Education Maintenance Allowance - information for parents currently receiving EMA

Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013:

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is provided by the Victorian Government to lower-income families to help with education-related costs.

If you have a child under 16, and hold a valid Health Care Card, Pension Card, or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible to receive the EMA. The allowance is paid in two instalments, one in March and one in August.

From 2013, the EMA will no longer be paid 50/50 between the parent and the school. The 50% school portion of the EMA will no longer be paid to schools on behalf of parents.

The School Start Bonus which was previously received by EMA families has been discontinued as a separate payment from 2013.

In 2013, the annual EMA amount is:

- $200 for prep students
- $150 for students in years 1 – 6

The payment is intended to assist with education-related costs such as; uniforms, excursions, textbooks, and stationery.

EMA payment options

You can elect to have your EMA paid in one of the following ways:

- Paid to the school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses;
  (This is the preferred option for our school as it enables us to allocate these funds towards your outstanding costs for the student bookpack, fees and the special events pre-payment.)
- Paid by direct deposit (Electronic Funds Transfer) into your own nominated bank account;
- Paid by cheque which will be posted to the school for collection or sign over.

The introduction of the new payment option to have the EMA payment directed to the school provides parents with extra flexibility to assist with budgeting towards education expenses.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for the EMA in 2013, you must:

- be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen; and
- be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004* or be a Veterans Affairs (TPI) pensioner or be a temporary foster parent.

  * i.e – the parent/guardian must be the holder of a valid Health Care Card or valid Pension Card.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at 29 January 2013 (Instalment One) and 15 July 2013 (Instalment Two).

Payment Amounts 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prep</th>
<th>Years 1 - 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instalment One</td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instalment Two</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Total</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$150</td>
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**How to Apply:** The EMA application form will be distributed with school bookpack information or you can contact the school office for further information.

**Closing Date:** Parents/guardians need to lodge an EMA application form by 28 February 2013.


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**Schoolkids Bonus:**
From January 2013, a new payment called the 'Schoolkids Bonus' will be introduced by the Commonwealth Government. The Schoolkids Bonus will be paid by Centrelink in January and July each year to help families with school costs.

Families receiving Family Tax Benefit Part A will receive:

- up to $410 for each child in primary school

You should consider putting these funds aside to cover schooling costs.


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**Sample EMA form:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL NAME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surname</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town/Suburb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcode</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTACT PHONE NUMBER</th>
<th>CENTRELINK PENSIONER</th>
<th>CONCESSION / HEALTH CARE CARD NUMBER (CRN)</th>
<th>FOSTER PARENT</th>
<th>VETERANS AFFAIRS PENSIONER</th>
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**EMA PAYMENT METHOD**
- Direct Deposit to parent
- Direct Deposit to school
- Cheque

**ACCOUNT NAME**
(e.g. John Smith)

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**
(e.g. Westpac) AND BRANCH

**BSS No.**

**BANK ACCOUNT No.**

**STUDENT DETAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD’S SURNAME</th>
<th>CHILD’S FIRST NAME</th>
<th>STUDENT ID</th>
<th>DATE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>YEAR LEVEL</th>
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</thead>
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The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development collects your personal information for the purposes of administering the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) payment. Your personal information may be disclosed to other Victorian Government departments, such as the Department of Human Services, for the purpose of verification and monitoring of maintenance and services.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development may disclose some of your personal information to Centrelink to confirm that the details provided for the EMA payment are complete. You may access and request access to your personal information by contacting the Victorian Education Department. You should consider putting these funds aside to cover schooling costs.

**SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT**

**DATE**

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School’s preference