the limit.
- fraudulent activity.
- administrative or system error.
- changes in the amount of rent paid or incorrect amount of Rental Assistance Allowance paid.

12.2 Debt management and recovery by DHS

DHS is responsible for administering the recovery of debts but will not be responsible for any unrecovered amounts after recovery options have been exhausted.

Rule 11 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule 2014) states:

The accountable authority of a non-corporate Commonwealth entity must pursue recovery of each debt for which the accountable authority is responsible unless:

- a) *the accountable authority considers that it is not economical to pursue recovery of the debt; or*
- b) *the accountable authority is satisfied that the debt is not legally recoverable; or*
- c) *the debt has been written off as authorised by an Act.*

Acceptable recovery options available to DHS are limited to voluntary cash, cheque/ money order, Postbillpay®, BPAY, withholdings or by a direct debit agreement.

12.3 Reconsideration of a debt for an overpayment

If an SRSS Recipient disputes a decision by DHS that a debt to the Commonwealth is owed, a DHS officer will review the decision to ensure it complies with the PGPA Act. DHS must review and verify the legitimacy of the debt within 28 calendar days.

In the event that the SRSS Recipient (the debtor) is unsatisfied with the review outcome, and an agreement to repay the debt cannot be reached, DHS will refer the case to Community Support, Assurance and Analysis (CSAA) section, DIBP.

- If CSAA agrees with the outcome of the review conducted by DHS CSAA will inform DHS and the SRSS Recipient that the SRSS Recipient remains liable to repay their debt, or
- If CSAA finds in favour of the SRSS Recipient CSAA will provide instructions to DHS and the SRSS Recipient on what actions are required to extinguish the debt.



Australian Government
Services Australia

~~OFFICIAL: Sensitive~~



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

SERVICES SCHEDULE

For the delivery of the Status Resolution Support Services Payment

BETWEEN:

SERVICES AUSTRALIA

and

THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

Released by Department of Home Affairs
under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

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s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

18.2. Services Australia will provide management reports to Home Affairs in accordance with the following table:

s. 47E(d)	Content of report (including any format requirements)	s. 47E(d)
	s. 47E(d)	
	Report contains information on debts that are being returned to Home Affairs for management, including customer information and amounts	

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

20. Complaints handling

20.1. If a third party makes a complaint about the Program or the provision of the Services:

- (a) the party receiving the complaint will promptly notify (or as otherwise agreed through regular management reporting mechanisms) the other party in writing of the complaint, and agree which party is responsible and who will take the lead in responding
- (b) subject to any legislative restrictions, the parties will endeavour to provide relevant information to each other to support the handling of the complaint in an agreed timeframe and keep each other informed of progress
- (c) Services Australia and Home Affairs agree to work cooperatively in order to pursue the timely resolution of the complaint
- (d) the parties will share all information according to relevant Privacy requirements

21. Internal review

21.1. All internal review of decisions made under the Program requested by members of the public will be handled by Services Australia in accordance with the SRSS Payment Policy.

21.2. Services Australia will provide assistance when requested by Home Affairs to enable Home Affairs to perform its functions under this clause.

- 21.3. Where an eligible customer seeks information about an eligibility decision made by Home Affairs under the SRSS program, Services Australia will direct the SRSS customer to Home Affairs.
- 21.4. Services Australia is responsible for providing information to a SRSS customer where the SRSS customer is seeking information regarding their SRSS rate of payment or a payment decision (including suspension or cancellation of payment) that has been initiated by Services Australia.

22. Administrative review

- 22.1. All appeals by members of the public of Program decisions will be handled by Home Affairs.
- 22.2. Services Australia will provide assistance to Home Affairs to enable Home Affairs to perform its functions under this clause.

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)