



# COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program

4 January 2021

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who can apply?

To be eligible for a payment, a business will need to meet the following requirements:

- Operating a business as either a travel agent or tour arrangement service provider prior to the announcement of the closure of international borders by the Prime Minister on 19 March 2020,
- Have had an annual turnover starting from \$50,000 up to a maximum of \$20 million for the 2019 calendar year,
- Have received a payment for a JobKeeper fortnight ending in October 2020 - that is JobKeeper fortnight 14 (28 September 2020 to 11 October 2020) and JobKeeper fortnight 15 (12 October 2020 to 25 October 2020).

Please refer to the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program Guidelines for final eligibility criteria on [GrantConnect](#).

### What support is available?

Under the \$128 million scheme, eligible travel agents and tour arranging service providers can apply to access the Travel Agents COVID-19 Payment announced on 1 December (see [media release](#)).

The one off payments will be scaled, ranging from a minimum payment of \$1,500 to \$100,000 depending on the turnover of the business.

The COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program is in addition to whole-of-economy measures and targeted measures to support the tourism sector.

### How much will my grant payment be?

Grants for eligible applicants will be tiered based on the turnover amount that was submitted in their 2019 Business Activity Statement (BAS). Sample grant amounts are in the table below.

Eligible applicant's 2019 business turnover	Potential grant amount (subject to eligibility)
\$50,000	\$1,500
\$200,000	\$6,500
\$500,000	\$14,000
\$1 million	\$26,500
\$2 million	\$51,500
\$4 million	\$100,000

## **How can I determine whether my business is considered a travel agent or tour arranging service?**

To demonstrate that your business is a travel agent or tour arrangement service provider you can:

- Confirm that your business has identified itself using the relevant Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) codes in your 2018-19 financial year business tax return, or
- Hold active incorporation or registration in Australia with at least one of the following entities as at 30 November 2020:
  - Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA)
  - Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC)
  - Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO), or
  - Any other applicable tourism peak industry body as determined by Austrade.

A travel agent can include either an inbound tour operator or an outbound tour operator.

A Tour Arrangement Service Provider does not include a person or entity who operates a tour or tourism activity (such as a tour guide).

## **When are applications open?**

Eligible businesses will be able to apply for a claim under the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program from 14 December 2020.

## **How do I apply?**

Services Australia, through the [Business Hub](#), will receive and assess applications. Further information is available on the [Services Australia website](#).

## **How long will applications open?**

Applications will be open for three months or until monies are fully allocated, whichever is sooner.

## **Why is this support being provided?**

There are approximately 5,000 travel agents employing 40,000 people in Australia. Industry estimates show that travel agents have seen a drop of 90 per cent to their revenue due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, travel agents are also processing refunds to consumers who were unable to undertake previously booked travel, and paying back commissions received on these bookings.

## **How do I work out the turnover for my business under the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program?**

If eligible, businesses will be paid a grant payment based on annual turnover. The reference period for annual turnover will be the annual turnover figure for 2019 calendar year.

If your business submitted a BAS in 2019, this information should match that reported on question G1 of your BAS.

If your business turnover was less than \$75,000 in the 2019 calendar year, and are not registered for GST, a self-declaration can be accepted.

## **Why is turnover used for the basis of grants payments? Were other metrics such as Total Transaction Value (TTV) or profit and loss considered?**

Turnover is the standardised way that business income is compared, and will ensure all applicants are assessed on the same basis. As the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) already has this information for the majority of organisations using their quarterly BAS statements, this will reduce the complexity of grant applications and mean we can roll out the payments quickly and easily to provide support to businesses.

## **Why has support for travel agents and tour arranging service providers taken so long?**

The Government has provided significant whole of economy support in response to COVID-19 including for the travel sector. The COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program is in addition to the whole of economy measures and those measures targeted to supporting the tourism sector.

However given the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on the travel industry and particularly those impacted by border closures, the Government acknowledged the unique challenges faced by travel agents and responded through this additional targeted, one off support mechanism

## **What happens if I have made, or need to make, any changes to my G1 figures in my BAS for the 2019 calendar year (additional guidance as at 4 January 2021)?**

Eligibility for a COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program grant is based on G1 figures as they were reported as at 14 December 2020. Any changes to the G1 figures in your BAS for the 2019 calendar year made after 14 December 2020 will not be reflected in the certificate of tax information issued by the ATO.

If you would like your application to be considered taking into account changes after that date, you should contact Services Australia in the first instance by phone on 1800 560 774. Your enquiry will be referred to Austrade for consideration. Please note you may need to provide further supporting information in these circumstances.

This additional guidance was issued on 4 January 2021 and is prospective as at this date. Accordingly, if you have already submitted a grant application and are relying upon changes made to the G1 figures in your BAS for the 2019 calendar year, the changes made on or prior to 4 January 2021 will be reflected in the certificate of tax information issued by the ATO. This information has been reflected in updated guidelines which will apply to all new applications commenced after 4 January 2021.