



Social Security Agreement between Australia and Germany

Australia's social security system

Australia's social security system is different to most other developed countries. Each person's pension is paid by the Australian Government out of general funds, rather than through contributions paid by individuals and employers into a social insurance fund. For this reason, Australian pensions are income and asset tested.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) delivers Australian social security payments to individuals.

You will have to tell us about all of your, and in some instances, your partner's¹ income and assets if you want to claim an Australian pension.

How does the agreement help you?

The agreement generally allows you to lodge a claim for payment from either country. It also allows you to add together your periods of residence in Australia and periods of social security coverage in Germany, so you can meet the minimum requirements for payment.

Who can get an Australian payment?

If you live in Australia, Germany or another specified agreement country⁵, you can lodge a claim for the Australian Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Parenting Payment, Bereavement Allowance and Double Orphan Pension in any of those countries.

To qualify under the agreement, you need to meet the following basic requirements*:

Age Pension

You may be able to get Age Pension if:

- you are over the qualifying age (refer to humanservices.gov.au for details), and
- the total period of time you have lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Germany add up to more than 10 years.

Disability Support Pension

You may be able to get Disability Support Pension if:

- you have a disability, or
- you are permanently blind, and
- your disability/blindness occurred while you were living in Australia, or
- the total period of time you have lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Germany add up to more than 10 years.

Carer Payment

You may be able to get Carer Payment if:

- you are providing full-time care for someone, and
- you have lived in Australia before.

Parenting Payment

You may be able to get Parenting Payment if:

- your partner is deceased, and
- you are caring for one or more children under eight years of age who have been to Australia before, and
- the total period of time you have lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Germany add up to more than two years.

Bereavement Allowance

You may be able to get Bereavement Allowance if:

- your partner died while you were living together, and
- your partner died less than 14 weeks ago, and
- your partner died while you were living in Australia, or
- the total period of time you have lived in Australia and/or your periods of coverage in Germany add up to more than two years.

Double Orphan Pension

You may be able to get Double Orphan Pension if:

- you are caring for a young person, and
- the young person became an orphan while they were an Australian resident.

Note: if you live outside Australia when you claim, you generally need at least 12 months Australian Working Life Residence², of which six months must be continuous.

* There may be additional requirements you need to meet before you can be paid.

Who can get a German payment?

Under the agreement, you can add periods of Australian Working Life Residence² to your periods of coverage in Germany to meet the minimum requirement for the German Old Age (retirement) Pension, Early Age (early retirement) Pension, Reduced Earning Capacity Pension (for disabled persons with a partial/complete reduction in earning capacity), Reduced Earning Capacity Pension (for under age disabled persons), Child Raising Pension, Widow's/Widower's Pension and Orphan Pension.

The German pension authorities make all decisions about German payments. For more information about German payments, you should contact the German pension authorities³.

How do I claim?

If you are in Australia, to claim:

- an Australian payment under the agreement, go to **humanservices.gov.au**
- a German payment, contact the department⁴, or
- lodge your claim at your nearest DHS Service Centre.

If you are in Germany, to claim:

- a German payment, contact your local German social insurance office
- an Australian payment:
 - contact your local German social insurance office
 - the department, or
 - download the claim forms from **humanservices.gov.au**

You can also lodge your claim at any local German social insurance office.

If you are in another specified agreement country⁵, to claim:

- an Australian payment contact the department, or
- download the claim forms from **humanservices.gov.au**

You can also lodge your claim at any local social insurance office in that third country.

To get a claim for a German payment, contact the German pension authorities³. You will need to lodge your claim for a German payment directly with the German pension authorities.

Claims for Australian payments can be lodged up to 13 weeks early. You must lodge your claim and all supporting documents at the same time. If you do not do this your claim may not be accepted.

For more information

If you would like more detailed information you should contact us⁴ for free help and advice.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services available.

The information in this factsheet is accurate as at July 2017. If you use this publication after that date, please check with us that the details are up to date.

Should I lodge a claim?

We can't be sure if you will get a payment, until you lodge a claim and your circumstances are taken into account. It is your responsibility to decide whether you lodge a claim for payment or not.

From what date are the payments available?

Most government payments are paid from, or after the date on which the application is made so the sooner you lodge your application, the quicker you may be paid.

For Australian payments, you must lodge your claim and all supporting documents at the same time. If you don't your claim may not be accepted.

What do you need to do when dealing with a third party?

You may deal with a third party who is not a member of our staff. If you do so, please remember that we have not authorised any third parties to provide information or advice to you about payments.

Notes

1. Definition of a partner	For our purposes, a person is considered to be your partner if you and the person are living together, or usually live together; are married, in a registered relationship (opposite or same-sex), or in a de facto relationship (opposite or same-sex). The department considers a person to be in a de facto relationship from the time they start living with another person as a member of a couple. The department recognises all couples, opposite-sex and same-sex.
2. Australian residence	'Australian residence' means periods when you were residing in Australia as an Australian citizen or Australian permanent visa holder. Australian residence at any time is used to qualify for an Australian payment. 'Working Life Residence' is period/s of Australian residence between the ages of 16 and Australian age pension age only.

3. German social insurance contact details	The social security system in Germany is based on contributions paid into a scheme by the customer. There are three funds:
	<p>Rentenversicherung Regionaltrager Schwachhauser Heerstrasse 34 28209 Bremen GERMANY</p> <p>Call +49 4 213 4070 Fax +49 4 213 407155 Website deutscherentenversicherung.de</p>
	<p>Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund 10704 Berlin GERMANY</p> <p>Call +49 30 8651 Fax +49 30 86527240 Website deutscherentenversicherung-bund.de</p>
	<p>Deutsche Rentenversicherung Knappschaft-Bahn-See Verwaltungsstelle Hamburg Referat I - Rentenversicherung Büro 1 20404 Hamburg GERMANY</p> <p>Call +49 40 361370 Fax +49 40 36137770 Website kbs.de</p>

<p>4. Department of Human Services contact details</p>	<p>Go to humanservices.gov.au</p> <p>Call 131 673 from within Australia.</p> <p>Call 0800 1802 482 from Germany only.</p> <p>Note: this international Freecall™ number connects you directly to the Department of Human Services. This Freecall™ may not be available from every location within Germany and may not be free from mobile phones or public phones. You may need to insert coins/card in payphones as for a local call and this may not be refunded at the end of the call.</p> <p>If you are not able to use the Freecall™ number listed above, please contact us on +61 3 6222 3455.</p> <p>Note: call charges apply—calls from mobile phones may be charged at a higher rate.</p> <p>Fax +61 3 6222 2799</p> <p>Write to GPO Box 273, Hobart, Tasmania 7001, Australia.</p>
<p>5. Specified agreement country</p>	<p>Go to humanservices.gov.au</p>