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TAXES

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How does the tax system work in Australia?

The Australian tax year runs from 1st July to 30th June. Under Australian law most people are required to lodge tax returns with ATO after the 30th June and before 31st of October each year.

Australia has a Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 10% on most items. The GST is included in the price you pay for items that are subject to GST.

Basic items, for example, food, education and health services are GST free. For more information on taxes in Australia please see the Tax Office website www.ato.gov.au

Is there anything else I need to be aware of?

Register with Centrelink

Help with job seeking, social security payments and other assistance is provided through the government agency called Centrelink. Newly arrived residents can register with www.centrelink.gov.au to get help with looking for work, having overseas skills recognised and accessing relevant courses.

Centrelink also has application forms for Tax File Numbers and can assist you to lodge your application with the Tax Office, so that access to any payments is not delayed.

If you have children, you may be eligible for government-funded Family Assistance payments to help with the costs of parenting.

What other payments are available?

The Family Assistance Office can help you with the costs of parenting. Please refer to the website www.familyassist.gov.au.

The available family assistance payments are:

- **Family Tax Benefit Part A** helps families with the cost of raising children
- **Family Tax Benefit Part B** gives extra assistance to families with one main income including sole parents
- **Child Care Benefit** helps families with the costs of childcare
- **Maternity Payment** is money to help with the extra costs of a new child (including adopted children)
- **Maternity Immunisation Allowance** is a separate payment for children aged 18 - 24 months and who are fully immunised or have an approved exemption from immunisation.

They also offer other types of assistance such as:

- **Large Family Supplement** if you get Family Tax Benefit for three or more children, this will be added to your Family Tax Benefit for each child after the second

- **Multiple Birth Allowance** if three or more of your children were born at the same time, this extra payment will be added to your Family Tax Benefit
- **Rent Assistance** can give you extra help if you are eligible and you receive more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and you pay rent to private landlords
- **Healthcare Cards** are issued automatically if you are entitled to receive the maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and you get your payment through the Family Assistance Office. Other types of Healthcare Cards, are available under certain circumstances, for example, if you are receiving a social security income support payment, are a low-income earner who meets a particular income test or are caring for a foster child
- **Double Orphan Pension** provides additional assistance to raise children who are orphans
- **Jobs Education and Training Child Care** - Provides extra help with the cost of approved child care for eligible parents undertaking activities such as job search, work, study or rehabilitation as part of an activity agreement, to help them enter or re-enter the workforce.