

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2014-15 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 2

Question No: 455

Topic: Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Moore asked:

Can you please provide the Committee with a detailed comparison of the new TILA guidelines and payment delivery system - please provide a detailed account of how the new guidelines/payment delivery system differ from what was in place?

Answer:

From 1 January 2014, TILA administration was transferred to the Department of Human Services (DHS). The online automated system is designed to increase administrative efficiency and flexibility for TILA case workers.

There are three steps in the TILA application process. States and territories are responsible for undertaking these steps:

- 1. Assessment:** The case worker and the young person discuss a transition to independence plan. The case worker will assess whether the young person is eligible for TILA, if TILA is applicable, and how the payment is to be used.
- 2. Approval:** The case worker will email the TILA contact in DSS to seek approval of the proposed expenditure.
- 3. Claim lodgement:** Once approval has been received from DSS, the case worker will complete and submit an electronic claim for TILA payment via the DHS Unified Government Gateway. The TILA amount is then paid to the case worker's organisation.

A summary of the key changes to the payment delivery system is below.

Previously	1 January 2014	Rationale
Payment can only be accessed in one lump sum.	Payment can be made in up to six instalments.	This change encourages longer term, more flexible planning and the maintenance of the relationship between the young person and case worker.
Payment by one NGO in New South Wales.	Payment by DHS, through approved organisations in every jurisdiction.	A streamlined administration system ensures that TILA is better integrated into existing support services. It also improves accessibility nationally.
Case workers provided quotes, receipts, and proof of eligibility to central TILA administrator for manual processing.	Registered case workers request TILA payments via an online payment system, the Unified Government Gateway.	Under the new system, the case worker supporting the young person can directly access the TILA payment mechanism. The money is paid directly to the case worker's organisation by DHS.

More detailed information about the administration of TILA can be found at www.dss.gov.au/tila.