

Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2019–20; Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

Description

All states and territories provide private rental assistance through a number of programs and maintain administrative data sets about these programs. Extracts of these data sets are provided annually to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The Private Rent Assistance (PRA) programs offered by the states and territories are:

- bond loans (all states and territories)
- rental grants (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania)
- ongoing rental subsidies (New South Wales)
- relocation expenses (Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory)
- other assistance (Western Australia and Tasmania).

Data are provided for PRA received during the 2019–20 financial year.

Summary

- The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of PRA programs run by the states and territories and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.
- The data are published in AIHW reports.
- Care should be taken when comparing data across time due to changes in the underlying PRA programs and how they are classified.

Institutional environment: The AIHW is a major national agency set up in 1987 by the Australian government under the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987](#) (AIHW Act) to provide reliable regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent statutory authority, which is governed by a [management board](#) and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Australian Government Health portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide variety of topics and issues, including health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, mental health, ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The AIHW also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work helps improve the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The AIHW works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to these standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national datasets based on data from each jurisdiction, analyse these data sets and disseminate information and statistics.

Compliance with the provisions of both the AIHW Act and the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth) ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

For further information, see the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au.

The AIHW receives, compiles, edits and verifies the data in collaboration with states and territories. The finalised data sets are signed off by the states and territories and used by the AIHW for reporting, analysis and approved ad hoc data requests. Requests for jurisdiction-level data releases must be signed off by the relevant state or territory.

Timeliness: The reference period for the PRA data collection is based on the financial year (ending 30 June). Data are collected and published annually. The specific reference period for these data is 2019–20.

Accessibility: Data are reported in the AIHW's annual [Housing assistance in Australia](#) reports.

Users can request additional disaggregation of data which are not available online or in reports (subject to the AIHW's confidentiality policy and state and territory approval) via the AIHW's online data request system at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/our-services/data-on-request>. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may also incur costs or require approval from the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General enquiries about AIHW publications can be directed to info@aihw.gov.au.

Interpretability: Metadata and definitions relating to this data source can be found in the [Private rent assistance data set specification 2013-](#)

Supplementary information can be found in the housing collection data manuals which are available upon request.

Relevance:

The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of PRA programs administered by the states and territories and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.

PRA, for the purpose of this collection, relates to the provision of financial assistance to enable households to access and maintain accommodation in the private rental market and includes:

- bond loans
- rental grants
- rental subsidies
- relocation expenses
- other assistance grants.

Accuracy:

There are known accuracy issues with the data collected.

- The administrative data sets from which this collection is drawn have inaccuracies to varying degrees including missing data and data coding or recording errors.
- Not all states and territories collect data items as per data specifications.
- Information about the Indigenous status of the household is not collected for some programs within the PRA collection. Approximately 6% of households recorded in the 2019–20 collection had an unknown Indigenous status.
- Caution is also advised when reviewing the Indigenous status of the household. Households receiving more than one type of assistance may report different Indigenous statuses.

State- and territory-specific issues:

Queensland

- Due to increased emergency responses provided in 2019–20, there was an increase in number of households where income source was not stated/inadequately described.
- Weekly rent charged is not available in Western Australia's reporting system.
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South Australia

- Reporting of non-assessable income is not mandatory. Therefore, gross weekly household income information may be under-reported.

Australian Capital Territory

- Sex of main applicant is not part of the collection for the Australian Capital Territory. It is derived from the applicant's title and name.
- Rent charged is not collected for relocation expenses assistance.

Northern Territory

- Weekly rent charged is not available in the Northern Territory's reporting system.

Coherence:

States and territories may publish their own analysis of private rent assistance data which may vary in scope from this collection.

Differences in the data collected and which records are included or excluded from a calculation in different states and territories affect the coherence of the output

comparisons across states and territories.

Coherence over time has been affected by changes in the methodology. For example:

- Numbers of households assisted by rental grants, subsidies and relief cannot be directly compared with figures produced prior to 2011–12 due to a change in methodology.
- Since 2017–18, remoteness area (RA) is determined using the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 RA classification. Previous years used the 2011 RA classification. Care is therefore required when comparing remoteness data across time.

Income details (gross weekly household income and principal source of income) are at the time of application with the following exceptions:

- New South Wales—income details are recorded at the time of PRA application and updated in March and September of each year. The most recent record is used for reporting
- Victoria and Queensland—at 30 June. Therefore, reported income may be different to the income received at the time of assistance.

Care should be taken when comparing gross weekly household income across states and territories. New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory include CRA in gross weekly income, while Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory do not. Therefore, gross weekly household income in some states and territories may be artificially lower than others because of the non-reporting of CRA.

Weekly rent is at time of application with the following exceptions:

- New South Wales—weekly rent is recorded at the time of PRA application and updated as and when the rent increases. The most recent record is used for reporting
- Queensland—at 30 June.
- Western Australia and the Northern Territory do not provide weekly rent.

State- and territory-specific issues:

New South Wales

- For the years up to and including 2010–11, temporary accommodation was included under 'rental grants, subsidies and relief'. Temporary accommodation was no longer included from 2011–12. Thus, data on the number of households assisted by rental grants, subsidies and relief are not comparable with the data from 2010–11 and earlier reference periods.
- From 2011–12, hotel/motel assistance is not included in the collection. Prior to 2011–12, hotel/motel assistance was included under rental grants, subsidies and relief. Thus, the number of households assisted through rental grants, subsidies and relief from 2011–12 are not comparable with earlier collections.
- From 2015–16, Indigenous status of the household is required to be collected from all PRA recipients. This has led to better identification of Indigenous clients.

Victoria

- For the years up to and including 2012–13, unit record data could not be provided for households assisted under the housing establishment fund. As such, estimates were provided for these households, which were based on funding levels and historical data. From 2013–14, estimates were no longer provided. Thus, care is advised when reviewing data from 2013–14 onwards with that of previous years.
- As a result of a system change in 2012–13, caution is advised when comparing gross weekly household income. Although a household may appear to have little or no income, they are most likely receiving appropriate levels of income and these changes may not be reflected accurately in the system.

Western Australia

- During the 2014–15 reporting period, systems were changed to allow better data validation to improve data quality of Indigenous status. Prior to 2014–15, there was greater variation in missing data for Indigenous status.
- The change to the reporting system in 2014–15 also resulted in the discontinuation of data relating to weekly rent charged from 2015–16 onwards.
- In 2014–15, Western Australia made improvements to the process through which income-related data was entered and validated. The new process provided an increased selection of income types. This enhanced the accuracy of mapping to national codes.

South Australia

- Prior to 2011–12, clients receiving emergency hotel/motel accommodation were reported under 'rental grants, subsidies and relief'.
- From 2011–12 to 2018–19, clients receiving emergency hotel/motel accommodation were reported under 'other'. Thus, the number of households assisted through 'other' assistance from 2011–12 are not comparable with earlier collections. Weekly rent was not available for this type of assistance and gross weekly income amount and source were not always available.
- From 2019–20, emergency hotel/motel accommodation is not considered in-scope for this collection.
- Prior to 2015–16, Indigenous status of the main applicant was reported rather than the Indigenous status of the household. Therefore, any comparisons with previous years for South Australia and other states and territories should be undertaken with caution.
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Australian Capital Territory

- Until the commencement of the new Rental Bond Help program in November 2018, income information was generally collected for assessable income items only (assessable income as defined in the Public Rental Housing Assistance Program legislative instrument). Consequently, accurate gross income is not available for all program recipients and caution should be exercised when interpreting data for households experiencing housing stress.
- In 2016–17, there was improved data quality in the identification of Indigenous data.
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- Prior to 2018–19, the date of assistance was the date the assistance was approved for payment. From 2018–19, the date of assistance is the date on which it was paid.

Northern Territory

- Prior to 2018–19, Indigenous households were under-reported because details of non-income earning household members were not captured in the collection.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Supersedes [Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2018–19; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 24/02/2021

Has been superseded by [Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2020–21; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 27/03/2023