



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) INFORMATION FOR PERMANENT AGED CARE RESIDENTS

Emergency Leave

19/12/2023

The Government declared the COVID-19 pandemic an emergency situation in 2020. Unpredictable COVID-19 outbreaks are still occurring in aged care homes and the broader community, so emergency leave continues to be available for permanent aged care residents for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2024.

The availability of emergency leave means that between the dates above, residents who wish to temporarily relocate to stay with family during COVID-19 outbreaks, will not need to pay their aged care provider further fees (in addition to what they already pay) to secure their place

This fact sheet explains the emergency leave provisions for residential aged care providers.

Use of emergency leave during the COVID-19 pandemic

You can use emergency leave to take temporary leave from your aged care home.

The Government has decided this emergency leave:

- covers all permanent aged care residents from all services across Australia
- dates back to 1 April 2020
- is available until 31 December 2024.

You cannot take emergency leave outside of these dates.

Do I have to pay any fees while on emergency leave?

When you take emergency leave you must continue to pay your:

- basic daily fees
- means tested care fees
- daily accommodation payments.

This is the same as when you take social leave.

During this time, the Government will continue to pay the aged care subsidy to your provider. You won't pay further fees to retain your place at the aged care home.

Discuss with your aged care home any concerns around paying these fees, including if you experience financial hardship.

Can I take emergency leave now?

Yes. If you feel safer staying with family who can provide you with care, you can take emergency leave. Emergency leave is available from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2024.

If you wish to take leave from your aged care home you should:

- speak with your aged care provider
- tell them that you wish to take emergency leave.

Can I use emergency leave for a hospital stay?

No. Emergency leave does not cover hospital stays. If you are admitted to hospital during the emergency leave period, you must take hospital leave while in hospital.

What happens if I do not want to go back to my aged care home?

If you decide to stay in the community on a long term or ongoing basis, you will need to give up your place in your aged care home. You will then need to arrange for a home care services assessment through My Aged Care. If the assessment indicates you require a Home Care Package (HCP), families should be aware that there are waiting times for a HCP. You can, however, access entry-level services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) while waiting for a HCP

Find more information about HCPs and average wait times on the My Aged Care website at: www.myagedcare.gov.au/assessment-decision-home-care-packages.