

Financial Assistance

Information sheet

Information correct at **28 April 2020**

This document can help you talk about the financial assistance we are providing to people affected by the bushfires.

| Type of assistance | Who is eligible? | How to access it |
|---|---|--|
| Bereavement payment \$20,000 | Identified senior next-of-kin of people who have died in the fires | We are in direct contact with senior next-of-kin. For more information, call 1800 733 276. |
| Emergency Grant Starts at \$10,000 per household Up to \$20,000 is available per household for those who are still experiencing financial hardship | People whose primary place of residence has been destroyed or rendered permanently uninhabitable (i.e. has been or must be demolished) by bushfires since July 2019. | Apply at redcross.org.au/grants (you will need proof of ID, address and bank details) If your documents have been damaged or lost in the fires and cannot be replaced, please phone 1800 RED CROSS (1800 733 276). |
| Primary Residence Repair Grant \$5,000 per household | Home owners whose primary place of residence has not been destroyed but needs structural repairs (i.e. walls, ceilings, windows) or repairs to private water, septic or power infrastructure to make it safe to return home. | Apply at redcross.org.au/grants (you will need proof of ID, address and bank details) If your documents have been damaged or lost in the fires and cannot be replaced, please phone 1800 RED CROSS (1800 733 276). Eligibility for this grant has been extended to include repairs to critical private water or power infrastructure (i.e. water tanks, generators) or septic systems. |
| Injury Grant \$7,500 per person | People who were hospitalised for two or more days as the direct result of physical injuries or mental health issues caused by the fires and are experiencing financial hardship as a result. Hospital admission needs to have occurred within two weeks of the bushfire starting. | Apply at redcross.org.au/grants (you will need proof of ID, bank details, evidence of hospital admission and discharge) If your documents have been damaged or lost in the fires and cannot be replaced, please phone 1800 RED CROSS (1800 733 276). |

Please note: Applications for the above grants will remain open until **30 June 2020**.



| Type of assistance | Who is eligible? | How to access it |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Rebuild Grant</p> <p>\$20,000 is available for those who are still experiencing financial hardship.</p> <p><i>We anticipate being able to provide further support for rebuilding purposes beyond this grant, focussing on those who meet additional financial hardship eligibility criteria.</i></p> | <p>Home owners whose primary place of residence has been destroyed or rendered permanently uninhabitable (i.e. has been or must be demolished) by bushfires since July 2019.</p> <p>This grant is for owner occupiers facing continued financial hardship, who intend to start the early stages of planning to rebuild their destroyed home.</p> | <p>Apply at redcross.org.au/grants</p> <p>(New applicants will need proof of ID, bank details, address, evidence of being the owner occupier)</p> <p>If you've already received a Red Cross grant, we won't ask you to provide information that you've already given us. When completing the application form you only need to provide documents that verify that you are the home owner occupier (if you didn't previously upload them) or let us know if you have changed your bank account since you last received a Red Cross grant).</p> |

Please note: Applications for the Rebuild Grant are currently open until **30 June 2020**.

Questions and Answers

How can I apply for a grant?

We're making the process as simple as possible, with a few basic checks which we have to make. Visit redcross.org.au/grants to apply. You will need to provide evidence of your identity (such as a driver licence), proof of residence (like a utility bill), evidence of hospital admission and discharge (for the Injury Grant) and details for a financial transfer (a recent bank statement showing BSB and account details).

We know that some people have lost documents in the fires. Use what you do have to complete your application. We'll follow up with you to verify details. Our teams know and understand that it's not always easy to provide all of your documents. They will help you to work through the process.

You can also **call 1800 733 276** during business hours for help.

Grants will be open until at least 30 June 2020 and are available right across Australia.

How long will it take to receive my grant?

We're working as hard as we can to process hundreds of applications. Once your information is verified and the application approved, the emergency grant will be paid within a matter of days, wherever possible.

I want to rebuild but am struggling financially. How can I access the \$70m set aside to rebuild destroyed homes?

From 1st April 2020, \$20,000 per household is available for owner/occupiers facing continued financial hardship, and intend to start the early stages planning to rebuild your home destroyed by bushfires from July 2019. Visit redcross.org.au/grants to apply. If you **haven't previously received a Red Cross grant**, you will be asked to provide some documentation for the Rebuild Grant (proof of ID, proof of address, evidence of being the owner occupier, bank details for grant payment). If you **have already received an Emergency Grant**, we won't ask for information you have already supplied, except for documents that verify you are the home owner occupier if needed or if you have changed your bank details.



I'm renting a place that was destroyed or structurally damaged. Can I get a grant?

If the property you are renting was **destroyed** in bushfires since July 2019 and it was your primary place of residence, you can apply for the Emergency Grant.

If the property that you are renting was **structurally damaged** in bushfires since July 2019 you are not currently entitled to financial assistance from Red Cross, but if it is a shared primary place of residence with your landlord, your landlord can apply for the Primary Residence Repair Grant. They should go to redcross.org.au/grants to apply or call us on **1800 733 276**.

My home has a damaged water tank or generator. Can you help?

Yes, you can now apply for the Primary Residence Repair Grant. It has been extended to include loss, damage or destruction of critical private water infrastructure (like water tanks and pumps), power infrastructure (like generators and fuse boxes) and septic systems. If you have applied before the eligibility conditions were extended, please let us know at grants@redcross.org.au or call 1800 733 726.

My home has a damaged fence/water tank/dangerous tree, why aren't you helping me?

At the current time the Primary Residence Repair Grant does not cover the removal or making safe of dangerous trees, or the repair of fencing on your property. Other agencies are offering support for these issues and Red Cross is working hard with these agencies to make sure we can direct you appropriately. We will continue to assess any gaps in support for these needs. Visit www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au to see what is available in your state

I've lost a holiday house/investment property in the bushfires. Can I get a grant?

The grants are for people whose primary place of residence has been destroyed or rendered permanently uninhabitable (whether owned or rented) or structurally damaged (if owned). This is because we are trying to respond to the most urgent cases first. Other assistance may be available from government: visit www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au to see what is available in your state.

I am self-isolating and need some help to complete my application. Where can I get help?

We know many people may be unable to get to Recovery Centres or to friends and family who provide support for people to complete online applications or upload documents due to COVID-19 restrictions. If COVID-19 restrictions are impacting your ability to provide the required information for a grant, please contact us at **1800 RED CROSS** (1800 733 276) and we can help.

Can you use funds donated during the bushfires to help people affected by COVID-19?

Under charity, tax and consumer laws there are strict rules about how money donated to the Disaster Relief and Recovery fund during the bushfires can be used. Those are legal requirements, but we also stand by the commitment we made to Australians and people around the world who donated to us to use the money they gave to help the recovery of people affected by the bushfires.

We are using all funds donated to the Disaster Relief and Recovery fund since July 2019 to provide immediate and longer term relief and recovery for people directly affected by the fires, with \$5 million having enabled our emergency teams to respond to those fires. You can see our full plan at www.redcross.org.au/bushfirefunds.

We are supporting the COVID-19 response in many other ways: providing psychological support to maintain people's mental wellbeing, delivering emergency packages, supporting people in self-isolation, and continuing to assist our existing clients who are in high-risk groups.

redcross.org.au/grants

