

nobody deserves poverty

THE SAFETY NET IS NOT SAFE

WHAT IS INCOME SUPPORT?

Financial assistance for us all¹ when we are below set asset and income levels and:

- * over 65
- * unemployed or underemployed
- * caring for a child
- * caring for a loved one
- * permanently disabled
- * studying

Which is... pretty much every Australian at some point in their life.

Income support should provide enough money for someone to live on during that phase of their life.

It doesn't.

More than 2/3 of people on income support report²:

- * zero affordable housing in their area
- * skipping meals, for some every day
- * cutting back on fresh fruit, veg, and meat
- * not able to afford fuel to get to appointments
- * turning off the heat on cold days
- * missing medications and medical appointments due to cost

WHY ARE CONDITIONS SO DIRE FOR SO MANY ON INCOME SUPPORT?

The rates are given modest indexed increases every year, but they aren't keeping up with the costs of living. As a result, some income support is now as low as 52% of the poverty line.

It's very simple: all income support payments must be increased to the Henderson Poverty Line, currently \$616 a week.

WHAT'S THE HENDERSON POVERTY LINE?

There isn't a good measurement of poverty in Australia, but the HPL is the least worst - it at least attempts to base its calculations on the real cost of food and necessities.

WHY DO WE RECOMMEND THE HPL?

We know it works. During the early pandemic, the COVID Supplement was set at the HPL and the effects on alleviating suffering were dramatic².

We need to make the base rate high enough to not become instantly inadequate again as soon as costs of living raise a smidge.

Nationally, we're facing a number of massive systemic issues (a national housing shortage, few bulk-billing GPs, increasing natural disasters) that will require years to improve. At an individual level? With enough money, these are problems. Without enough money, these are catastrophes.

Freeing people from the relentless stress and anxiety of living below the poverty line gives them the capacity to be better siblings, parents, friends, neighbours and citizens. Adequate income support will free up a wave of human capital the entire nation would benefit from.

WANT TO HELP?

We've got suggestions² but if you have an idea, do it.

Alone we are just one small voice. Together we are a force of nature.

1. Not quite, of course. We're simplifying.

2. Want to see the stats in depth? Go to nobodydeservespoverty.org.au/resources