

Provisional Payments Scheme for Emergency Workers Pilot

Pilot Opt-In Document

What is this form for?

This form is to let you know that you can ask to participate in this pilot. It contains information to help you decide if you want to participate and lets you know what kinds of personal information will be used, who it will be shared with and for what purpose.

What is the Provisional Payments Pilot?

The Department of Justice and Community Safety (**department**) is setting up a pilot program for emergency workers, including employees and volunteers.). The pilot allows emergency workers with a work-related mental injury to receive payments to cover medical and other expenses without waiting for compensation claims to be determined.

The pilot has been established to remove financial barriers to seeking treatment as soon as possible, recognising that early intervention is important for good health outcomes and helping you to return to work.

How does the pilot work?

The pilot will provide provisional payments for medical and like expenses if you suffer a work-related mental injury and make a claim for compensation under WorkCover or another relevant insurance scheme. This 'provisional payment' will cover reasonable medical or other expenses you incur in relation to the work related mental injury while you wait for your claim to be decided. You can ask your employer or the agency you volunteer with for an up-to-date list of expenses covered by the pilot. The pilot only covers expenses that are on the list.

Your employer or agency will pay you or your treatment provider (on your behalf) for your expenses while your claim is being processed.

If your claim is rejected, the pilot will still provide payments for an extended period of up to a total of 13 weeks from claim lodgement. When you suffer a mental injury it's important to seek treatment as soon as possible and these payments will assist you to do that. If you want to receive the extended period payments existing entitlements under Medicare (other than Medicare mental health plan) are to be processed before you seek reimbursement from the pilot. Your employer will require you to provide relevant banking details to assist electronic funds transfer to your preferred bank account so that it can reimburse your expenses.

The department will also need some information to test whether a program like this might be an option in any future reforms of the WorkCover system.

What do I need to do to participate?

You will need to read this form and agree to participate. This includes agreeing to your information being used for the purposes of the pilot (this is discussed below.) You can agree by signing the attached consent form. You should keep a copy of these documents and the consent form for your records.

Your employer or the agency you volunteer for will need to let us know that you meet the eligibility criteria. You can ask them to tell you what the criteria are.

What happens if I have a claim but don't want to participate in the pilot?

The pilot is available on an opt-in basis, and is not compulsory. If you do not wish to participate, your claim will be processed in the normal way and your information will not be shared for the pilot.

What personal information will be collected and used?

Participation in pilot:

In order to participate in this pilot, certain personal information will need to be collected, including, information that identifies you, provides details of the circumstances of your claim and information about your health (including your mental health and health services you access) in relation to your work related mental health injury.

This information will be provided to:

- the department, for the purposes of administering the pilot
- your employer or the agency you volunteer with
- agents of WorkSafe (or other relevant insurer) who may contact you to make provisional payments

As this information is required to administer the pilot, if you do not agree to your information being used by these bodies, **you will not be able to participate**. No identifiable personal information will be published through the pilot.

Monitoring and evaluation of the pilot:

The department will be evaluating the pilot to determine if it is meeting its objectives, and inform broader reforms to the WorkCover system. In addition to your participation in the pilot, we also request your consent to participate in this evaluation.

Throughout the evaluation, the department will attempt to de-identify your information wherever possible. Only de-identified information will be published.

If you agree to participate in the evaluation of the pilot, the department will collect, use and share de-identified information with:

- WorkSafe, for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the pilot
- third parties engaged by the department as part of monitoring and evaluating the pilot.
- Other Victorian Government departments and officials as part of monitoring and evaluating the pilot.

At a minimum, you must agree to your personal information being collected in order to participate in the pilot. However, your participation in the evaluation is voluntary, and you do not have to agree to your information being used in the evaluation of the pilot. If you do not wish to participate in the evaluation of the pilot, you can still access the pilot, subject to providing the requisite personal information outlined above.

The findings from the evaluation will be written up in reports. This means your de-identified data will be examined and you may be invited to participate in a survey and/or interview.

Who will see and use my personal information?

The department:

- will receive your claim number and a copy of this consent form
- will receive information about sources (other than the pilot or WorkCover) where you have made a claim for your medical or other expenses. If you do not have a claim number, the department will assign you one for the purposes of the pilot (the numbers link your information to make payments and evaluate the pilot).
- will receive claim information from WorkSafe (or other relevant insurer) for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the pilot if you agree to be involved in the evaluation. This information will be de-identified for the evaluation.

Your employer or agency:

- will notify the department if your claim is rejected (including the reasons the insurer rejected the claim)
- will provide the department with reasons, if they decide you are not eligible for the pilot
- will be reimbursed by WorkSafe (or another relevant insurer) for paying your expenses if your claim is accepted (this happens independently from the pilot)
- will be reimbursed by the department for paying your expenses if your claim is rejected (this happens because of the pilot).

You:

- will receive payments from your employer or agency to cover your reasonable medical and like expenses covered by the pilot
- must tell your employer if you have claimed for your medical (and like) expenses from a source other than your Insurer or the pilot (e.g. from the Transport Accident Commission).

How will my privacy be protected?

The department values your privacy and is committed to protecting the personal and health information it collects.

In Victoria the collection of personal and health information is governed by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*, respectively. These Acts set out what the department must do when it collects, uses, discloses, handles and destroys personal and health information.

Can I ask for access to my information or have it corrected?

You can request access to, and correct any of your personal or health information held by the department by written request to privacy@justice.vic.gov.au. There may be limitations on your right of access and costs associated with access, amendment or deletion.

Can I withdraw my consent?

You can withdraw your consent by providing written notice to the department at privacy@justice.vic.gov.au. If you withdraw your consent during your participation in the pilot you will not be able to continue to participate in or access the benefits from the pilot. You cannot withdraw your consent after your eligibility period for access to the pilot has concluded.

You can find more information on the Department's Privacy Policy here: <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/your-rights/privacy/information-privacy-policy>

Consent form

- I have read and understood the Opt-In Documents including this consent form
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions and seek professional advice before signing this consent form
- I have read and understood how my information will be collected, used and shared for the purposes of the pilot.
- I agree to my personal and health information being collected, used and shared for the purposes of the pilot.
- I agree to participate in the pilot.

- I also agree that my de-identified information can be collected, used and shared for the purposes monitoring and evaluating the pilot.
- I understand that I may receive an invitation to participate in a survey and/or interview about this pilot as part of the evaluation.

Signed by the Emergency Worker

Name *(please print)*

Date:

Signed by the Employer

Name *(please print)*

Date:

Signature of witness:

Name *(please print)*

Date