

# Raise the Rate I Sector Resource Pack

## **Introduction**

**In the lead up to the Federal Budget, ACOSS is asking community service organisations to use their voice to urge their local MP to support an increase to income support.**

We know that for many people around the country, the last few months have been the most difficult they've ever experienced.

Even before the recent cost-of-living crisis, people on income support were struggling to cover basic expenses. But in the last twelve months, rents have risen by about 18% and food by about 9%. **People on income support are bearing the brunt of these rising costs.**

**As a community service organisation, you're seeing the impact of this every day** – you're hearing it from the communities you work with and seeing it in increased demand for your services. **You can provide a key perspective to politicians about the urgent need to increase income support.**

That's why in the lead up to the budget, we need you to use your voice to advocate to your local MP. **There are two key actions we're asking organisations to take:**

1. Write a letter to your local MP
2. Mobilise your staff to call their local MP

We've included all the resources you need in the pack below, including:

- Key points to include in a letter to your MP
- Templates you can send to your staff
- Tools to support your staff to take action

If you have any further questions, you can reach out to our Senior Campaigner Stacey Batterham at [stacey@acoss.org.au](mailto:stacey@acoss.org.au).

## **Write a letter to your MP**

In early May the government will hand down the federal budget. That means that **right now, our political leaders are attending meetings and reviewing briefs to decide which measures will be included.**

We need to make sure that supportive politicians go into those meetings armed with the information they need to advocate for an increase in income support, and that those who are undecided feel the weight of community pressure.

**We know that politicians give more weight to local information, evidence and correspondence.** That's why we're urging services around the country working with low-income communities to write to their local MP, share what they're seeing and urge them to support an increase in income support.

### **Can you write to your local MP?**

In your letter you may want include:

- How the low rate of income support affects the community you serve
- Any change you're seen in demand for your services in the past year
- Any trends you're hearing from people on income support that access your services

You may also want to offer to meet them in person to discuss this further prior to the federal budget.

You may find these resources helpful:

- [ACOSS policy brief outlining the case for increasing income support:](https://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Addressing-inadequacy-of-income-support-2023-final.pdf)  
<https://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Addressing-inadequacy-of-income-support-2023-final.pdf>
- [A map showing the rates of income support by electorate:](https://pip.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=13c486b6ed024a43be54355fafa605eb)  
<https://pip.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=13c486b6ed024a43be54355fafa605eb>

## **Mobilise your staff to call their local MP**

**Flooding MP offices with personal phone calls is one of the most powerful ways of grabbing a politician's attention and persuading them to increase income support.**

The Raise the Rate for Good campaign has mobilised individuals receiving inadequate income support to lobby their local member. But **employees of community service organisations can bring an important additional perspective** and help back in these calls from people struggling to get by on income support.

### **Can you mobilise your staff to call their local MP?**

In order to support you and your employees we've included below:

- A template email you can personalise and send to your staff asking them to make a call
- A tool that helps them identify their local MP and provides a template call script

## **Template email to send to your staff**

{NAME},

**In the coming weeks, the Federal Government will finalise its plans for the Federal Budget.** ACOSS is asking people working in community service organisations around the country to contact their local MP and urge them to support an increase to income support in the budget.

**Can you make a phone call sharing your experience of working with people on income support, and urging them to support an increase to income support?**

**<https://raisetherateforgood.good.do/topbudgetpriority/call/>**

We as staff working in service organisations can bring an important perspective and help back in calls for increased rates of payment from people struggling to get by on income support.

The Raise the Rate for Good campaign has put together a tool to help you make a phone call. **Click here to access the call tool.** **<https://raisetherateforgood.good.do/topbudgetpriority/call/>**

Many thanks,  
{NAME}