

APPENDIX B.11

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Summary

Human Services reported 13 measures¹ during the year, with a total net regulatory saving of \$132.7 million per year. The department has implemented a range of measures which streamline individuals' interactions with government. Individuals now benefit from a range of new online claim processes, improvements to online functionality and faster confirmation of concession entitlements. Requirements have been removed for some individuals to attend certain interviews with the department, reducing the need to call the department or visit a service centre. The department has also improved processes for health professionals who interact with the department, removing manual and paper-based arrangements and transitioning to digital channels. The department is continuing work to identify further initiatives which will reduce red tape for individuals, businesses and third parties.

Regulatory measures reported since the 2015 Spring Repeal Day²

With an impact of greater than \$2 million

Human Services/
Employment

Removing duplication for job seekers³

- In July 2015, the Department of Human Services removed duplicate processes for job seekers demonstrating they have met participation requirements.
- Over 500,000 job seekers will no longer need to attend Personal Contact Interviews with Human Services, reducing the need to call the department or visit a service centre. Instead, job seekers will continue to report their participation activities online and periodically meet with employment service providers to meet participation requirements.
- The Department of Human Services has estimated this change will lead to an annual saving of \$80.4 million in compliance cost savings which will be shared equally with the Department of Employment.

¹ Measures counted here only include decisions with a regulatory impact. Measures with a zero regulatory impact have been excluded.

² These measure descriptions relate to new decisions taken and reported between the Spring 2015 Repeal Day and 31 December 2015. Descriptions of regulatory increases or regulatory decreases generally capture those measures with a regulatory change in excess of \$2 million per annum.

³ The treatment of participation requirements was consistent with the Regulatory Burden Measurement (RBM) framework in effect at the point the decision was taken. Effective 30 September 2015, the Government amended guidance about the treatment of enforcement costs under the RBM. Further details on these changes, including the implications for assessing burden on job seekers, are outlined in the *Regulatory Burden Measurement Framework Guidance Note (February 2016)*. See <https://ris.govspace.gov.au/files/2016/02/Regulatory-Burden-Measurement-framework-guidance-note.pdf>

Human Services	Online claiming – Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September 2015, the Department of Human Services enhanced the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card online claim process. • The improved process includes dynamic questions to ensure only questions relevant to a customer’s circumstances are asked, providing a more tailored service for over 55,000 customers who claim the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card per year. • The Department of Human Services has estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$2.1 million in compliance costs. 	
Human Services	Improvements to the Income Management programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In July 2015 the Department of Human Services streamlined requirements for customers in the Income Management programme as part of announcements made in the 2015-16 Budget. • As part of a suite of changes, certain assessments under the Income Management programme are now conducted on an ‘as-needs’ basis, reducing the requirement for approximately 27,000 customers per year to call the Department of Human Services or visit a service centre. • The Department of Human Services has estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$3.6 million in compliance costs. 	
Human Services	Making it easier for families to claim online
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2015 the department increased automation in online claims for families. • The improved process pre-populates additional information the department already holds for customers applying online for some payments such as the Child Care Benefit, and allows customers to complete certain claims as part of one process instead of completing different claims. These improvements are expected to benefit approximately 318,000 families per year. • The Department of Human Services has estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$2.9 million in compliance costs. 	

2015 regulatory measures, previously reported in conjunction with the Autumn and Spring Repeal Days

These measures below are reproductions of the 2015 Autumn and Spring Repeal Day overview descriptions and have not be amended.⁴ Where necessary, supplementary information is shown as blue text.

Health/Human Services	Amending the <i>Health and Other Services (Compensation) Act 1995</i> (Autumn)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the 2015 Autumn Repeal Day, sections 18(2) and 23A of the <i>Health and Other Services (Compensation) Act 1995</i> (HOSC) will be amended to remove the requirement for compensation recipients to submit a statutory declaration about benefits provided under Commonwealth Government programmes for Medicare, nursing home, residential care and, from 1 July 2015, home care services. Compensation recipients will save time by being able to declare that the information provided is true and correct using the existing forms required to complete this process, which will be updated to reflect the removal of the statutory declaration requirement. Section 23(6) of the HOSC Act will also be amended to remove the requirement for a Notice of Judgment or Settlement form to be signed by both the compensation recipient and the compensation payer and instead only the compensation payer is required to sign. The Department of Health and the Department of Human Services have estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$41.4 million in compliance costs. NB: This measure was part of the Omnibus Repeal Day (Autumn 2015) Bill.
Human Services / Health	Easier and faster reconciliation of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme claims (Spring)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2015 the Department of Human Services improved the process for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) approved suppliers to submit claims to the Department. Over 5,600 PBS approved suppliers were previously required to submit hardcopy prescriptions to the Department of Human Services as part of a claim process. Ceasing the requirement for approved suppliers to bundle and submit paper prescriptions to the Department now saves time, postage costs and enables easier and faster reconciliation of claims. The Department of Human Services and Department of Health have estimated this will lead to an annual saving of \$18.8 million in compliance costs.

⁴ To align this table with the 2015 calendar year, any measures accounted for in the previous annual report have been excluded.

Human Services	Faster confirmation of concession entitlements (Spring)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2015 the Department of Human Services improved the process for businesses wishing to access electronic customer details when providing a concession rebate or service. • The Department of Human Services can now approve a new category of business to receive customer information electronically. An estimated 40,000 customers each year will no longer need to manually verify their details with these concession providers to receive a concession or service. • The Department of Human Services has estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$6.8 million in compliance costs.
Human Services	Improving claims processes and online functionality (Spring)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015 the Department of Human Services made more of its services available online. • A range of new online claims and improvements to existing online claims will benefit customers by providing a more tailored service, including through using dynamic questions to ensure only questions relevant to a customer's circumstances are asked. Over 40,000 customers claiming Mobility Allowance and Sickness Allowance now have access to an online claim and over 60,000 customers transferring to Age Pension are able to benefit from an improved online claim process. • More customers can now notify the Department of Human Services of more changes in circumstances online without having to call the department or visit a service centre. For example, over 400,000 customers can now update their managed investment and real estate details online. • The Department of Human Services has estimated that these measures and other improvements to service delivery will lead to an annual saving of \$24.2 million in compliance costs.
Human Services	Improving the Proof of Identity process for Centrelink customers (Spring)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2015 the Department of Human Services assigned existing Centrelink customers with sufficient identity information a "confirmed identity status". • Centrelink customers with a confirmed identity status will no longer need to provide identity documentation when claiming a new payment, reducing the need for an estimated 180,000 customers to visit a service centre each year. • The Department of Human Services has estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$4.4 million in compliance costs.

Human Services	Launching the Medicare Bulk Bill Webclaim (Spring)
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- In June 2015 the Department of Human Services launched Medicare Bulk Bill Webclaim.
- This measure reduces administrative burden by allowing health professionals to submit Medicare bulk bill claims online, as an alternative to the current paper-based channel.
- The Department of Human Services has estimated that this will lead to an annual saving of \$16.8 million in compliance costs.

Further information

If you have a question about the information provided here, please email Ms Simone Pensko, National Manager, Deregulation and Portfolio Advice from the Department of Human Services at Simone.Pensko@humanservices.gov.au.