

Senate Community Affairs References Committee

DESIGN, SCOPE, COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS, CONTRACTS AWARDED AND IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATED WITH THE BETTER MANAGEMENT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM INITIATIVE

PUBLIC HEARING 11 APRIL 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Review process

Question reference number: QoN 113

Member: Senator Pratt

Type of question: Hansard page 4

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 5 May 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: Sorry, but with all due respect as soon as you get a letter—I know that as soon as I got a letter like that I would go: 'They think I owe them money. What is it?' We heard yesterday that that is when people panic. Panic might not be the right word, but we did hear that it sets off emotional distress in some people, and they want to know. So you get on the 1800 number and you start asking questions because you do not have any idea. We also got told people make assumptions about what it might be about. If I am on the phone to the 1800 number, that does not necessarily mean that I am automatically in review mode. When does my 21 days kick-in? That is not what the impression given yesterday is. If you are not being really clear, people may inadvertently think they are in review, but they are not and the 21 day period expires. You have to be really clear with people here. When is it a review and when is it not?

Mr Mowbray-d'Arbela: Would you mind if I take that on notice so I can give a very specific answer to your specific question?

Answer:

Prior to February 2017, recipients were asked to respond to the initial letter within 21 days from the date of the letter. Initial letters are not debt letters. The initial letter requests people to confirm employment income details and to correct any inaccuracies. No assumptions about debt are made.

The Employment Income Confirmation (EIC) enhancements delivered in February 2017, provide recipients with 28 days to respond from the date the letter is received by the individual. The receipt date is confirmed by Australia Post through registered mail delivery.

Senate Community Affairs References Committee

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PUBLIC HEARING 11 APRIL 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Letters

Question reference number: QoN 120

Member: Senator Siewert

Type of question: Hansard page 9

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 5 May 2017

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: Okay. Regardless of that fact, you have been updating the letters. Can we have a copy of the latest one?

Mr Mowbray d'Arbela: Yes.

Senator SIEWERT: It would be appreciated. Thank you.

Answer:

A copy of the current Employment Income Confirmation (EIC) template letters are attached.

Attachment 1 – Current EIC Contact Letter

Attachment 2 – Current EIC Reminder Letter 1

Attachment 3 – Current EIC Reminder Letter 2

A_EIC Initial Contact letter_1.4_100217

If not delivered: Locked Bag 8900 CANBERRA ACT 2601

{RETURNADDRESSBARCODE}

Customer Reference Number: {REFERENCE.NUMBER}

<{NOMINEE.TITLE.FULLNAME}
{NOMINEE.POSTAL.ADDRESS}
{NOMINEE.POSTAL.ADDRESS}
!
{CLIENT.TITLE.FULLNAME}
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Australian Government

Department of Human Services

centrelink

{PRINT.DATE}

<APPLY EXISTING NOMINEE RULE: This is a copy of the letter we have sent to {CLIENT.FULLNAME} for whom you are the nominee. | This letter provides information about {CLIENT.FULLNAME} for whom you are the nominee. | >

Dear {CLIENT.TITLE.SURNAME}

Employment income confirmation

We have information from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) that we need your help to confirm or update. The employment dates or income details are different to what you told us when getting a payment. We use your employment information so you get paid the right payment.

This is not a debt letter. Please check the ATO information with this letter carefully.

You must confirm or update the information **within 28 days** of receiving this letter.

Go online and check today

The easiest way is to sign in to your Centrelink online account linked to your **myGov** account.

You can also go to **humanservices.gov.au/confirmincome** and register:

1. Enter the reference number at the top of this letter and your confirmation code: {CODE}. The confirmation code will expire after 28 days.
2. Enter details from your current Australian driver licence or passport, and your Medicare card.
3. Provide an email address or mobile number so we can send you a security code to log on.

Please note, if you don't confirm or update the information within 28 days, we may apply the employment dates and income from the ATO to your record. This may result in a debt you will need to repay.

After you have confirmed or updated the details, we will write to you to let you know the outcome and what you need to do next.

For more information



my.gov.au



ExpressPlus mobile apps



humanservices.gov.au

If you need help

If you don't have internet access or need help to sign in, go into any of our service centres. If you need help with the employment information provided, call us on 1800 086 400.

Yours sincerely

Director, Earned Income
Customer Compliance

DRAFT

Employment information statement

Check this employment information from the Australian Taxation Office against your records. Make sure you check the dates you worked for each employer.

Go to humanservices.gov.au/confirmincome to confirm or update these details. You may need payslips or bank statements to check this information.

Employer	Super Sparkle Cleaning
Dates of Employment	10 JUL 2015 to 13 AUL 2015
Earnings	\$400.00
Employer	Joe Bloggs Tree Cutting
Dates of Employment	5 DEC 2015 - 20 FEB 2016
Earnings	\$3,255.00
Employer	Glassy Clothes
Dates of Employment	15 MAR 2016 to 22 APR 2016
Earnings	\$1022.00

Your Customer Reference Number is **{REFERENCE.NUMBER}**

If you do not agree with a decision we have made

- Contact us so we can check the details and explain the decision.
- Contact us and ask for a review of the decision. We will change it if it is wrong.
- Contact the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) if you do not agree with the review officer's decision.
- If you do not agree with the decision of the AAT you may be able to appeal further. For more information about the AAT, please go to aat.gov.au

All of the above are free of charge.

There is no time limit for a review of a decision about money you owe us. You can choose to pay back the money while the decision is being reviewed.

Privacy and your personal information

Your personal information is protected by law (including the *Privacy Act 1988*) and is collected by the Australian Government Department of Human Services for the assessment and administration of payments and services.

Your information may be used by the department, or given to other parties where you have agreed to that, or where it is required or authorised by law (including for the purpose of research or conducting investigations).

You can get more information about the way in which the department will manage your personal information, including our privacy policy, at humanservices.gov.au/privacy

Data matching initiatives

The Department of Human Services undertakes regular data-matching activities in line with the Data-matching Program (Assistance and Tax) Act 1990 and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's Guidelines on Data Matching in Australian Government Administration and social security law.

This includes matching with the:

- Australian Securities and Investments Commission
- Australian Taxation Office
- ComSuper
- Department of Employment
- Department of Health
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- Defence Housing Authority
- Department of Corrective Services in each state and territory
- Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each state and territory
- Public and Private education providers in each state and territory.

If you need help

If you need help or you do not have internet access, you can go to any of our service centres. You can also call us directly on 1800 086 400.

To give us feedback or make a complaint

We aim to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you want to make a complaint or give us feedback you can:

- call our feedback and complaints line on **1800 132 468**, or

- go to humanservices.gov.au/feedback for other options.

If we are not able to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, you can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman by going to their website ombudsman.gov.au or calling them on **1300 362 072**.

DRAFT

B_EIC Reminder letter1_1.4_100217

If not delivered: Locked Bag 8900 CANBERRA ACT 2601

{RETURNADDRESSBARCODE}

Customer Reference Number: {REFERENCE.NUMBER}



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Department of Human Services

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<{NOMINEE.TITLE.FULLNAME}
{NOMINEE.POSTAL.ADDRESS}
{NOMINEE.POSTAL.ADDRESS}
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{CLIENT.TITLE.FULLNAME}
{CLIENT.POST.ADD}
{CLIENT.POST.ADD}
{CLIENT.POST.ADD}>

{PRINT.DATE}

<APPLY EXISTING NOMINEE RULE: This is a copy of the letter we have sent to {CLIENT.FULLNAME} for whom you are the nominee. | This letter provides information about {CLIENT.FULLNAME} for whom you are the nominee. | >

Dear {CLIENT.TITLE.SURNAME}

Reminder – Employment income confirmation

We wrote to you on {DATE OF INITIAL LETTER} asking you to confirm or update the employment information we have from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). This is a reminder that you are running out of time.

This is not a debt letter. Please check the ATO information with this letter carefully.

You must confirm or update the information **by {28 DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF INITIAL LETTER}**.

Go online and check today

The easiest way is to sign in to your Centrelink online account linked to your **myGov** account.

You can also go to **humanservices.gov.au/confirmincome** and register:

1. Enter the reference number at the top of this letter and your confirmation code: **{CODE}**. The confirmation code will expire on **{28 DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF INITIAL LETTER}**.
2. Enter details from your current Australian driver licence or passport, and your Medicare card.
3. Provide an email address or mobile number so we can send you a security code to log on.

Please note, if you don't confirm or update the information by **{28 DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF INITIAL LETTER}**, we may apply the employment dates and income from the ATO to your record. This may result in a debt you will need to repay.

After you have confirmed or updated the details, we will write to you to let you know the outcome and what you need to do next.

For more information



my.gov.au



ExpressPlus mobile apps



humanservices.gov.au

If you need help

If you don't have internet access or need help to sign in, go into any of our service centres. If you need help with the employment information provided, call us on 1800 086 400.

Yours sincerely

Director, Earned Income
Customer Compliance

DRAFT

Employment information statement

Check this employment information from the Australian Taxation Office against your records. Make sure you check the dates you worked for each employer.

Go to humanservices.gov.au/confirmincome to confirm or update these details. You may need payslips or bank statements to check this information.

Employer	Super Sparkle Cleaning
Dates of Employment	10 JUL 2015 to 13 AUL 2015
Earnings	\$400.00
Employer	Joe Bloggs Tree Cutting
Dates of Employment	5 DEC 2015 - 20 FEB 2016
Earnings	\$3,255.00
Employer	Glassy Clothes
Dates of Employment	15 MAR 2016 to 22 APR 2016
Earnings	\$1022.00

Your Customer Reference Number is **{REFERENCE.NUMBER}**

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Privacy and your personal information

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Your information may be used by the department, or given to other parties where you have agreed to that, or where it is required or authorised by law (including for the purpose of research or conducting investigations).

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- ComSuper
- Department of Employment
- Department of Health
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- Defence Housing Authority
- Department of Corrective Services in each state and territory
- Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each state and territory
- Public and Private education providers in each state and territory.

If you need help

If you need help or you do not have internet access, you can go to any of our service centres. You can also call us directly on 1800 086 400.

To give us feedback or make a complaint

We aim to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you want to make a complaint or give us feedback you can:

- call our feedback and complaints line on **1800 132 468**, or
- go to humanservices.gov.au/feedback for other options.

If we are not able to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, you can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman by going to their website ombudsman.gov.au or calling them on **1300 362 072**.

DRAFT

C_EIC Reminder letter2_1.5_140217

If not delivered: Locked Bag 7834 CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

{RETURNADDRESSBARCODE}

Customer Reference Number: {REFERENCE.NUMBER}

<{NOMINEE.TITLE.FULLNAME}
{NOMINEE.POSTAL.ADDRESS}
{NOMINEE.POSTAL.ADDRESS}
!
{CLIENT.TITLE.FULLNAME}
{CLIENT.POST.ADD}
{CLIENT.POST.ADD}
{CLIENT.POST.ADD}>



Australian Government

Department of Human Services

centrelink

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Dear {CLIENT.TITLE.SURNAME}

You need to contact us – Employment income confirmation

We wrote to you on {DATE OF INITIAL LETTER} asking you to confirm or update the employment information we have from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). We use your employment information so you get paid the right payment.

We sent you a reminder on {DATE OF FIRST REMINDER} to do this by {28 DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF INITIAL LETTER}.

Please call us on **1800 086 400** if you need more time or help with this request. You can call us yourself or appoint someone to deal with us on your behalf.

If we don't hear from you by {PRINTDATE+14days}, we may apply the ATO employment dates and income included with this letter to your record. This may result in a debt you will need to repay.

After you have confirmed or updated the details, we will write to you to let you know the outcome and what you need to do next.

Yours sincerely

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