Early access to your super benefits

Your super is an investment for your retirement. For this reason, the government requires that your super generally remains in a fund until you reach your preservation age. Your preservation age depends on your date of birth.

Table 1 - Preservation age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Preservation age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1/7/1960</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/1960 to 30/6/1961</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/1961 to 30/6/1962</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/1962 to 30/6/1963</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/1963 to 30/6/1964</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 30/6/1964</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some circumstances, for instance if you are experiencing hardship, you may be able to access some of your super early in accordance with the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Regulations 1994 (SIS Regulations). These circumstances include:

- severe financial hardship
- specified compassionate grounds
- medical grounds.

This factsheet refers to early release due to severe financial hardship or specified compassionate grounds. For more information about early release on medical grounds, refer to our invalidity factsheets and forms on your scheme’s section of csc.gov.au

Accessing your super early may impact your future benefit and we encourage you to seek financial advice on all your options before applying. Super released early may be subject to taxation.

This factsheet is for...

CSS, PSS, MilitarySuper, ADF Super and PSSap members.

If you have any questions regarding this factsheet please refer to the contact details on the last page.
Who can apply for early release?

You can apply for early release if you are a:

• CSS contributing or preserved member
• PSS contributing or preserved member
• MilitarySuper preserved member or you hold an ancillary account
• ADF Super member

or

• PSSap member

and are seeking early release of all or part of your super due to severe financial hardship, specified compassionate or medical grounds.

Please note: If you are a PSSap or ADF Super member, an exit fee of $50 is charged at the time of processing for each full or part withdrawal.

Severe financial hardship

Who can apply?

You can apply if you are unable to meet reasonable and immediate living expenses, and:

• have not yet reached preservation age, and have received an eligible Commonwealth income support payment, (excluding Austudy, ABSTUDY or Youth Allowance), continuously for 26 weeks or more

or

• have reached preservation age and have received an eligible Commonwealth income support payment (excluding Austudy, ABSTUDY or Youth Allowance), for 39 weeks or more since reaching preservation age.

For more information about Commonwealth income support payments in relation to early release of super, visit the Department of Human Services (DHS) website at humanservices.gov.au or contact DHS on 1300 131 060.

To help us determine your eligibility, please complete the authority in Part C of the EAFR02 Early access – severe financial hardship form, to allow us to confirm your details with DHS.

or

If you are receiving a benefit from the Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA), you must include a valid Release of Super Benefits on Hardship Grounds – Income Support statement from DVA with your application. This statement must be dated no more than 21 days before you submit your application and must only refer to you, not other members of your family.

For more information about the DVA statement, and what services DVA offer to support veterans who are in financial hardship, refer to the DVA website at dva.gov.au, or call 1800 555 254.

How much can I have released?

The amount that can be released on the grounds of severe financial hardship must be:

• more than $1000 before tax, (unless you have less than $1000 in your account. In this instance, the whole amount may be released)

and

• a maximum of $10 000 before tax in any 12 month period.

A 12 month period starts from the date an amount is released on the grounds of severe financial hardship.

If you have reached your preservation age, and are not gainfully employed on a full–time or part–time basis, you can instead claim your full benefit on age retirement grounds.

If you claim an early release at or above your preservation age, there is no restriction on the amount that can be accessed, subject to scheme rules. Refer to csc.gov.au for more information.

Specified compassionate grounds

What can I apply for?

If you don’t qualify for early access to your super due to severe financial hardship, you may consider asking the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to approve the release of benefits on specified grounds for:

• medical costs for treatment and/or travel to treatment
• mortgage payments – to prevent the foreclosure of your home
• renovations to your home or car necessitated by severe disability
• palliative care for you or a dependant

and/or

• funeral for a dependant.

First, you need to apply to ATO who will assess your claim. Where approved, you can then submit your request to us for processing. All enquiries regarding applications for early release on these grounds should be directed to the ATO at ato.gov.au.
If you have already received an ATO approval for the release of your benefit on specified grounds, please complete our EAFR01 Early access – specified compassionate grounds form and submit it to us. You will need to supply a copy of your ATO approval letter with your application.

**How much can I have released**

The ATO will determine the amount you may be eligible to receive. However, a lesser amount may be released depending on scheme rules.

**Does tax apply to my withdrawal?**

Your super can be made up of different components which attract different tax treatment. It is important to note that tax may be applied at the time of withdrawal. For more information on how tax is applied to components please refer to the ATO website, [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au).

**How does this release affect my final benefit?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Preserved</th>
<th>Ancillary/other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSS</td>
<td>An Early Release Deduction Amount (ERDA) will be applied to your account. This will be reported on your annual statement and will be deducted from your final benefit.</td>
<td>An Early Release Deduction Amount (ERDA) will be applied to your account. This will be reported on your annual statement and will be deducted from your final benefit.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSS</td>
<td>An Early Release Deduction Amount (ERDA) will be applied to your account. This will be reported on your annual statement and will be deducted from your final benefit.</td>
<td>Your preserved benefit will be reduced by the amount of the withdrawal and you will <strong>forfeit any right to a preserved pension</strong>.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSSap</td>
<td>No effect on your final benefit, other than reducing your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
<td>No effect on your final benefit, other than reducing your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
<td>No effect on your final benefit, other than reducing your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MilitarySuper</td>
<td>You are ineligible to apply for early release due to financial hardship or on compassionate grounds.</td>
<td>Will reduce your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
<td>Will reduce your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADF Super</td>
<td>No effect on your final benefit, other than reducing your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
<td>No effect on your final benefit, other than reducing your account balance by the amount withdrawn.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before you make any decisions regarding your super, we recommend you seek professional advice from a licensed financial planner. CSC’s authorised financial planners provide a personalised service that takes your objectives, financial situation and needs into account. For more information about this service, or to book your first advice appointment, call **1300 277 777** or visit [csc.gov.au/advice](http://csc.gov.au/advice)
How do I apply?

Severe financial hardship
1. Complete EAFR02 Early access – severe financial hardship form, sign the Statutory Declaration section and have it witnessed by a qualified person.
2. Provide your Customer Reference Number (CRN) in the Centrelink consent section, or attach your income support statement from DVA.
3. Attach your bank statement(s) for your everyday transaction account(s), showing the last three months of transactions and your current account balance.
4. Attach certified copies of documents to prove your identity, or complete the Identification requirements section of the form and agree to have your documents verified electronically.
5. Refer to the lodgement section on the application form and send it to CSC.

Specified compassionate grounds
1. Complete EAFR01 Early access – specified compassionate grounds form.
2. Attach your ATO approval letter.
3. Attach certified copies of documents to prove your identity, or complete the Identification requirements section of the EAFR01 Early access – specified compassionate grounds form and agree to have your documents verified electronically.
4. Refer to lodgement section on the application form and send to CSC.

Where can I get more information?

CSS Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme
EMAIL members@css.gov.au
PHONE 1300 000 277
FAX (02) 6275 7010
MAIL GPO Box 2252, Canberra ACT 2601
csc.gov.au
WEB

PSS Public Sector Superannuation Scheme
EMAIL members@pss.gov.au
PHONE 1300 000 377
FAX (02) 6275 7010
MAIL PSS
GPO Box 2252, Canberra ACT 2601
csc.gov.au
WEB

PSSap Public Sector Superannuation accumulation plan
EMAIL members@pssap.com.au
PHONE 1300 725 171
FAX 1300 364 144
MAIL PSSap
Locked Bag 9300 Wollongong NSW 2500
WEB csc.gov.au

ADF Super Australian Defence Force Superannuation
EMAIL members@adfsuper.gov.au
PHONE 1300 203 439
FAX 1300 204 314
MAIL ADF Super
Locked Bag 9400 Wollongong DC
NSW 2500
csc.gov.au
WEB

Military Super Military Superannuation & Benefits Scheme
EMAIL members@enq.militarysuper.gov.au
PHONE 1300 006 727
FAX (02) 6275 7010
MAIL MilitarySuper
GPO Box 2252 Canberra Act 2601
csc.gov.au
WEB