



Department of  
**Primary Industries and  
Regional Development**

# **Regional Agriculture, Tourism and Hospitality Workers Travel and Accommodation Support Scheme**

**(Formerly known as Primary Industries Workers Regional Travel and  
Accommodation Support Scheme)**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

Last updated 21 April 2022

The Regional Agriculture, Tourism and Hospitality Workers Travel and Accommodation Support Scheme will provide targeted assistance to tourism, hospitality, farming, fisheries and food processing businesses in regional areas experiencing labour shortages as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The scheme will provide new opportunities for people seeking jobs in Western Australia, encourage regional work and travel, and help people access jobs in the regions.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## [Approved workers](#)

### **Why is the accommodation scheme limited to 42 nights for Backpackers/Working Holiday Makers (WHM)?**

The scheme is designed to provide new opportunities for WA job seekers and help people access jobs in the regions by providing assistance to temporarily move away from their home, recognising the additional costs involved. The transient nature of WHMs means they are less likely to be locked into long-term leases, have mortgages, and are not moving from their family home for the first time.

WHMs are encouraged to remaining living and working in regional WA; and are incentivised to work in primary production jobs to qualify for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year visas by doing 3 to 6 months work in the agricultural sector.

### **Why is the scheme not available for Seasonal Worker Program (SWP) or Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS) participants?**

The SWP and PLS programs are highly regulated by the Australian Government and participants can only work for a small number of Approved Employers who must provide a high level of pastoral care. Approved Employers must receive Australian Government approval for accommodation provided for these workers and payroll deductions for accommodation and transport is pre-agreed before workers arrived in Australia, so workers are not facing additional, unexpected costs.

## [Approved work](#)

### **Why are some primary production jobs not eligible?**

The scheme is designed to help farming and fishing businesses fill critical positions in highly seasonal activities. Due to limited funding the scheme cannot be extended across the whole agrifood supply chain.

### **What jobs in horticulture/viticulture farming are eligible for the allowance?**

Eligible jobs include any on-farm roles that support the planting, pruning, leaf and fruit thinning, harvest, grading or packing of crops.

As shared or common-use packing or processing facilities are common in horticulture and viticulture, off-farm grading or packing of horticultural fresh produce and time-critical primary food processing of fresh, perishable produce also eligible.

### **What horticulture/viticulture related jobs are NOT eligible for the allowance?**

Jobs not eligible for the allowance are secondary processing, bottling, cooking that is no longer time critical to prevent the produce from perishing. Jobs in transport or logistics or the supply of goods or services are also not eligible.

**What jobs in grain; hay; broadacre farming are eligible for the allowance?**

Eligible jobs include any on-farm roles that support harvesting, seeding, spraying, cutting of crops, done by an employee of the farm business, or an employee of a contractor where the contractor is undertaking on-farm work for more than two consecutive weeks (14 days).

**What grain; hay; broadacre related jobs are NOT eligible for the allowance?**

Jobs not eligible for the allowance include employees of businesses undertaking off-farm activities including post-farm gate transport or logistics; activities relating to receiving of grain or hay; or suppliers of other goods or services.

**What jobs in livestock; dairy, pastoral farming are eligible for the allowance?**

Eligible jobs include any on-farm roles that support the breeding, raising, caring of livestock for the commercial production of meat, fish, milk, skins, eggs and wool. This includes management of fodder and pastures, milking, catching, drenching, shearing, maintaining pens or sheds.

**What livestock; pastoral farming related jobs are NOT eligible for the allowance?**

Jobs not eligible for the allowance include employees of businesses undertaking off-farm activities including post-farm gate transport or logistics or the supply of goods or services.

**What jobs in fishing or aquaculture are eligible for the allowance?**

Eligible jobs include on-vessel commercial fishing roles; on-farm aquaculture activities and time-critical on-shore processing of fresh fish.

**What fishing or aquaculture related jobs are NOT eligible for the allowance?**

Jobs not eligible for the allowance include employees of businesses in tourism or recreational fishing activities such as fishing charters; secondary seafood processing or preparation; transport or logistics activities to or from a processing facility or vessel, or the supply of goods or services.

**Can I apply if I work for a contractor that contracts to farmers?**

Yes, if the work is exclusively carried out on a farm property (for example contract hay cutting, harvesting, shearing). Any employment in roles off farm, or beyond the farm gate in the supply chain, (for example, road haulage, grain receival sites) are ineligible.

**Can I work for more than one employer?**

Yes. But you must work at least two consecutive weeks (14 days) for each employer – either the farmer, tourism or hospitality business, a contractor or labour hire business. You can only claim the travel allowance once.

### **Can I work for different businesses or at different locations?**

You can work for the same employer – either the farmer, tourism or hospitality business, a contractor or labour hire business – at different farms or locations, providing you have still relocated more than 100kms, remain living away from your home and are working in regional WA.

### **Do I have to work full time?**

#### **I have been employed in eligible work with my employer for 14 days but I have only had paid work on some of these days am I still able to apply?**

The Scheme has been designed to help tourism, hospitality, farming and fishing employers fill time-critical seasonal labour demand and therefore the allowance is only claimable for those working full time hours or for a minimum of 40 hours per fortnight for tourism and hospitality workers. We understand that the number of hours worked each day or the number of days worked in a week may differ from job to job and may change depending on the weather, ripening of crops or other factors determined by the employer.

All employment claims will be verified by the employer.

## **Travel allowance**

### **Can I claim the travel allowance in advance?**

No. Applications can only be submitted after completing more than two consecutive weeks (14 days) of eligible employment in a regional area for the same employer. Employer confirmation and eligibility assessment will be required before any rebates are paid.

### **Is the relocation of over 100km calculated from my home address or Perth CBD?**

The relocation of more than 100 kilometres is measured from your usual place of residence; being the address where you live as an owner, tenant or boarder, or where you reside with your family.

The Scheme assists workers who relocate more than 100km from their home to undertake eligible tourism, hospitality, agriculture or fisheries work in regional WA.

There is no daily travel payment, and the scheme is open to people already residing in Australia. (This includes people who may have recently arrived from overseas and who are residing in commercial lodgings.)

### **How many times can I claim the travel rebate?**

A travel allowance is only payable once within the claim period of Round 1 (9 September 2020 to 8 September 2021) and once under Round 2 (from 9 September 2021 or from 3 March 2022 for tourism and hospitality workers) where an applicant takes up new employment more than 100kms from their usual place of residence. Applicants who change employers within the period of either Round 1 or Round 2 cannot claim another travel allowance payment.

## Accommodation allowance

### **Can I claim accommodation allowance in advance?**

No. Applications can only be submitted after completing more than two consecutive weeks (14 days) of eligible employment in regional area for the same employer. Employer confirmation and eligibility assessment will be required before any rebates are paid.

### **Can I claim the accommodation rebate if I share accommodation or relocate to live with family and friends?**

Yes, you need be able to provide the address, name and contact details of the owner or business where you are living whilst working in regional WA.

You will also need to provide evidence that you have relocated more than 100 kilometres from your usual place of residence; being the address in Australia where you live as an owner, tenant or border, or where you reside with your family.

### **Can I claim more than \$40 per night in accommodation?**

No, the funding will provide an accommodation allowance of \$40 per night (\$280 week) for each night living away from home to take up eligible employment in regional area, up to a maximum of 84 nights or 42 nights for Working Holiday Visa Holders from 3 March 2022.

### **When should I apply?**

You can make an application any time after you have worked two consecutive weeks (14 days) and we would recommend making further applications on a monthly basis as funds are limited.

### **Can I apply for a rebate on accommodation while looking for work?**

No. To be eligible you need to be employed in an approved hospitality, tourism, agriculture, fisheries and food processing job for a primary producer, a tourism or hospitality business, a labour hire or contracting business since the 9 September 2020 (for Round 1) or 9 September 2021 if you are reapplying under Round 2. Tourism and hospitality worker applications can only be accepted for work which commenced on or after 3 March 2022. Before claiming you need to have been engaged by the same employer for at least 2 consecutive weeks (14 days) in regional WA and meet all other criteria outlined in the guidelines.

### **Can I apply for a rebate on accommodation on weekends or days I am not rostered on?**

Yes, provided your employer confirms you are employed over the period you are claiming.

An accommodation allowance of \$40 per night (\$280 week) for each night living away from home to take up eligible employment in regional area, up to a maximum of 84 nights, (42 nights only for Working Holiday Visa Holders from 3 March 2022), is available to eligible applicants.

## Application

### **What is the difference between Round 1 and Round 2 of the Scheme?**

The guidelines and eligibility for both rounds are largely the same, with the exception of applicable dates, the introduction of tourism and hospitality jobs from 3 March 2022 and the introduction of a limited accommodation allowance, (42 nights), for Working Holiday Visa holders from 3 March 2022. Round 1 applies to the period of 9 September 2020 to 8 September 2021. Round 2 applies from 9 September 2021 or from 3 March 2022 for tourism and hospitality workers. Round 2 has enabled a

'reset' to the limits on applicant's allowances. For example, for primary industries workers who received the once-off travel allowance and the maximum accommodation allowance of 12 weeks within the period of Round 1, you can reapply under Round 2.

**Is there an age restriction?**

No, other than being of legal working age. The Scheme is available to assist workers who relocate more than 100km from their home to undertake eligible agriculture or fisheries work in regional WA.

**Is there a time limit to apply?**

There is a limited amount of funding for this scheme and when funds have been exhausted the scheme will cease. We urge you to apply as soon as possible if you fulfil the eligibility requirements.

**What if I work for more than one employer within a month?**

Eligible applicants are able to submit an application at any time after completing more than two consecutive weeks of eligible work for the same employer. Application forms can include a maximum of two employers.

As there is a limited pool of funds applicants are encouraged to submit applications monthly – noting that a maximum of 84 night's accommodation allowance can be claimed, (42 weeks for Working Holiday Makers from 3 March 2022), and a travel allowance will only be paid once in each round.

**Can I claim a rebate if I am paid 'with keep' wages as per the Pastoral Award?**

Yes, if you fulfil all other eligibility criteria.

**Do I have to register before I start work?**

No, funding is available to those who have relocated to take up employment in an eligible agriculture, fisheries and food processing job for a primary producer, a labour hire or contracting business since 9 September 2021 and for tourism and hospitality workers since 3 March 2022 and have worked for more than two consecutive weeks for the same employer.

Applications can be submitted online at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development website and applicants must answer all questions and have uploaded the required evidence/verification documents to progress to assessment.

**Does applying mean that I will automatically receive payment?**

No, to be considered for funding through this program an applicant must meet **ALL** of the eligibility criteria. Applications will be assessed and assessors must be able to contact employers to verify work claims and applicants must provide correct contact details and a valid ABN for their employer.

Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted until all allocated funds have been exhausted. Applicants will be notified on the outcome of their claim.

## Application Process

### **How do I apply?**

All applications must be submitted online through [DPIRD's SmartyGrants system](#) and applicants must answer all questions and have uploaded the required evidence/verification documents to be able to submit their application. Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted.

### **How will I know if my application has been received?**

Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an email acknowledging receipt. Your application will have a unique reference that you should use if you need to contact us.

### **Can I update my application after it has been submitted?**

If your application has not been processed and you need to change any information or upload additional supporting documents, you should email the Workforce and Business Capability Team at [workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au) including your contact number and we will call you to discuss options.

### **How/when will I find out if my claim is successful?**

Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted until all allocated funds have been exhausted. Applicants will be notified via email on the outcome of their application.

Incomplete applications, or applications where required documents have not been uploaded will not be assessed and applicants will be notified.

### **How long will it take to receive payment?**

Applicants should allow at least 8 weeks for assessment and payment. Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted until all available funds have been paid out.

Incomplete applications or applications where required documents have not been uploaded will be rejected if applicants are unable to provide the missing and/or additional information within 10 business days of being asked to provide it. All applicants will be notified of decisions by email.

### **Will I receive a lump sum payment?**

Payments are processed as soon as possible after assessment and approval of claim. Payments will be made for the period of work included in the application assessment. Payments are made electronically to the nominated bank account.

### **Can I appeal the decision?**

Yes. Should your application be declined and you are able to provide additional information and/or documentation that addresses the reason for decline, you should email the Primary Industries Workforce and Business Capability Team at [workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au) quoting your application reference number and state you wish to appeal the decision (and upload the additional information and/or documentation that supports your case).

### **I am having difficulty with the Smarty Grants application form. Who can I contact?**

Please email the Primary Industries Workforce and Business Capability Team in the first instance at [workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au)

**I don't want to miss out on my claim if the funds are getting low. How do I know whether to submit my claim now, or leave it until later in the month?**

As there is a limited pool of funds applicants are encouraged to submit applications monthly. Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted until all available funds have been paid out.

**What if I don't have an Australian Bank account in my own name?**

You will need to have a bank account in your name with an Australian Authorised Deposit Taking Institution (a bank or credit union) in order to receive funds.

**Can I claim if I'm receiving Jobseeker/keeper?**

The rules you need to meet to receive JobSeeker/keeper payments depend on your situation. For more information please refer to the [Services Australia website](#) or contact Centrelink.

**Are the payments taxable?**

This is a travel and accommodation allowance and how the payment is treated for tax purposes will depend on your personal situation. You will need to seek professional advice on taxation issues.