

BUSHFIRE

Services Guide



DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Disaster Welfare Assistance Line – 1800 018 444

Open every day – 8.30am – 4.30pm

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

Evacuation Centres

These centres are safe places to go in the event of a bushfire. They provide immediate shelter, food and other assistance. Evacuation Centres are manned by Disaster Welfare Services (DWS), Red Cross and Anglicare.

Find your nearest Evacuation Centre:

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/recovery

Disaster Welfare Assistance Points

Once people have returned to their homes they can still access immediate support at Disaster Welfare Assistance Points. These welfare points are run by the Office of Emergency Management and are locations for the delivery of key welfare services set up either before, during or after the impact of a disaster, when an evacuation centre is no longer required. It can assist with government Disaster Assistance grants, extension of accommodation and a range of other supports.

Find your nearest Disaster Welfare Assistance Point at:

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/recovery

Recovery Centres

These are a one-stop shop, providing practical assistance and support for people impacted by the bushfires. Support services and agencies at Recovery Centres include local council, Disaster Welfare, small business, Red Cross, Anglicare, NSW Health, Legal Aid, Fair Trading, Salvation Army, chaplains and insurers. They are usually run by local Councils.

Find your nearest Recovery Centre:

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/for-the-community/disaster-assistance/community-recovery.aspx

Recovery Hotline – 02 6499 2345

Fires near me

This is a map of where all the fires are. Visit the website or download the app for consistent updates.

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me

Mobile Service Centres (Centrelink)

Mobile Service Centres are travelling to bushfire affected areas offering a wide range of services including access to self-service terminals. Staff can help users access online accounts and Express Plus mobile apps.

Find out where Centrelink's Mobile Services Centres are visiting:

www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/mobile-service-centres/when-and-where-find-us

EMERGENCY TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

NSW Department of Housing

Short-term housing support for up to three months is available to all people in urgent need of housing because of a natural disaster. This covers people who would not normally be eligible for social housing.

Housing Contact Centre - 1800 422 322

It is best to lodge a claim at an Evacuation Centre. If this isn't possible, then lodge a claim via a normal Housing Application which will then be referred to the Disaster Management team within Housing.

More information: www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/assistance

Find a Bed

Find a Bed matches a volunteer host with people who need somewhere to stay. Pets are accepted.

02 7202 6588

www.findabed.info/

INSURANCE & CLEAN UP ASSISTANCE

Insurance Council of Australia

The Insurance Council of Australia is there to help people understand their insurance entitlements and insurance fraud inquiries. They can also help insured clients with clean up assistance.

1300 728 228

www.insurancecouncil.com.au/

Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA)

The AFCA can assist with disputes with insurers, the internal dispute resolution process and external complaint dispute resolution.

1800 931 678

www.afca.org.au/

Financial Rights Legal Centre

The Financial Rights Legal centre provides specialist assistance on insurance matters.

1300 663 464

financialrights.org.au/

Public Workers Advisory

The Public Workers Advisory are available for consultation for those who are uninsured.

1800 88 55 39

Document replacement

Free replacement of licences, permits and certificates, including birth, marriage and change of name certificates and NSW Fair Trading permits and licences can occur.

Services NSW – 13 77 88

Lost and damaged passports

Australian Passport Information Service (APIS):

131 232

www.passports.gov.au/news/free-replacement-passports-bushfire-victims

EMERGENCY PAYMENTS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment

The Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment is a one-off payment of \$1,000 per adult and \$400 per child, available to those who have been significantly affected by a declared disaster.

Who can get it:

- Australian resident or hold eligible visa
- 16+ years old or getting a social security payment
- Must be adversely affected by the disaster (e.g. seriously injured, immediate family member died, residence destroyed or has sustained major damage)
- Claim lodged within 6 months of the disaster

Fastest way to claim is via phone

180 22 66

8:00am-8:00pm Monday to Friday

8:00am-5:00pm Saturday & Sunday

1300 111 278
anglicare.org.au

The following documents may be required:

- Proof of Identification (50 points)
- Proof of hospital admission or damage to residence

More information: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/nsw-bushfires-september-2019-australian-government-disaster-recovery-payment

Also available for New Zealanders: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/nsw-bushfires-september-2019-ex-gratia-disaster-recovery-payment

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Allowance

The Disaster Recovery Allowance is a short-term payment available to those who have lost income as a direct result of the bushfires. The maximum payment rate is the equivalent of the Newstart or Youth Allowances, which can be received for a maximum of 13 weeks from the date income was lost.

Who can get it:

- Australian resident or hold eligible visa
- 16+ years old and not a dependent child
- Living or working in affected Local Government Area
- Income loss is direct result of NSW bushfires in August, September, October, November, December 2019 and January 2020
- Not receiving other income benefit payments

Faster way to claim is via phone

180 22 66

8:00am-8:00pm Monday to Friday

8:00am-5:00pm Saturday & Sunday

The following documents are required:

- Proof of identification (50 points)
- Proof of loss of income (e.g. payslips or letter from employer, income tax returns, bank statements).

More information: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/nsw-bushfires-september-2019-disaster-recovery-allowance

Also available for New Zealanders: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/nsw-bushfires-september-2019-ex-gratia-disaster-recovery-allowance

Red Cross

Those who have lost their homes in a bushfire since July 2019 can apply for an emergency grant of \$5,000 per household from the Red Cross. These grants are open until 30 April 2020.

The following documents are required:

- Proof of identification (e.g. drivers license)
- Proof of residence (e.g. utility bill)
- Details for a financial transfer

Apply online: www.redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/recovering-from-emergencies/direct-assistance-application

If documents are damaged or lost call the Red Cross.

1800 733 276

CLOTHING, FOOD & FURTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Anglicare

Help with clothing, food and financial assistance can be accessed at Anglicare Op shops and Food and Financial Assistance Centres.

See www.anglicare.org.au/NSWbushfires for a list of Anglicare sites near fire affected areas.

Anglican Aid

Is distributing appeal funds through local Anglican churches. If you want to access these funds please contact your local Anglican Church.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is providing support for those who have lost their homes or who are experiencing extreme hardship. Assistance is provided by assessment for insured and uninsured clients.

The following documents are required:

- Photo identification
- One of the following four documents:
 - Receipt of Disaster Recovery Payment from Centrelink
 - Local council confirmation letter
 - Referred and loss verified by the NSW Fire Service, an Anglicare, Red Cross, or Lifeline Outreach worker or Disaster Recovery Chaplain
 - Claims assessment report or receipt from an Insurer

1800 662 217

sal.disasters@salvationarmy.org.au

Utility bills

Support with payment of utility bills can be accessed through the EAPA program continues to be available, and special circumstances allows for the provision of additional support to people affected by the fires. Anglicare Food and Financial Assistance centres can assist with accessing this support.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Bushfire Trauma Response Coordinators are a single point of contact for individuals and communities to ensure appropriate access to mental health supports. Coordinators will be engaged by Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and work in communities severely affected by bushfires. They can be contacted via your local PHN.

www.health.gov.au/phn

Free telephone counselling for people affected by the fires

APM Community Support Line – 1800 276 113

Anglicare Counselling services

Anglicare is offering face-to-face, telephone or Skype counselling for adults and children. Anglicare staff are available in locations including: Nowra, Ulladulla, Moruya, Wollongong, Campbelltown, Parramatta, Summer Hill and other Sydney sites.

1300 651 728

counselling@anglicare.org.au

Medicare Bushfire Recovery

People affected by bushfires are able to self-refer (or be referred by their GP) to an eligible allied mental health provider. For those already receiving assistance via the Better Access initiative (up to ten Medicare supported sessions with a Social Worker or Psychologist via a Mental Health Care Plan) an additional 10 sessions are available. Psychologists and Social Workers have to be accredited with Medicare to provide this service.

Farm Gate counsellors

Farmers and business owners in bushfire affected areas can access Farm Gate counsellors and peer support workers.

Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511

24/7 Telephone Helplines

Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511

Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Mensline – 1300 789 978

Kids Helpline – 1300 551 800

SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Volunteer Firefighter Payment

The NSW Government offers support to volunteer firefighters who have been called out for more than 10 days since 1 July 2019. The payments will provide for lost income of up to \$300 per day up to a total of up to \$6,000 per person. These payments are tax free and will not be means-tested but are targeted to those most likely to suffer lost income by volunteering for extended periods of time.

More information: www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/register-interest-volunteer-firefighters-financial-support-program

AGL

AGL are providing volunteer firefighters with \$150 credit on electricity and gas bills as well as additional support if required.

Volunteers must provide their volunteer ID numbers to AGL customer service staff and the bill relief will be applied to the next bill.

131 245

www.agl.com.au/bushfires

Telstra

Volunteer firefighters can register for free calls December 2019 – January 2020.

13 22 03

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO)

The Australian Tax Office is offering support to businesses affected by the bushfires and can waive interest charged, set up payment plans with interest free periods and give you more time to pay

1300 139 815

Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)

ASIC is offering assistance to small businesses that are facing disruption or severe hardship due to the bushfires, including reviewing fees or considering payment options.

More information: asic.gov.au/for-business/payments-fees-and-invoices/bushfire-relief/

Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service

Information is provided on damage to rented premises that is neither the fault of the landlord nor the tenant.

4284 3475

NSW Business Chamber

This hotline is for business owners in bushfire affected areas who are experiencing unique issues and are uncertain about what action to take.

Business Hotline – 13 26 96

Small business assistance

There is up to \$15,000 recovery grants and concessional loans for eligible small businesses.

NSW Rural Assistance Authority – 1800 678 593

Animal Welfare

Producers can report stock losses and infrastructure damage, or request animal assessment, or emergency fodder or water for stock.

Local Land Services – 1800 814 647

Primary producer assistance

There is up to \$15,000 in recovery grants, concessional loans and transport subsidies for eligible primary producers.

NSW Rural Assistance Authority – 1800 678 593

OTHER

Telstra

Free calls and hotspots are available from Telstra payphones.

Telstra also has assistance packages available for existing customers and volunteer fire fighters.

More information: exchange.telstra.com.au/providing-bushfire-relief-to-our-customers-affected-in-new-south-wales/

Motor vehicle stamp duty relief

Drivers whose cars have been written off because of a declared disaster may be eligible to receive a refund on any motor vehicle duty on replacement vehicles.

More information:

www.revenue.nsw.gov.au/taxes-duties-levies-royalties/motor-vehicle-duty/relief

Office of State Revenue – 1300 139 814

Waste disposal

The levy for waste disposal has been waived in bushfire affected Local Government Areas.

Banks and services offering disaster assistance to their customers

List of contact details for Banks Financial Hardship Teams: www.ausbanking.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Banks_Financial_Hardship-Jan-2020.pdf

Legal assistance

Legal Aid can provide free assistance on issues such as insurance policies, employment, tenancy, credit and debt.

Disaster Response Legal Service NSW – 1800 801 529

Financial Rights Legal Centre – 1300 663 464

DONATIONS

Anglicare Bushfire Appeal

Anglicare's Bushfire Appeal aims to extend our emergency relief activities into what we expect will be a difficult and lengthy recovery phase for many bushfire affected communities.

Your funds will:

- help get urgently needed food hampers to communities in affected regions. Anglicare's Op shops, Food and Financial Assistance Centres and local churches will be stocked as pickup locations. These hampers will serve emergency needs and also mean that people can spend their available cash on other things.
- support our Anglicare Op shops in affected areas to act as a community support base, providing free clothing, household items and food hampers to affected people. These locations also create an opportunity for connection to our other programs and to local churches.
- assist people who have lost their homes, businesses and possessions to navigate and access available financial assistance.
- provide post-trauma support to affected communities where we have existing trusted relationships.
- fund long-term, family and individual counselling and emotional support for grieving and traumatised families in devastated communities.

Donate: anglicare.org.au/bushfire-appeal

Non-perishable food

Non-perishable food donations are being accepted at Anglicare's Villawood Warehouse.

To discuss large donations – warehouse@anglicare.org.au

Anglicare Villawood Warehouse – 9 Christina Rd, Villawood

Second hand clothing

Good quality, new or second hand clothing may be donated to Anglicare via Anglicare Op shops, Anglicare clothing bins or directly at the Villawood Warehouse.

Find clothing bin and Op shop locations: www.anglicare.org.au/location-map/

Anglicare Villawood Warehouse – 9 Christina Rd, Villawood