



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)

Updated 11 November 2022

The Regional Agriculture, Tourism and Hospitality Workers Travel and Accommodation Support Scheme provides 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 provides new opportunities for people seeking jobs in Western Australia, encourages regional work and travel and supports regional communities.

Frequently Asked Questions

[Approved workers](#)

Why is the accommodation allowance 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.

In addition, there are existing incentives and support for WHMs employed in primary industries to qualify for 2nd and 3rd year visas by working up to 6 months 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.

Is there an age restriction?

No, other than being of legal working age.

[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.

Which jobs in horticulture/viticulture farming ARE eligible?

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.

Which jobs in horticulture/viticulture farming are NOT eligible?

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.

Which jobs in grain; hay; broadacre farming ARE eligible?

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).

Which jobs in grain; hay; broadacre farming are NOT eligible?

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.

Which jobs in livestock; dairy; pastoral farming ARE eligible?

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.

Which jobs in livestock; dairy; pastoral farming are NOT eligible?

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.

Which jobs in fishing or aquaculture ARE eligible?

Eligible jobs include commercial fishing roles; aquaculture activities and time-critical processing of fresh seafood.

Can I apply if I work for a contractor who 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 not eligible.

Can I work for more than one employer?

Yes, however you must work at least two consecutive weeks (14 days) for each employer – either the agricultural, tourism or hospitality business, a contractor or labour hire business. You can only claim the travel allowance once. Application forms can include a maximum of two employers.

Can I work for different businesses or at different locations?

You can work for the same employer – either the agricultural, 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 in primary industries or for a minimum of 40 hours per fortnight for tourism and hospitality industries. 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 application is approved.

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 is available to people who were already residing in Western Australia or have relocated from interstate or from overseas. Please provide sufficient evidence of your home address in your application (this may include accommodation receipts and flight itineraries).

How many times can I claim the travel rebate?

A travel allowance is only payable once within the claim period (from 9 September 2021 for primary industries or from 3 March 2022 for tourism and hospitality industries) where an applicant takes up new employment more than 100kms from their usual place of residence.

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 applications are approved.

Can I claim the accommodation allowance 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 day in accommodation?

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

Can I apply for an accommodation allowance while looking for work?

No. To be eligible you need to be actively employed in an approved agriculture, fisheries and food processing job for a primary producer, labour hire or contracting business from 9 September 2021 or an approved hospitality or tourism job within a hospitality or tourism business, labour hire or contracting business from 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 claim the accommodation allowance on weekends or days I am not rostered on?

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

Can I claim the accommodation allowance if I am paid 'with keep' wages as per the Pastoral Award?

Yes, if you fulfil all other eligibility criteria.

Application Process

When should I apply?

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

Do I have to register before I start work?

No, applications are submitted online at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development website and are assessed in order of submission.

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 end. We urge you to apply as soon as possible if you fulfil the eligibility requirements.

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 and provide all necessary and accurate information and documents. Assessors must be able to contact applicants and employers to verify their employment and accommodation.

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.

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 number 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, please email the Workforce and Business Capability Team at workforce@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

How will I find out if my claim is successful?

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?

Depending on demand, applicants should allow at least eight and up to sixteen weeks for assessment and payment. Applications will be assessed in the order they are submitted until all

available funds have been allocated. Payments will be made for the period of work included in the application assessment. Payments are made electronically to the nominated bank account.

Assessors reserve the right to decline applications which are incomplete, where necessary documents have not been provided or requests for information not satisfied within a reasonable time frame eg. 10 business days. Communications are via email and phone if necessary.

Can I appeal the decision?

You may appeal your application if declined. To do so requires providing additional documentation that directly addresses the reason for decline against the eligibility criteria by emailing the Primary Industries Workforce and Business Capability Team at workforce@dpird.wa.gov.au. Please quote your application reference number, state your desire for appeal and attach necessary evidence.

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

Please email the Primary Industries Workforce and Business Capability Team at workforce@dpird.wa.gov.au

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 conditions you need to meet to receive JobSeeker or Jobkeeper 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.