

*Financial Hardship

Financial hardship is defined as being on a Government short term income support payment paid by Centrelink including Youth, Jobsearch, Newstart & Sickness Allowances. A maximum period of suspension of up to 2 years may be allowed – but only while the member/spouse continues to receive the allowance. Periods beyond this will count towards “leave of absence” under the Lifetime Health Cover Legislation.

Conditions and Effect of Suspension:

Contributions No contributions are due or payable during the period of suspension.

Claiming A member is unable to make claims on the Fund for services performed during the period of suspension.

Premiums Membership may not be suspended unless the premiums have been paid to the date of departure or date of commencement of any income support payment.

Waiting Periods No waiting periods will apply on return to paying membership (if commenced within one month of your return), if all waiting periods were served at the time of suspension. For absences greater than 2 years waiting periods will apply unless you are working for the Seventh Day Adventist Church overseas.

Lifetime Health Cover

The period of suspension will not normally count as part of the two year Leave of Absence allowed under Lifetime Health Cover Legislation. (See Rule 26) (Applies only to Hospital Cover).

A member retains his/her “certified age”, under Lifetime Health Cover that applied at the commencement of the suspension.

Membership Conditions During Suspension

- The whole membership is suspended, meaning that a spouse or dependants are also not able to claim while the membership is suspended.
- Suspension will apply to all components of cover. For example Hospital and Ancillary cover if taken together.
- A member is only able to suspend membership once in any 1 year period – and not within 6 months of any previous suspension.
- Suspension does not count towards satisfaction of waiting periods or for calculating membership duration.
- Natural children born outside of Australia and children legally adopted (approved for membership) during a period of suspension will be covered at the time of recommencement providing all waiting periods were served by the member at the time of suspension.
- Any injury, ailment or illness arising during a period of suspension (which on the evidence did not exist at the time of suspension) may have a 12 month waiting period apply at the time of recommencement of membership. All decisions will be made in conjunction with the Fund’s medical advisor. The provisions of this clause shall apply to pregnancy and to legally adopted children.

Recommencement of Membership

- Recommencement of membership after a period of suspension will apply from the day of return to Australia or Centrelink benefits cease. If notification occurs more than 1 month after this time a new membership may be required with waiting and pre-existing ailment periods applied.
- Proof of departure and return dates (boarding passes, tickets, passport entries etc.) are required. Under financial hardship provisions copies of Centrelink letters are required.

Returning Early

In the event that you return earlier than the minimum 4 months you will need to contact the Fund to make arrangements to back pay or to restart your membership with waiting periods.

Suspension Effective Date

The date Suspension becomes effective will generally be:

- The date of departure from Australia for overseas travel or work.
- The date a member/spouse becomes eligible for an income support payment from Centrelink.
- The date of the suspension application if this date is after the date a member becomes eligible to suspend.

Other Points for You to Consider

Travel Insurance

Overseas medical costs can be very expensive, therefore we recommend that you arrange travel insurance before you leave Australia. ACA Health members receive a discount on Travel Insurance with QBE when booked via our website at www.acahealth.com.au

Additional 1% Medicare levy

The Federal Government has introduced an additional 1% Medicare levy for people who do not have hospital cover and who earn more than \$77,000 per annum as a single person or more than \$154,000 per annum as a couple or family. Please be aware that suspending your hospital cover may leave you liable to pay this additional Medicare levy. For more information please visit the Australian Taxation Office website www.ato.gov.au or phone 13 28 62