



# Accessing your super early

Commonwealth Legislation and the scheme's governing rules will determine when and in what form you can be paid your super benefit. Generally all super benefits must remain in super until you reach your preservation age and retire from the workforce. You can access your preserved benefit once you satisfy a condition of release. These restrictions are designed to assist in ensuring that your super entitlements are available to provide you with an income in your retirement.

However, members may also apply for the early release of preserved and restricted non-preserved benefits where specific conditions exist. The early release of benefits is only permitted in very limited circumstances. This fact sheet provides you with information to assess whether you may be eligible to apply for early access to all or part of your super.

All applications should be completed in full and include original certified identification. If you need more information on how to certify and who can certify documents, please see the 'Completing proof of identity' fact sheet on the RBF website at [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au)

Certain conditions must exist to allow for the early release of your super benefit, these are:

- ▶ severe financial hardship;
- ▶ compassionate grounds;
- ▶ Total and Permanent Incapacity; or
- ▶ Terminal Illness.

## Severe financial hardship

The Contributory Scheme CPA is the only account that can be released under this condition.

### Category A

In order for an application for early release of your preserved super on the grounds of severe financial hardship to be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you are unable to meet reasonable and immediate family living expenses. All documentary evidence must not be more than one month old.

You will need to have been in receipt of income support payments from Centrelink for a continuous 26 week period. You should contact Centrelink to check whether you meet this condition and to obtain a Q230 Centrelink letter to include with your application to RBF. If you have not been receiving income support payments from Centrelink for a continuous 26 week period we are unable to consider your application for early release of your preserved super on the grounds of severe financial hardship.

If RBF approves your application, we may release one lump sum payment of between \$1,000 and \$10,000 gross.

If your account balance is less than \$1,000 RBF may release the gross balance of your account.

RBF can only release one payment in any 12 month period on the grounds of severe financial hardship. You cannot make another application for a release of funds until 12 months after the last payment was made.

### Category B

If you have attained your preservation age plus 39 weeks and are in receipt of a Centrelink income support payment for a continuous 26 week period, and you are not gainfully employed on a full-time or part-time basis you may apply to RBF to receive the balance of your RBF account on the grounds of early release. As you have attained preservation age there is:

- ▶ no restrictions on the number of applications you may make for a release of funds in any 12 month period;
- ▶ no restrictions on the amount requested for release; and
- ▶ no requirement to demonstrate that you are unable to meet reasonable and immediate family living expenses.

Gainfully employed means employed or self-employed for gain or reward in any business, trade, profession, vocation, calling, occupation or employment for at least 10 hours per week.

## Compassionate grounds

The Contributory Scheme CPA is the only account that can be released under this condition.

Depending on the scenario, RBF may be able to release a sum of money from your super on compassionate grounds. Each of these scenarios is explained below.

### 1 Medical treatment for yourself or one of your dependants

Two medical<sup>1</sup> practitioners (one of whom is a specialist) must certify that medical treatment is not readily available under the public health system and that it is needed to:

- ▶ treat a life-threatening illness or injury; or
- ▶ alleviate acute or chronic pain; or
- ▶ alleviate an acute or chronic mental disturbance.

<sup>1</sup> If your application is for dental work, RBF requires two dental practitioners (one of whom is a specialist) to provide certification.

## 2 Assist in payment for transport to receive medical treatment for the details in scenario 1

RBF can release money to assist you and/or one of your dependants to pay for transport to receive the above medical treatment.

## 3 Modifications of your home or vehicle to accommodate special needs

Where you or one of your dependants is suffering from a severe disability, RBF may release preserved benefits to assist in modifying your principal place of residence or your vehicle, to accommodate the special needs which arise as a result of that disability.

### To pay for palliative care

RBF may release preserved benefits to assist with expenses associated with the palliative care of you or one of your dependants where death is imminent.

## 4 Expenses associated with the death, funeral or burial of a dependant

The release of funds will assist with the payment of general expenses associated with the death, funeral or burial of a dependant, including travel expenses for immediate members of your family to attend the funeral.

## 5 To make a loan repayment to prevent the potential loss of your principal place of residence

### Home loan arrears

If your mortgage provider has indicated that they will sell your principal place of residence because you are in arrears with your mortgage payments, RBF may consider releasing a sum of money to prevent foreclosure. A principal place of residence is where you live permanently. Once approved RBF will release the benefit directly to your financial institution on your behalf to prevent further delays.

### Council rates arrears

If you are in arrears with the payment of rates to your local Council and the Council has advised that unless the arrears are paid they will sell your home, RBF may consider releasing a sum of money to prevent this from occurring. Once approved RBF will release the benefit directly to your local Council on your behalf to prevent further delays.

## 6 To pay for other expenses consistent with the above

For more information regarding accessing your super early on compassionate grounds please read the fact sheet 'Accessing your super early on compassionate grounds' available on the RBF website at [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au) or by calling the RBF Enquiry Line on **1800 622 631**.

## Who is a dependant?

For RBF purposes a dependant, in respect of a member, is defined as:

- ▶ their spouse;
- ▶ their child; or
- ▶ any other person with whom they have an interdependency relationship. The dependant must be wholly or partly financially dependent on the member and can include:
  - ▶ elderly parents or grandparents;
  - ▶ ex-spouse who is receiving maintenance for them or their children;
  - ▶ partner of the same sex; or
  - ▶ brothers or sisters.

If the dependant is any other person with whom the member has an interdependency relationship with, there is additional information required to be sent to RBF. The member must send a Statutory Declaration detailing:

- ▶ the dependant's age;
- ▶ their relationship with the dependant;
- ▶ any characteristics that require the dependant to rely on the member e.g. health or disability;
- ▶ any care arrangements put in place for the dependant;
- ▶ the dependant's income; and
- ▶ the level of financial support the member provides to the dependant.

Documentation supporting the dependant's financial dependency on the member should also be provided.

## Terminal Illness

RBF must be satisfied on the basis of medical and other evidence that the member is suffering from a Terminal Illness.

A Terminal Illness exists if two registered medical practitioners certify, in writing, that the member suffers from an illness, or has incurred an injury, that is likely to result in the death of the person within a 12 month period.

At least one of the medical practitioners must be a specialist in an area related to the illness or injury suffered by the person.

If RBF approves your application for Terminal Illness we will release your super benefit according to the scheme governing rules and Commonwealth requirements. For more information please read the 'Contributory Scheme – Death and Incapacity cover' brochure available on the RBF website at [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au) or by calling the RBF Enquiry Line on **1800 622 631**.

## Total and Permanent Incapacity

If you are suffering from illness or injury that will prevent you from returning to work you may make an application for the early release of your super benefit on the grounds of Total and Permanent Incapacity.

RBF must be satisfied on the basis of medical and other evidence that you are Totally and Permanently Incapacitated within the meaning of the scheme governing rules and Commonwealth requirements.

RBF will have regard to medical reports prepared by a medical practitioner appointed by the member as well as other medical evidence required by the Superannuation Commission.

If RBF approves your application for Total and Permanent Incapacity we will release your super benefit according to the scheme governing rules, the terms and conditions of any life insurance policy and Commonwealth requirements. For more information please read the 'Contributory Scheme – Death and Incapacity cover' brochure available on the RBF website at [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au) or by calling the RBF Enquiry Line on **1800 622 631**.

## What do I do now?

If you think you satisfy one of the conditions of release listed in this fact sheet you should contact RBF to request that the appropriate application form.

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This fact sheet contains general information only. It is not intended to be, and should not be relied upon as legal, financial or other advice. It has been prepared without taking into account your personal objectives, financial situation or needs. Consider whether this information is appropriate to your circumstances and read any relevant RBF documentation available at [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au) before making a decision. We also recommend that you consider talking to a financial adviser. Every care has been taken in providing accurate and up-to-date information in this fact sheet. However, things may have changed since this fact sheet was published and some of the information may no longer be correct. If there are mistakes or omissions in the information, we reserve the right to correct those errors or omissions. The governing rules of RBF will prevail over any misstatement in this fact sheet.

The privacy and confidentiality of your personal information is important to RBF. We hold your personal information securely and use it only for the purposes described in the RBF 'Privacy Policy', available on the RBF website at [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au)

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## Contacting RBF

Contact RBF if you would like additional information or assistance.

RBF Enquiry Line: 1800 622 631 or  
+61 3 8687 1863  
(international)

Visit: [www.rbf.com.au](http://www.rbf.com.au)

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