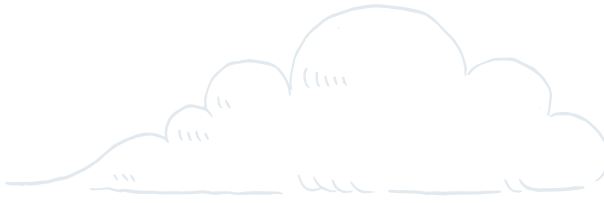


"MUTUAL" OBLIGATIONS SURVIVAL GUIDE



Antipoverty Centre



Do you want help in
Easy Read?

Visit the Inclusion
Australia website.



bit.ly/IEA-rights

access resources

WHY WE MADE THIS GUIDE

“Mutual” obligations are a pain in the arse with pointless compulsory activities, relentless harassment and payment suspensions. Job agencies do not like to explain the rules – if you know your rights it’s harder to profit from you. But you do have some rights.

Job agency workers aren’t actually allowed to make up rules, threaten with impunity, or punish you just because they feel like it. Their decisions can be challenged.

That’s why we wrote this guide. To cut through bullshit, explain how you can and can’t be penalised, and share rules and tips to make the system safer – with handy references to official government information.

This guide won’t fix what is a fundamentally fucked system or make it fair. That’s impossible unless compulsory activities are abolished. But it will help push back against unfair treatment from the welfare cops.

(Un)employment services thrive on keeping us isolated and in the dark. But many of us are sick of the bullshit and helping each other fight it. **You are not alone and being unemployed isn’t a moral failing.** We hope, at the very least, this survival guide will remind you of that.

In solidarity, the Antipoverty Centre team

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Abbreviations

DEWR	The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. It is responsible for "mutual" obligations policies and complaints.
IEA	Inclusive Employment Australia, the program for people with a disability or chronic illness that affects their ability to do paid work.
NCSL	The complaints and feedback line run by DEWR. We recommend logging any complaint or requests for help with the NCSL, even if you are in IEA or RAES where there are other (less effective) options.
RAES	The Remote Area Employment Service, for people in regional and remote areas. The majority of people in the program are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
Wfa	Workforce Australia, the mainstream program. You may be in the online service (operated by DEWR) or with a job agency.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Take the survival guide with you to appointments. It's handy to physically point to official information about the rules if you're being pressured.

This guide isn't comprehensive – that would be like carrying around a brick. We've included the most common issues to help you know when someone's bullshitting to make it just a little bit easier to survive the system of compulsory activities.

Job agencies want you to be intimidated so you don't stand up for yourself, but if they're treating you unfairly they are probably going to do it whether you push back or not, so you might as well tell them you know the rules.

We know having access to the right information won't solve everything, so get help when you don't feel confident. Get in touch with us when you need more information or support.

Is there information missing?

This survival guide is a living document. If you want help with something that isn't in here, check that you have the latest copy – this is the 2nd edition. You can find the latest edition at antipovertycentre.org/resources

Let us know if you think something important is missing so we can include it in the next update.

Finding the information that's relevant to you

There are some differences between compulsory activities for people in different (un)employment services. You will see an indicator for each rule showing whether it applies to the program you're in. We've colour coded the indicators – **Workforce Australia** is orange, **Inclusive Employment Australia** is blue and the **Remote Area Employment Service** is purple.

- ◇ If the rule is firmly applicable, you will see a solid indicator like this: **RAES**
- ◇ If the rule is flexible and discretion can be used in your favour, or it's only relevant in some circumstances, the indicator is shaded: **WFA**
- ◇ A grey indicator means the rule doesn't apply in that specific program, like this: **IEA**

For people in RAES

Right now there isn't much publicly available official information about RAES. We're working on getting access to more documents, but in the meantime, most rules that apply to RAES don't have their own reference in this guide. We've included links to the Workforce Australia website that apply to RAES, and more references will be added once we have access to them. If a RAES provider tells you something different to what's in this guide please get in touch with us via help@welfarecopwatch.org



Golden rules to protect your rights

RULE 1: CHECK WHETHER YOUR REQUIREMENTS ARE REASONABLE

Make sure you
get a full
exemption if
you're eligible!

... and take your circumstances into account. Activities should be reduced if your capacity is limited by physical or mental illness, disability, caring duties, homelessness, travel costs, bad transport access, violence or trauma, you're pregnant, away from home or grieving.

The job agency shouldn't penalise you if activities are difficult for these reasons. You can also get a formal reduction, or full exemption for up to 2 years.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [IEA Guidelines Part B](#), pages 75, 96–97 and 117; [WfA Guidelines Part B](#), pages 182 and 189–190; [WfA fact sheet – tailoring your points target](#); [Services Australia operational information 001-1005000 \(circumstances\)](#) and [001-09120000 \(exemptions\)](#); [Services Australia RAES fact sheet](#)

RULE 2: KNOW WHEN YOU CAN'T BE PUNISHED

... because you missed an activity for paid work, a job interview, medical emergency, health issues, housing problems, personal or family crisis, caring responsibilities, cultural commitments, transport issues or phone problems. Your payment shouldn't be suspended. You can use the calendar to log some items. If you get a payment suspension notice but you had a valid reason, you shouldn't get a demerit.

You also can't be penalised for missing an activity if you were given less than 48 hours notice or if you're working.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [DSS Guide to Social Policy Law – Social Security Guide 3.11.15](#); [Services Australia RAES fact sheet](#); [WfA Guidelines Part B](#), section 11.7.8, page 222; [Services Australia operational information 001-10040060 \(reasonable notice – process tab\)](#)

RULE 3: MAKE SURE UNFAIR DEMERITS ARE REMOVED

... when a suspension was wrongly applied or you had a valid reason for missing a requirement. Demerits can stay on your record even if the suspension is lifted and add up over time, leading to your payment potentially being cancelled.

If you got a penalty for something out of your control, contact the employment department complaints line (see page 31). Tell them if the job agency or IT fucked up, or if you had a valid reason to make sure that the demerit is removed.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [DSS Guide to Social Policy Law – Social Security Guide 3.11.15](#)

Constant
suspensions
are abusive

RULE 4: TAKE TIME TO THINK ABOUT YOUR JOB PLAN

... instead of signing it during your first appointment. They have to give you two days to think about it so you have time to request changes that might better suit your circumstances and any help you might actually want from them.

It's supposed to be tailored to your needs and state what the provider will do for you (see [page 26](#)). In IEA, you "get to choose which activities you do".

You can also ask for the job plan to be updated at any time.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: DEWR fact sheet – [Getting started in RAES](#); DEWR fact sheet – [Getting started in IEA](#); [WfA Guidelines Part B](#), section 11.4.2, page 190

RULE 5: DON'T SIGN THE PRIVACY WAIVER IF YOU DON'T WANT TO

... and if you already signed the form you can withdraw consent at any time. It's completely voluntary.

The job agency might pressure you, saying they won't be able to "help" until you sign a privacy waiver. That's false. (And most of them don't do anything anyway.)

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [WfA privacy and consent form](#); [IEA privacy fact sheet](#)

If it sounds like bullshit, it probably is

RULE 6: HAVE APPOINTMENTS OVER THE PHONE

Told they can't
let you do this?
Yeah, that's a lie

... instead of wasting your time, money and energy. All job agencies can do a phone appointment if you ask. They're meant to "consult" with you on whether phone, online or in person is most suitable. You shouldn't be made to attend in person if it could affect your health, or it costs too much time or money.

In IEA, appointments are always supposed to be "in ways that suit you". Messages via SMS and email can count for your minimum contact requirements (but not replace all appointments).

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [WfA Guidelines Part A](#), section 1.10, page 11; [IEA meaningful engagement fact sheet](#); [IEA Guidelines Part B](#), section 5.6.1, page 112

RULE 7: HEALTH CARE IS ALWAYS VOLUNTARY

... even if it's in your job plan. Job agencies might try to push you into counselling or other services. Sometimes they want to refer you to businesses that are related to them. You never need to agree to this.

If you want help paying for counselling or other healthcare, they can assist with this (see [page 14](#)), and you might need to give them an invoice. But they cannot put your payment on hold, give you a demerit or penalise you in any other way if you don't want to give them "proof" that you've accessed healthcare, whether they pay for it or not.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [IEA Guidelines Part B](#), section 7.7.5, page 172; [WfA Guidelines Part B](#), section 28.6, page 390

RULE 8: ASK FOR ANY FINANCIAL HELP YOU'RE ENTITLED TO

Get any free shit you can - it'll never be enough to make up for wasting your time

... from funds that are available to pay for things that can "overcome barriers". It can be for clothes, laptops, tools, healthcare, groceries, fuel, car rego, phone, training, licences, relocation costs and even rent or bills in some circumstances. It's the job agency's job to help you access the funds and they get given \$1500 per person.

People in Workforce Australia Online can get work-related items paid for even after you've left the service – up to 6 months.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [WfA Guidelines Part B, attachment 6A, pages 121–134](#); [WfA fact sheet – provider payments](#); [IEA Guidelines Part B, section 6.5, pages 130–132 and section 7.7.5, page 167](#); [WfA Online – request help with costs](#)

RULE 9: CHOOSE THE TRAINING THAT IS BEST FOR YOU

... not a crappy patronising course with your job agency, another dodgy private company, or the employment department.

There are a bunch of courses that can count for your requirements including TAFE courses under 12 months long, Skill Finder or Job Trainer courses, and other subsidised state government training.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [DSS Guide to Social Policy Law – Social Security Guide 3.11.3.10](#); [IEA Guidelines Part B, section 7.7.2, page 164](#); [WfA Guidelines Part B, section 25.2, page 369](#)

Sending you to a private RTO might be better for them than it is for you

RULE 10: DO AN ALTERNATIVE INSTEAD OF WORK FOR THE DOLE

... it's supposed to be a "last resort" requirement. Job agencies are meant to look for other options before they force you into it. If you're being pressured to do WftD, strongly assert your right to do a different activity, like training or volunteering.

You can't be forced into WftD at all if you:

- > have paid work, even if you're working less than your "benchmark hours"; or
- > are in IEA or RAES.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: DSS Guide to Social Policy Law – [Social Security Guide 3.11.3.110](#); WfA fact sheet – [mandatory activity requirement](#)

RULE 11: SAY NO TO WORK THAT ISN'T RIGHT FOR YOU

... if it's not suitable, such as if it needs skills or qualifications you don't have, might make your health condition worse, is too far from where you live, pays less than the relevant award or minimum wage, will leave you financially worse off, or it contradicts your moral, cultural or religious values.

You can turn a job offer down without losing your payment in these circumstances.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: DSS Guide to Social Policy Law – [Social Security Guide 3.11.1.20](#)

The job agency will have to prove the job is suitable before you are penalised

RULE 12: DON'T HAND OVER YOUR PAYSLIP UNLESS YOU WANT TO

... even if you ask them to pay for something like a training course or work equipment. Job agencies often harass people to get their payslips, by booking appointments when they know you can't attend or threatening punishment.

That's a rule breach and should be sent to the complaints line (see **page 31**). It's also a major breach if they try to get payslips from your employer without your consent.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: [WfA Guidelines Part B, section 11.7.8, page 221](#); [WfA Services Deed, section A3.3, paragraph 44.1, page 33](#); [IEA Guidelines Part A, section 6.3.2, page 50 and section 6.3.3, page 51](#)

RULE 13: SKIP APPOINTMENTS WITH ENOUGH WORK AND STUDY

... all appointments are voluntary if you meet the criteria.

Say goodbye to job agencies, their stupid appointments and job search if you do an average of 30–35 hours a week or more between paid work and study. You can leave the job agency entirely if you want to and just report to Services Australia.

If you are a parent, carer or have partial capacity to work, this applies if you average 15 hours a week between work, study and in some cases volunteering.

WFA

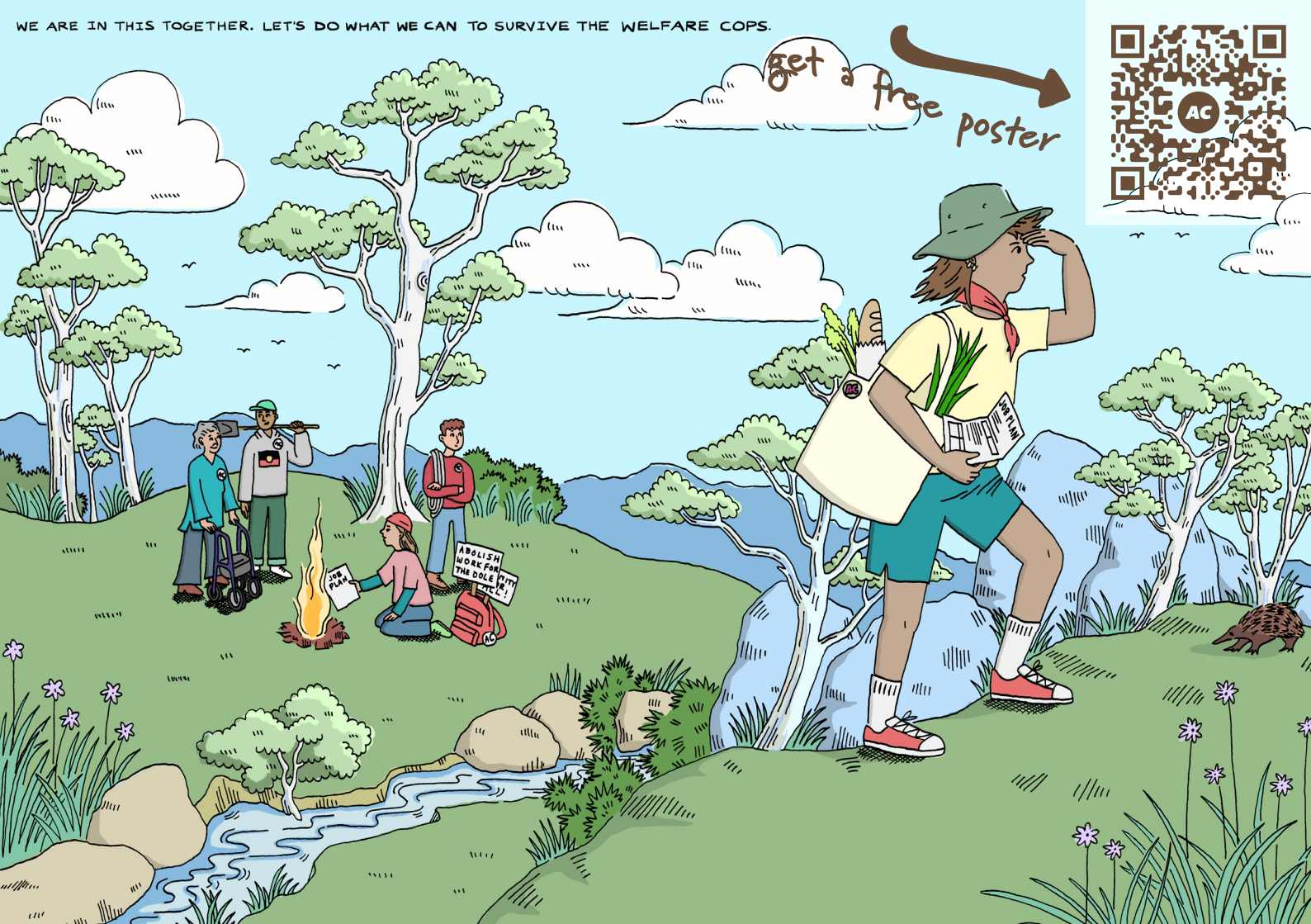
IEA

RAES

See: [WfA fact sheet – attend appointments](#); [DSS Guide to Social Policy Law – Social Security Guide section 3.11.6](#); [IEA Guidelines Part B, section 5.2.1, page 99](#)

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER. LET'S DO WHAT WE CAN TO SURVIVE THE WELFARE COPS.

get a free poster



RULE 14: SWITCH TO ANOTHER JOB AGENCY OR PROGRAM

... whenever you need to. Call a job agency in your area and ask what help they'll give you before choosing a new one. You can arrange a transfer in your online account, with the NCSL (see [page 30](#)) or the job agency you're switching to can arrange it.

Change to Workforce Australia Online if you haven't already done it since you became unemployed. Get the job agency to do a transfer form – lodge a complaint if they refuse. To move from WfA to IEA, organise medical evidence and an ESAt.

WFA

IEA

RAES

See: WfA fact sheets – [change your provider](#) and [transfer to online](#); RAES fact sheet – [while you're in RAES](#); Services Australia fact sheet – [Inclusive Employment Australia](#)

RULE 15: GET THEM TO PROVE THE RULE

... if they try to use their power and pressure you to do things on the spot, while you're isolated and don't have access to hundreds of pages of official rules. Any time you're told a rule that seems dodgy or convenient, or you have to do something you don't see any value in, use the magic phrase: **"Can you send me that information in an email with a link to the relevant part of the deed or guidelines where it says I have to?"**

Getting it in writing gives you breathing room to research and get advice. But often just asking them to go to the effort to prove what they said means they give up. They know lies in an email can easily be forwarded to advocates or media and get them get in trouble.

*If it seems
suss, send
it to us*

Check it with us too

The rules are confusing, and misleading if used selectively. Check with us when you're made to do something that sucks if it seems like there is a grey area via help@welfarecopwatch.org



Our top survival tips

ALWAYS KEEP A PAPER TRAIL, EVEN IF IT'S ROUGH

Job agencies often keep bad, error-ridden notes, which can be the only record of what happened. So, the more detailed receipts you can keep, the better – but don't worry about making it perfect.

Note down dates, names, and what was said. If something happens over the phone or in person, make a quick note afterwards. Even a simple timeline can help make a big difference if you're treated unfairly.

These notes come in handy if you need to complain.

If you're punished due to tech or system glitches, it's also useful to keep time-stamped screenshots your online dashboard showing the error, and proving that you reported and uploaded everything.

If you get the job agency to agree to something verbally (like lowering your points target, conducting appointments over the phone or paying for something you need), follow up with a summary: *"As per our conversation today, we agreed that my job search requirement will be reduced to X."* This creates concrete points of reference if they later deny or dispute it.

Emailing them to recap what you discussed is an easy way to keep track of names and dates

ASK THE JOB AGENCY THESE QUESTIONS

Turn up at your appointment with this handy list of questions to get info that might be useful later and to send a message that you expect them to do their job.

- ◇ What is the best phone number and email address to reach you on if I need to change an appointment or can't make it to an activity?
- ◇ What is the name of the site manager?
- ◇ What type of job can you help me get?
- ◇ What specific steps will you take to help me get a job (or achieve whatever is in the job plan) **that are tailored to me?**
- ◇ What financial assistance will you provide?

Examples of practical steps they can help with include approaching relevant employers on your behalf, paying for things you need or supporting you to do training if you want to.

Ultimately if the goal in your plan is to get a job they shouldn't be threatening you with penalties to get you to do things you don't find useful, like in-person activities, frequent appointments, referring you to a health provider they are connected to, etc.

*They use the rules
to get what they
want but you can too*

LOOK OUT FOR ANY “MUTUAL” OBLIGATIONS PAUSES AND STAY SAFE IN THE HEAT

Every year everyone gets a break from the welfare cops. In 2026, penalties will be paused from 14 December until 4 January 2027.

During a pause your payment won't go on hold if you miss activities, appointments or don't sign a job plan, and you won't get demerits. If you are due to report during a pause, you can skip job search and logging points from your **previous** reporting date. If your payment is on hold when the pause starts, it will be lifted on that date.

When there's a flood, fire or cyclone, “mutual” obligations penalties are paused.

If what happened affects you or makes it difficult to do requirements but there isn't pause in place, the job agency is able to waive requirements for you – if they don't, lodge a complaint and let us know if you want a hand dealing with them. This also applies **if there's a heatwave** in your area. Even though there won't be an official pause, you're entitled to stay safe. You can read about the health risks of doing compulsory activities in the heat and a related letter to government on the [Sweltering Cities website](#).

Check if penalties are paused at: bit.ly/MOsPause

GET HELP DEALING WITH YOUR JOB AGENCY OR THE DEPARTMENT

If the job agency uses pressuring tactics or coercion, for example booking appointments on short notice or when they know it's difficult for you to attend, or threatening you with suspensions, it's time to call in backup. You're always entitled to have someone with you at an appointment. Whether it's a friend, family member or support worker, having a witness can deter bad behaviour and help you remember details.

We encourage you to send questions and examples to us via help@welfarecopwatch.org so we can help you directly and keep track of trends in job agency abuse. You can also CC us on emails if you want – sometimes knowing an advocate can see what they're saying means the job agency backs off. We can help you draft emails or complaints if you're not sure what to say. It's also good to send the info to the employment department (see [page 31](#)) so it's logged in their system, even if you don't expect them to do anything.

If you need a break and have an exemption denied, ask to speak to a Centrelink social worker. Other avenues where you may be able to find help with individual advocacy include your local MP or senator, a disability advocate, social worker, homelessness support worker or other support service you access.

LOOK UP MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Visit the Antipoverty Centre website to get more information from us, including a [digital version of this guide](#) and the materials we have linked to on the Resources page. There's also information about support services such as financial counsellors and mental health crisis lines. On our website you can find submissions, reports, media releases and other information about our work to end the use of compulsory activities.

Visit antipovertycentre.org

More peer support

You can talk to someone over the phone at the Australian Unemployed Workers' Union helpline about issues with your job agency. Call **1800 289 848** between 10am and 2pm on weekdays or visit their website for more info: auwu.org.au

Talk to a free lawyer

If you need legal help related to "mutual" obligations, a debt or anything else to do with a Centrelink payment, contact a community legal centre.

Find one on the Economic Justice Australia website, where you can also get fact sheets and other useful information: ejaustralia.org.au/find-help-near-you

LODGE A COMPLAINT WHENEVER SOMETHING IS WRONG OR UNFAIR

For example, if you are told appointments must be every two weeks, that isn't true. Even if you do not feel there's much it will achieve, sending information about this and other inappropriate or incompetent conduct to the employment department's National Customer Service Line helps to document systemic issues.

This might lead to them doing something practical, but even if it doesn't, these records may become significant in any potential legal processes challenging penalties.

For complaints where you need the NCSL to take action, you have a say in what they do. They won't contact the provider about your complaint unless you ask them to. Right now there is high demand on the NCSL – a reflection of how bad things are – so if you need urgent help and can't get through, let us know and we will see if we can assist. If the NCSL says you should resolve the issue your job agency and you don't want to, **say no**.

We're also aware that the NCSL occasionally gives out wrong info or refers people back to their job agency. We can help to escalate your issue to someone more senior if this happens to you.

It's tiring, and you shouldn't have to, but complaints help pull job agencies into line

We know that advocating for yourself is hard, especially when you are under strain from poverty and any other issues in your life. It's tempting to simply comply with an unfair or unlawful "requirement", or accrue incorrect demerits, but if you have capacity to do so, we want you to know standing up for your rights helps keep you safe and chips away at the viability of the whole system.

Contacting the NCSL

Your feedback or complaint can be anonymous if you wish. We recommend using the NCSL rather than the CRRS, which is often suggested to IEA participants but is run by an outsourced organisation that is related to a company with IEA contracts and means records are not managed by the responsible government department.

You can contact the NCSL on **1800 805 260** or via nationalcustomerserviceline@dewr.gov.au, or submit through their website: bit.ly/NCSLcomplaints

Even though the form says Workforce Australia at the top, IEA and RAES participants can also use it.

You can also challenge unfair decisions through the Administrative Review Tribunal or escalate complaints to the Commonwealth Ombudsman if you get an unsatisfactory reply. Contact a community legal centre if you want help going to the ART (see [page 29](#)).

Actions you can take to help break the poverty machine



CHECK WHETHER YOU'RE ENTITLED TO BACKPAY OR COMPENSATION

Between 2023 and 2025 it was revealed that the government unlawfully applied rules in the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* that caused **hundreds of thousands of people** to have their Centrelink payment cancelled. This led to two Commonwealth Ombudsman investigations and the rules being paused, including for:

- ◇ section 42AF persistent mutual obligations failure, meaning you accrued too many demerit points;
- ◇ section 42AH unemployment failure, meaning you quit your job;
- ◇ section 42AG work refusal failure, meaning you turned down a job offer; and
- ◇ section 42AM failure to reconnect within 28 days of your payment being suspended.

If your payment was cancelled between 2020 and 2025 for any of these reasons, you might be owed money – even if you think you “did the wrong thing”. You don’t need to wait for an “invitation” to apply for backpay. You can learn more and get the application form here: bit.ly/TCFcompensation

You can also learn more about this in the Economic Justice Australia fact sheet: bit.ly/EJAfactsheets

DO THE ANTIPOVERTY CENTRE “MUTUAL” OBLIGATIONS SURVEY

We want your help making sure that organisations who make hundreds of millions of dollars off contracts for punishing the poor don't go unnoticed. As part of our work to end compulsory activity requirements for people on Centrelink payments, we're asking for input about your views and experiences in (un)employment services. We also want to understand patterns of unfair and unlawful job agency behaviour.

Even if you don't have direct, recent experience in the welfare system, we'd appreciate if you could share the survey on social media or directly with folks you know who rely on Centrelink payments.

We incorporated the expertise of survey contributors into our submission to consultation on Workforce Australia. Read it here: bit.ly/ReformSubDEWR



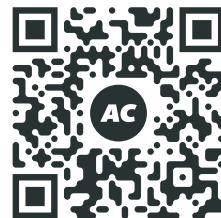
bit.ly/MOs2026survey

USE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION TO REQUEST YOUR RECORDS

Ever wonder what the people at the job agency have to say about you? Under Freedom of Information laws you have a right to access your personal information from government departments, Services Australia and job agencies you interact with.

You can find out when and how you've been penalised, and whether the required (and truthful) records were kept about why, as well as see any notes that have been made about you or your circumstances. If you have had “mutual” obligations, this may provide important evidence to help assert your rights or reveal unfair and unlawful welfare compliance penalties.

We made an FOI request template to make things as easy as possible. You just copy the text, add your details, then send it to the email address we've included.



bit.ly/WelfareFOI

SHARE THIS SURVIVAL GUIDE

Our own experiences with job agencies, our many years of accumulated collective knowledge as advocates, and a lot of love for our peers went into making this guide. It's something we wish we had for ourselves, and wish we'd made sooner for people we support.

This survival guide is for:

- ◇ welfare recipients with compulsory activities;
- ◇ community sector workers;
- ◇ carers and individual advocates;
- ◇ organisations and politicians who get inquiries from people on Centrelink payments; and
- ◇ anyone else who wants to help.

For as long as welfare cops remain, we want as many people as possible to hold this survival guide in their hands. Fill out the [order form](#) and we can send you any of the following materials for free to help you share the guide:

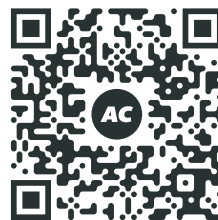
- ◇ physical copies of the full survival guide;
- ◇ flyers, post cards and stickers with a QR code that links to the order form; or
- ◇ a poster featuring Judy Kuo's wonderful art featured in this booklet.

Get a copy to use for yourself, or a bundle to give to others. Leave them in your library, community centre or MP's office. Hand them out at a community event, outside your local Centrelink office or at the job agency.

You can even give a copy to a worker if there's a friendly person at the job agency! Their bosses often lie to them about the rules too.

Compulsion shouldn't exist at all. There is no reform or tweaks that can be made to this system that will stop privatised job agencies – whether they're companies or “non-profits” – exploiting poor people unless we are given the freedom to choose when and how we want help finding paid work.

But with solidarity and concrete information to fight unfair treatment we can do our best to keep each other safe and reduce stress. Please help us share it far and wide.



order free copies



**bit.ly/
OrderMOsRightsGuide**

ARE YOU WORKING IN A JOB AGENCY OR A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT? CONSIDER BLOWING THE WHISTLE

We know many people who work at job agencies and government departments are concerned about how the rules, and the administration of them, cause harm.

If you are being asked to apply the rules in a way that feels unfair or harmful, get in touch with us and we can help you check whether what you're being asked to do is consistent with the law or the contracts job agencies are bound by.

Workers will be essential to stopping the poverty machine and we urge you to speak up. If you're working in the system (or have in the past) you may be able to help by sharing information that's in the public interest. If you would like to be connected with lawyers or journalists who can safely handle disclosures you can reach out to us via tips@welfarecopwatch.org

Alternatively, you can contact the Human Rights Law Centre Whistleblower Project directly for advice. Get more info at: hrlc.org.au/whistleblower-project

*We need your
voices too!*

SUPPORT THE ANTIPOVERTY CENTRE

The Antipoverty Centre is a collective of activists, advocates and researchers with direct, contemporary experience of poverty and unemployment. We have deep expertise in poverty because we live it. We defend and fight for the rights of people like ourselves who experience violence at the hands of an economic system designed to oppress us.

Our goal is to ensure the voices and rights of poor people are at the centre of social policy development and discourse.

In our work, we ensure that all people on low incomes who contribute to policy, public advocacy or in other way receive a payment in recognition of their expertise. We cover costs for people to participate in workshops, inquiries, meetings and other advocacy such as food, transport, childcare and mental health or other support to enable participation.

If you can comfortably afford to do so, we would be grateful for contributions to our work. You can make a donation at antipovertycentre.org/support

Acknowledgement of Country

We live and work on stolen, unceded land, cared for by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for thousands of generations. First Peoples have connections to place, land, waters and community that have been unbroken for 120,000 years. We recognise Indigenous sovereignty and the cultural significance inherent in these connections; historical and contemporary.

We pay respect to Elders past and present and stand with all First Peoples in the quest for land back, self-determination, justice and truth-telling in the face of ongoing colonial violence, including that inflicted through racist policy and practice in the welfare system, carceral system and labour market.

In our work we seek to end the harm of compulsory activities, particularly for First Nations people, who are issued around 30% of all penalties – that's more than 650,000 a year.

Visit paytherent.net.au for information about actions you can take to stand in solidarity with First Nations people.

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Statement on artificial intelligence

No artificial intelligence tools or services were knowingly used in the creation of this work. The Antipoverty Centre opposes the use of these tools because of concerns related to ethical implications, costs to communities, environmental impacts and accuracy.

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WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER.

LET'S DO WHAT WE CAN TO SURVIVE THE WELFARE COPS.

ABOLISH WORK FOR THE DOLE PITY THE POOR!

JOB PLAN

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