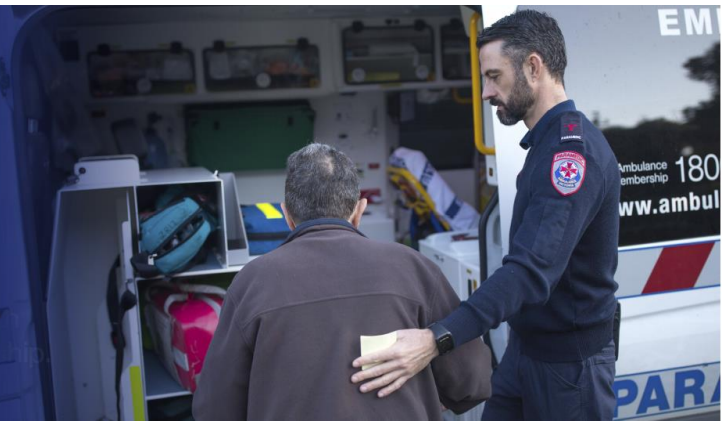


Experiencing Hardship?

Ambulance Victoria is committed to working with consumers who are experiencing hardship.



Ambulance Victoria responds to emergency and other calls for medical help from those in need in our community. We have a statutory obligation to do this under the Ambulance Services Act 1986 and we will always perform this service, regardless of a consumer's financial status or ability to pay. This is part of our commitment to Victoria, and is supported by the Victorian Government.

We understand that sometimes an unexpected life event can affect a consumer's ability to pay for the ambulance service they have received. We also understand that sometimes there are situations where exemption from billing is appropriate on compassionate grounds.

Compassionate Exemptions

Ambulance Victoria will offer a compassionate exemption to patients where the case record indicates that the patient:

- ▶ Required an ambulance following a sexual assault;
- ▶ Required an ambulance following domestic violence or child abuse;
- ▶ Was an infant who was deceased as the result of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome; or
- ▶ Was a deceased child under the age of 17 years.

Additionally we do not charge for treatment without transport services provided to members of Victoria's emergency services, whilst the members are on duty.

Consideration for Hardship

Any consumer facing genuine difficulty can apply for hardship consideration. We have a policy to support consumers who experience both temporary and long-term difficulties, and offer a range of options to help.

Your rights

Each consumer experiencing hardship has the right to:

- ▶ be treated with respect, compassion and without judgement,
- ▶ have access to an interpreter if required,
- ▶ receive information about alternative payment arrangements, as well as relevant government concessions,
- ▶ choose from various payment methods in accordance with personal and financial circumstances,
- ▶ nominate a payment arrangement that is affordable for consideration,
- ▶ be exempt from any legal action and additional debt recovery costs whilst negotiating or participating in a payment arrangement, and
- ▶ receive information about our complaint and dispute resolution procedures.

Understanding entitlements

Many consumers are not required to pay for Ambulance Victoria services, including:

Insured consumers

Consumers who have a current Ambulance Victoria membership are insured against ambulance costs. Interstate consumers may be covered under arrangements in their home state.

Many private health insurance funds also provide ambulance cover in their policies. There can be restrictions on ambulance services, so it's important to understand the exact level of cover your policy entitles you to.

Concession Card holders

An exemption applies if you held any of the following cards at the time you received ambulance services:

- individuals with a current Victorian Pensioner Concession Card (includes listed dependent children but not spouses)
- individuals with a current Health Care Card including listed dependents and spouses (excludes Health Care Card for carer allowance and foster care issued in the name of the child),
- individuals with a current Veterans Affairs Gold Card and some White Card holders, and
- children holding Child Disability Health Care Cards or Foster Child Health Care Cards (but not listed parents or guardians).

Special exemptions also apply for children under care orders, compulsory mental health patients and eligible asylum seekers.

Payment arrangements

Consumers who are experiencing financial hardship can set up payment arrangements. We will work with you to ensure that the payments are affordable and meet your personal circumstances. To discuss these options, please contact us on 1800 990 029.

Interpreter service

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask them to telephone Ambulance Victoria on 1800 990 029. Our business hours are 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Financial counselling

Our staff can also refer consumers to an independent service that provides free financial counselling. Consumers can discuss their financial situation with an accredited provider in a confidential setting, receive advice and access support services available to them. Please contact us if you would like to be referred to this service.

Contact us

If you're having difficulty understanding your entitlement or making your invoice payment, or you believe that your invoice should be considered for compassionate exemption, please contact our Consumer Support team on 1800 990 029 for a confidential conversation.