

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia

ICPA (AUST) Inc



POLICIES

Updated May 2014

ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (INC)

EDUCATION ALLOWANCES

POLICY:

ICPA seeks equity of access to an appropriate education for rural and remote students by ensuring the provision of suitable government allowances which assist with compensating the families of these students for the additional costs incurred in educating their children.

OBJECTIVES:

1. All components of the current Federal Government funded Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) scheme be continued.
The components of AIC are:
 - a) a non-means tested distance education allowance for students who do not have reasonable daily access to a government school and are studying primary or secondary education by distance education
 - b) a non-means tested basic boarding allowance for students who do not have reasonable daily access to a government school and must live away from home to access an education
 - c) an additional boarding allowance, based on a parental income test, for students living away from home to access an education
 - d) a non-means tested second home allowance, equivalent to the basic boarding allowance, for families who establish a second home to access an appropriate education for their children
2. Assistance for Isolated Children allowance be:
 - a) reviewed annually
 - b) increased annually by at least the CPI
 - c) exempt from income tax
3. Access to the AIC allowance for students in rural and remote areas who need to live away from home in order to attend a school which provides a curriculum appropriate to the student's needs.
4. AIC allowance be available for all 4 year olds enrolled in a recognised early childhood distance education program.
5. Provision for 100% discount for owner-operated small rural business and farm assets currently included for the purpose of calculating the Youth Allowance assets test.
6. Rural and remote students, who must live away from home to access further education upon completion of secondary school, be classified as independent for Youth Allowance purposes.
7. The Federal Government annually reviews the following for students who receive the away from home rate of Youth Allowance:
 - a) the personal income limit

- b) the liquid asset limit
- c) the student income bank limit

8. Students in receipt of Youth Allowance at the independent rate due to assessment based on the existence of drought, fire or flood conditions, remain eligible for payments at that rate until the completion of their course.
9. Scholarships and bursaries be excluded from assessable income for the purpose of student income support.
10. Ensure that requirements of the Family Actual Means test do not disadvantage eligibility for Youth Allowance for students who must live away from home to access education.
11. Provision of a tertiary access allowance for rural and remote students who must live away from home to access their chosen course.