

Frequently Asked Questions



What are my hardship assistance options?

Hardship arrangements cover the time between when your circumstances change, and when you can start repaying your debts in full again. In most cases, people just need some temporary help to get them through the tough times. The arrangement options available will depend on your personal circumstances and financial situation, and may include:

- Tailoring a payment arrangement
- Deferring or reducing loan repayments for a defined period of time
- Extending the loan term
- Capitalising loan arrears

It is important to contact us early so that we can discuss your situation and provide the best options available to you.

What is the application process?

If you think you are, or will be unable to meet your debt obligations, please contact us as soon as possible. Depending on your situation, we may be able to provide assistance quickly and efficiently over the phone.

Alternatively, we may require further information and documentation to help us understand your financial position and determine whether assistance is appropriate. The Bank may require:

- A statement of financial position to be completed, summarising your current income, expenditure, assets and liabilities
- An employment contract and/or payslips
- Your account statements
- A Centrelink statement and/or social security payment details
- A medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner
- An employment separation statement
- A contract of sale/ sales agency agreement
- Other documents which support your request

Once you have provided us with all the requested information necessary to review your financial situation, we will provide you with a decision within 21 days.

How will we assess your application for financial difficulty assistance?

Our dedicated team will contact you. When assessing your request, they will take into account factors including:

- The reason for financial difficulty
- Your current financial position
- Your ability to meet the commitments under the proposed arrangement and future repayments under the contract
- The ability to rehabilitate your circumstances (based on whether the financial difficulty assistance will offer genuine relief and restore your financial situation)

How we will confirm the hardship arrangement?

We will tell you in writing if we can assist you, the reason for our decision to provide assistance, and the main details of the proposed new arrangements. You will need to ensure that you meet the terms of the new agreement. If you are subsequently unable to meet these terms, you should contact us as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

What happens if my application is declined?

There may be a number of reasons why we decide not to provide financial difficulty assistance. If this is the case, the reason for the decision will be explained to you in writing. We will also seek to discuss the next steps we will take and other available options with you.

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome of the assessment?

Please contact us on 1300 660 550 and request that your application is reviewed by our Internal Dispute Resolution team. We will promptly investigate your complaint and notify you of the outcome.

If you are not satisfied with the response provided, you have the option of referring the matter to the Customer Advocate who will impartially assess your complaint, keep you informed of the progress and provide you with a response.

The Customer Advocate can be contacted by:
Telephone: 1300 139 572 (+61 3 5485 7919) between 8:30am and 5:00pm Victorian time, weekdays
Email: customeradvocate@bendigoadelaide.com.au
Post/letter: write to Customer Advocate,
P.O. Box 480
Bendigo VIC 3552.

Alternatively (or following consideration by the Customer Advocate) you may refer your complaint directly to:

Australian Financial Complaints Authority
GPO Box 3
Melbourne VIC 3001
Phone: 1800 931 678
Fax: 03 9613 6399
Email: info@afca.org.au
www.afca.org.au

Other useful resources

If you are experiencing financial difficulty, useful resources are available to you. These include:

[Our Financial Difficulty Brochure.](#)

The National Debt Helpline or website www.ndh.org.au, which has easy to use, step-by-step guides on how to tackle debts. You can also call the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007 to talk to a financial counsellor for free, independent advice about your situation.

The Financial Counselling Australia website www.financialcounsellingaustralia.org.au provides information on finding a financial counselling agency in your area.

The ABA's 'Financial Hardship' website provides information about financial hardship, including what you can do if you are experiencing financial difficulties, how your bank can help, where to go for more information and how to apply for hardship assistance.

See www.ausbanking.org.au/policy/customers/financial-hardship/

ASIC's 'MoneySmart' website provides information and tools to help you make the most of your money. See www.moneysmart.gov.au

Contact Us T: 1300 660 550