



SA Portable Long Service Leave Community Services

31 July 2025

Managing worker questions



What workers need to know about Portable Long Service Leave

The SA Portable Long Service Leave – Community Services scheme will be introduced from 1 October 2025. This will affect thousands of workers across South Australia, and many will have questions about the impacts it will have.

Employers may be asked questions about the scheme and how it will work. The information below may prove helpful when discussing the scheme with workers.

About the SA Portable Long Service Leave – Community Services scheme

From 1 October 2025, eligible community services workers in South Australia will be able to accrue long service leave – even if they change employers within the sector.

If someone works full time, part time or casually and performs duties that are covered under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHADS) or the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Award 2016 (ALRM) and are working in the community services sector, they will be eligible for portable long service leave. This means their long service leave will move with them across different employers in the sector.

The scheme recognises and values the commitment of workers within community services by allowing them to accrue long service leave even when changing employers within the sector and encourages workers to stay in the sector.

The scheme is being introduced into South Australia to support workers as the State Government recognises high turnover due to funding cycles is a reality in community services.

The scheme will ensure workers are skilled and supported to stay engaged in these critical services.

Other states already have similar schemes in place with proven benefits for both workers and employers, with South Australia now also protecting its community services workers.



Common questions from workers

Who is eligible?

Full time, part time or casual employee covered by the *Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010* (SCHADS) or the *Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Award 2016* (ALRM) who are working in the community services sector (as defined in Schedule 2 of the *Portable Long Service Leave Act 2024* (the Act)), will be entitled to portable long service leave once the scheme begins on 1 October 2025.

What do workers need to do to register for the scheme?

Workers don't need to do anything to ensure they have access to Portable Long Service Leave, as their leave will be managed by their employer. Their employer will register them for the scheme, and once they are registered, they will be able to track their entitlements in the Portable Long Service Leave scheme's Worker Portal. Any entitlements accrued prior to the scheme will also be protected.



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What happens to the long service leave they have already accrued?

A worker's long service leave will continue to accrue with their current employer.

If a worker is in a role covered by the PLSL Act at the time of their claim after 1 October 2025, then SAPLSL-CS will pay the worker for their long service leave, then seek reimbursement from the employer for their share of leave accrued under the *Long Service Leave Act 1987*.

If a worker is in a role covered by the *Long Service Leave Act 1987* at the time of their claim, then the employer will pay the worker for their long service leave, then seek reimbursement from SAPLSL-CS for their share of the leave accrued under the portable Act.

What happens if a worker changes employers after 1 October 2025?

If a worker who is eligible for the SA Portable Long Service Leave – Community Services scheme starts with a new employer after the scheme comes into effect from 1 October 2025, their employer will need to register them as soon as possible.

The new employee will then have access to the Worker Portal and will be able to track their leave and access other relevant information.

When can workers apply for leave?

From 1 October 2025, regardless of where a worker works within the sector, they will be required to apply for any Long Service Leave entitlements, once accrued, directly via the scheme. Workers will be able to apply to take long service leave once they have recorded more than 120 months of service (equivalent to 10 years). The Portable Long Service Leave scheme will let workers know when this is reached. Workers will also be able to check how close they are to reaching any milestones by logging into their Worker Portal to see the number of months of service recorded.

Workers don't have to take their entire entitlement at once; they just need to be claimed in whole days with a minimum of one week (7 days) at a time. Once an employee has accrued their 13 weeks of leave, it doesn't end there either - for each 12

months they work thereafter, they will receive a further 1.3 weeks of leave.

When a worker is ready to take leave, they will need to log into the Worker Portal and complete the online claim form. Their employer will then be required to approve their period of leave that has been requested.

We recommend employees have a conversation with their employer prior to applying for leave, to ensure proposed leave dates align.



How will workers be paid when they take leave?

A worker's rate of pay will be based on their average rate of pay over the three years prior to their claim. If they have had multiple employers, their rate of pay will be based on their average rate for all employers combined over the three years prior to their claim.

If an employee has not been employed prior to making their claim – or has had a break - their rate of pay will be based on their average rate of pay over the last three years of service recorded by the SA Portable Long Service Leave - Community Services scheme.

Rates may vary if a worker's claim includes leave accrued under the *Long Service Leave Act 1987*. If an employee is lodging a claim including service accrued under the *Long Service Leave*



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Act 1987, they will need to contact the scheme to obtain personalised advice for their particular circumstances.

A worker's weekly rate of pay during long service leave and their expected gross payment will be displayed during the lodgement of their claim through the Worker Portal.

The scheme will pay an eligible employee in advance for their whole period of leave. The *Portable Long Service Leave Act 2024* requires claims to be lodged at least two months prior to taking leave.

Provided the scheme has all the necessary information, payments will be made the week before leave is scheduled to begin.

If an employee has submitted a request for a cash-out payment, the payment will be made as soon as practicable. These requests will generally take at least three weeks to process.

Once a payment has been processed, the scheme will then email the eligible employee. Their PAYG payment summary will be available in the Worker Portal to download.

What happens if a worker leaves their job or the industry after the scheme begins?

Workers won't need to do anything if they change employers, their long service leave will be automatically tracked and managed by the Portable Long Service Leave scheme.

Workers can take a break of up to two years (if they have accrued less than 60 months of service) or up to three years (if they have accrued more than 60 months but less than 84 months of service), before returning to the sector and continuing to accrue Portable Long Service Leave.

If they have accrued more than 84 months of service and would like to take a break, they can be absent indefinitely without forfeiting their accrued service.

If a worker has left a business, the business must advise the Portable Long Service Leave scheme in writing of the date of transition and no longer record service on Employer Returns for that worker.



Where to find further resources

Further information about the scheme, including eligibility and benefits, can be found on the scheme's [website](#).

Toolkits providing further information can be found [here](#).

The scheme provides a helpline for worker-specific questions, which can be contacted via email at: admin@sapls-l-community.org.au.

Workers can also contact the scheme via the SA Portable Long Service Leave – Community Services website. To submit an online enquiry, click [here](#).

Alternatively, you can call the SA Portable Long Service Leave – Community Services team on 08 8474 2400 or 1800 954 001.

To find out more about worker entitlements, please [read our FAQs](#).