



COVID-19 information for permanent aged care residents

Emergency leave

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 until 31 December 2026.

The availability of emergency leave means that residents who wish to temporarily relocate to stay with family during COVID-19 outbreaks cannot be charged any new fees to reserve their place at the aged care home. However, they will still need to pay their usual fees and accommodation costs.

This fact sheet explains emergency leave provisions for permanent aged care residents.

Use of emergency leave during COVID-19 outbreaks

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 in all aged care homes across Australia
- is available until 31 December 2026.

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

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

- basic daily fee
- contributions based on your means assessment
- accommodation costs
- optional fees.

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.

Learn about financial hardship assistance at www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-hardship-assistance

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 until 31 December 2026.

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

- speak with your aged care provider
- tell them 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. If you think you will need some help and want to access aged care services at home, you will need to arrange for an assessment through My Aged Care.

Learn about how to get assessed at www.myagedcare.gov.au/how-get-assessed