



The Hon Alan Tudge MP
Minister for Human Services

MC17-011609

The Hon Kelly Vincent MLC
Parliament House
ADELAIDE SA 5000

21 NOV 2017

17 NOV 2017

Dear Ms Vincent *Kelly*

Thank you for your letter of 16 October 2017 regarding how the Cashless Debit Card (CDC) operates in respect to the payment of housing expenses. I appreciate the time you have taken to make this enquiry.

The CDC was designed to allow a range of payment options for things like rent or regular bills. These include BPAY, direct debit arrangements, or setting up recurring deductions. This ensures participants lives are not disrupted as the program works to reduce consumption of alcohol and drugs and reduce gambling.

For situations where it is not possible to make housing payments using the CDC or with BPAY, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will assist participants to honour pre-existing arrangements, such as payments to a landlord for private rent or for mortgage repayments.

Individual housing limits can be setup at the time a participant transitions onto the program based on existing housing information held by Centrelink. This means that not all housing limits will be set at the default of \$0 per month when participants transition onto the card.

While participants are on the program, they can amend these limits at any time by contacting the DSS Hotline on 1800 252 604. A participant requesting to amend their housing limit would need to provide evidence to DSS of a lease agreement or sign a rent declaration form.

The level of support and range of services provided during the implementation of the CDC was found to be effective in the initial trial sites. The Final Evaluation released on 1 September 2017 found that having access to DSS officers on the ground worked well to ensure personal circumstances were considered at the time they transitioned onto the program.

If you are interested in reading the report, it is available at <https://www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children/programs-services/welfare-quarantining/cashless-debit-card-trial-evaluation-reports>.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely

Alan Tudge