

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

9.4 Application for crisis payment

Policy summary

Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) aims to ensure that inmates are provided with the opportunity to apply for a Crisis Payment – Prison Release (crisis payment) through the Department of Human Services (DHS), so that financial support is available to eligible inmates on release from custody.

DHS may provide a crisis payment in anticipation of an inmate’s release. The inmate cannot have access to these funds until they are released from custody.

The DHS will be notified of the names and number of inmates being discharged on a weekly basis for each centre. DHS will make contact with the Offender Services & Programs (OS&P) staff at the centre to arrange for an interview with the inmate to organise for a crisis payment to be made.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Service specifications	Rehabilitation and reintegration
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Scope

This section applies to all correctional centres and other facilities administered by or on behalf of CSNSW.

It also applies to all CSNSW employees, and where relevant to other personnel such as Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN), contractors, subcontractors, and visitors.

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1 Application for crisis payments

1.1 Policy

CSNSW aims to ensure that inmates are provided with the opportunity to receive financial assistance on release from custody.

DHS may provide a 'crisis payment' which equates to one week's payment of an inmate's relevant social security pension or benefit. An eligible inmate will also be entitled to an advance payment of up to seven days of the first instalment of their social security pension or benefit that they are qualified to receive.

The eligibility criteria for a crisis payment states that an inmate must:

- have been in custody for at least 14 days
- qualify to receive a social security pension or benefit
- be in severe financial hardship.

The day of release is not to be included as part of the 14 day criteria.

The number of crisis payments that an inmate is eligible to receive within a 12 month period is restricted only by the requirement to have been imprisoned for at least 14 days on each occasion.

The DHS will be notified of the names and number of inmates being discharged on a weekly basis for each centre. DHS will make contact with the Offender Services & Programs (OS&P) staff at the centre to arrange for an interview with the inmate to organise for a crisis payment to be made.

An inmate may lodge a claim up to 21 days prior to their release date, or within 7 days of being released. It is recommended that an application be lodged prior to the inmate's release, as this may occur outside of standard business hours or at a remote location. Inmates should be advised of the criteria and procedures (including any LOPs) involved in applying for a crisis payment.

DHS may provide a crisis payment in anticipation of an inmate's release which will be paid into an external bank account nominated by the inmate.

An inmate should be advised that the availability of sufficient identification (such as bail papers, or recognisances) may assist this process. DHS may also require evidence to verify a lack of funds (such as a bank account balance) from an inmate who has been released from custody.

1.2 Procedures for receiving crisis payment while in custody

Governors, through authorised officers, should liaise with the local DHS office to implement local operating procedures (LOPs) that are in line with the generic procedures set by DHS (**refer to COPP 21.8 Local operating procedures**).

In correctional centres where kiosk facilities are available, inmates should be directed to use these systems.

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Notify DHS of the number and names of inmates being discharged on a weekly basis, as arranged locally between the correctional centre and the DHS office.	SMO
2.	Arrange interviews with inmates through OS&P staff at the centre who must receive notification of the dates and times of these interviews. The inmate will be expected to complete all necessary documentation during their interview with DHS or its agents unless DHS are unable to provide a telephony service.	DHS
3.	Facilitate interviews between DHS and the inmate.	OS&P staff

1.3 Procedures for receiving confirmation by DHS or an inmate

The following procedure will occur if an inmate has been discharged unexpectedly from court or is granted bail and has not received a *Release certificate*. In these cases, the inmate may attend a DHS office to request a crisis payment.

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Verify the inmate's previous custody and entitlement by phone with the correctional centre from where the inmate was discharged, or with Corrections Corporate Support Unit (CCSU).	DHS/inmate

2 Quick links

- [Related COPP](#)
- [Forms and annexures](#)
- [Related documents](#)

3 Definitions

Authorised officer	The officer authorised by the Governor to perform the functions prescribed as part of the Custodial Policy and Procedures
CCSU	Corrections Corporate Support Unit
COPP	Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
DHS	The Department of Human Services (formerly referred to as Centrelink) is a Commonwealth statutory authority that delivers services, programs, and payments for Government Departments. It is responsible to the Minister for Human Services.
LOP	Local Operating Procedure
OIMS	Offender Integrated Management System
OS&P	Offender Services and Programs
Release Certificate	<p>A Release Certificate is issued to all inmates who have been in custody (correctional centres or police/court cells) for more than 48 hours.</p> <p>A Release Certificate serves as evidence of an inmate's incarceration and may be used when obtaining housing or financial assistance. A release certificate must only be issued once and generated in OIMS. (Refer to exceptions in COPP Section 23 Release of inmates).</p>
Severe Financial Hardship	Severe financial hardship is defined as having less than the equivalent of a fortnight's DHS benefit or allowance in available funds.
SMO	Sentence Management Operations

4 Document information

Business centre:	Custodial Operations	
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Version	Date	Reason for amendment
1.0		Initial publication (<i>Replaces section 7.14 of the superseded Operations Procedures manual</i>)
1.1	22/08/19	Remove references in procedure table at [1.2] to crisis funds being transferred to inmate trust account. DHS no longer transfer funds to inmate trust accounts.
1.2	12/03/20	General formatting update and improvements
1.3	21/08/23	Update in line with CSNSW restructure: renaming of Sentence Administration Corporate (SAC) to Corrections Corporate Support Unit (CCSU); and renaming of State Sentence Administration (SSA) to Sentence Management Operations (SMO).