

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
28 and 29 May 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Independent Youth Allowance

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, Monday 28 May 2012, pages 81 and 82)

QUESTION No.: BI-36

Senator NASH: The answer to question 171 was about whether any of the students had their application for independent youth allowance rejected. Thank you for breaking all of that down for me. There are two categories I was interested in getting a bit of an explanation on. A reason for rejection is: 'in receipt of parental-like support'. What does that mean and why is it a reason for rejection?

Ms Sakkara: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator NASH: One of the other ones that I was interested in is: 'refuses to contact parent-guardian' as a reason for rejection for independent youth allowance.

Ms Sakkara: I imagine that is about establishing—

Senator NASH: No, I do not want 'imagine'.

Ms Sakkara: I would have to take that on notice, then.

Senator Chris Evans: In the case I had personal experience with, my wife, my partner, provided a stat dec in support of his application as he tried to establish his case. We will get to the answer. It is not administered by the department, but we will get you an explanation of the terms and how they apply them.

Senator NASH: That would be good. Perhaps the explanation of the term and the reasoning behind that particular category being used as a criterion.....

ANSWER

Under paragraph 1067A(9)(b) of the *Social Security Act 1991* (SSA), a person is independent for Youth Allowance if it is unreasonable for the person to live at home and they are '...not receiving continuous support, whether directly or indirectly and whether financial or otherwise, from a parent of the person or from another person who is acting as the person's guardian on a long term basis'. If the person fails to meet this eligibility criterion, the rejection reason listed is 'in receipt of parent-like support'.

In order to be granted independent Youth Allowance under subsection 1067A(9) of the SSA (unreasonable to live at home), the Department of Human Services (DHS) must verify a young person's claims. A component of this would normally involve contacting the young person's parents or guardians, unless there is a risk to the young person's physical or mental well-being in doing so.

Where the young person refuses DHS' request(s) for them to contact the person's parents or guardians and the department cannot establish that there is a risk to their physical or mental well-being in doing so, their claim for Youth Allowance is rejected and the rejection reason listed is 'refuses to contact parent/guardian'.