



To: The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister
 Cc: The Hon Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer
 Cc: The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services

Increase income support to reduce homelessness

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to urge you to increase income support payments in the 2024 Budget to better enable struggling renters to keep up with the rising cost of rent.

More than 30% of Australian households are renters. The inability to keep up with rising rents is a major and growing cause of severe financial stress and homelessness.

Inadequate income support is both driving increased homelessness, and preventing people from gaining a new tenancy and escaping homelessness.

Homelessness services simply cannot keep up with increased demand for support. More Australians have no alternative to sleeping rough or in their cars. This is impacting young people, families with children, single adults and older Australians.

The situation is especially dire for people reliant on income support payments. In the most recent snapshot of income support recipients, 63% of JobSeeker recipients and 75% of Youth Allowance recipients were still in rental stress, even after receiving CRA.

While we recognised and greatly valued the income support increases delivered by your Government in the 2023 Budget, rapid rental growth means much of this increased support has been swallowed up in extra rent payments, with some renters further behind even after these increases.

Increasing the base rates of JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and related working-age payments are an immediate and effective way to relieve the profound financial stress driving people into homelessness.

We are seeking your commitment to:

- increasing JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and related income support to parity with pensions, at least \$80 a day, and index payments to wages as well as prices.
- increasing the maximum threshold for Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) by 60%.

Kate Colvin
CEO, Homelessness Australia

on behalf of

Anglicare N.T.
Anglicare SA
Anglicare WA
Anti Poverty Network SA
Baptist Care Australia
Brisbane Youth Service (BYS)
Caroline Chisholm Society
CHIA Vic
Council to Homeless Persons
Dawn House
Dharma Care Inc
Domestic Violence NSW
Foundation Housing Ltd
GenZine
Great Lakes Womens Shelter
Hester Hornbrook Academy
Homelessness NSW
Jesuit Social Services
Melbourne City Mission
Melbourne City Mission Housing

Mission Australia
Murwillumbah Community Centre Inc
National Alliance of Seniors for Housing
Nt Shelter
Outer Northern Youth Homeless Service (ONYHS)
Project Youth
Rotary Club of Kenthurst Inc.
Rotary Club of Norwest Sunrise
Ruah
Sacred Heart Mission
Southern Youth and Family Services
the haymarket foundation
The Salvation Army Australia
Victorian Public Tenants Association
wayss
WIRE
Yfoundations
Youth Affairs Council Victoria
Youth Off The Streets
YWCA Australia
YWCA Canberra