

Claiming a Terminal Illness benefit

Frequently Asked Questions

June 2025





We're here to help

Speak with one of our Claims consultants on **1300 008 605**, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (AEST/AEDT). If you're calling from overseas, please call us on +61 3 9192 4446.

You should read these Frequently Asked Questions along with the *Claiming a Terminal Illness benefit guide*. You can access this document at [**mercersuper.com.au/claims**](https://mercersuper.com.au/claims).

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Claiming a Terminal Illness benefit: Frequently Asked Questions

You should read these Frequently Asked Questions along with the *Claiming a Terminal Illness benefit guide*. You can find the guide at mercersuper.com.au/claims.

1. What is a terminal illness benefit?

A terminal illness benefit (if approved by the insurer) gives you a lump sum payment if it's been medically confirmed that your illness is terminal, and you have less than 24 months to live. Your Case Manager will let you know if your Mercer Super plan has a shorter life expectancy requirement than 24 months. This benefit is included as part of your death insurance cover. The payment is generally tax free.

2. How do I know if I'm eligible?

To receive a terminal illness benefit, the insurer must determine that you meet their definition of terminal illness, which may vary based on which Mercer Super plan you're in.

It generally requires the following conditions to be met:

- Two registered medical practitioners have certified that you have 24 months* or less to live (at least one of the treating doctors must be a specialist practicing in an area related to your illness or injury).
- The insurer agrees with the doctors' assessments
- Both certificates are current and valid (within 24 months from the certification date)
- Your cover was current at the dates of each of the two medical certificates

*Your Case Manager will let you know if your Mercer Super plan has a shorter life expectancy requirement and which terminal illness definition applies to you.

3. What dates are important to my insurance claim?

There are important dates for a terminal illness claim. They are:

1. The date your cover started. Note: If you have voluntary cover as well as default cover, there will likely be separate start dates
2. The dates of the two medical certificates must be on or after the date your cover started
3. Your insurance must be current as at the date of the second medical certificate

Your Case Manager will be able to assist.

4. Are there different types of terminal illness cover?

Yes, terminal illness cover consists of two parts: default and voluntary.

- **Default cover:** Most members automatically receive default death cover (which includes terminal illness) once they meet certain eligibility criteria. This usually means they're at least 25 years old with a super account balance of at least \$6,000.
- **Voluntary cover:** Some members choose to have that extra layer of protection on top of their default death cover, which can be applied for through their Mercer Super account. Voluntary cover can be for a specific amount, usually to cover your specific financial needs. Sometimes the insurer may decide to offer you cover subject to additional terms and conditions.

5. What are limitations and exclusions?

This is where you may not be paid cover due to a clause in your policy. It could also limit the amount you're entitled to. If this is the case, you will be advised once your claim has been assessed by the insurer.

Your Case Manager can provide you with further information on the limitations and exclusions that may apply.

Standard limitations and exclusions apply to all members with default insurance which is issued automatically. If you have voluntary cover, you may have personal exclusions that apply, as agreed with the insurer.

6. What if I don't have insurance cover?

If you don't have death cover with us, you may be eligible for a Terminal Medical Condition payment (which is your super account balance only). One of the requirements will be supplying certificates from two registered medical practitioners (at least one of the treating doctors must be a specialist practicing in an area related to your illness or injury) certifying:

That you suffer from an illness, or have incurred an injury, that is likely to result in death within 24 months of the date of certification.

This wording will be included on the forms for the doctors to complete.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The key people involved include you, your case manager, the insurer and the trustee.

You

Provide any information requested by your Case Manager and keep them informed of any changes to your personal or medical situation.

Your Case Manager

They will be assigned to assist you. Their role is to help communicate on your behalf with the insurer. This includes collecting and sharing all the necessary information for your claim. They will also guide you through the process, inform you of what's required, and help you if there are any difficulties with documents.

The insurer

Assesses the claim based on the terms and conditions of cover applying to your Mercer Super plan and communicates to the trustee their recommendation about whether they intend to pay or not pay the insurance claim to the trustee.

The trustee

The trustee of Mercer Super is responsible for managing the super fund on behalf of members. As the trustee, they have a duty to act in the best financial interests of members. They will:

- Review the recommendations made by the insurer to accept or decline the claim
- Ensure the amount received from the insurer is correct (if they approve the claim). You will then see this amount in your super account.
- Determine if you meet the condition of release called a Terminal Medical Condition so that we can pay your super to you, including any amount paid by the insurer.

What is the Trust Deed?

The Trust Deed is the foundational legal document for any super fund in Australia. It sets out the rules and terms for establishing, operating and managing the fund. It outlines the fund's objectives, powers and responsibilities of the trustee, and rules for who can be a member, and their rights. In addition, this includes the eligible dependants in the deed.

The Trust Deed operates in line with superannuation law to form the fund's governing rules.



8. Claims process and timeframes

How do I start a terminal illness benefit claim?

To start the claims process, call us on **1300 008 605**, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (AEST/AEDT), or email us at mercersuperclaims@mercerc.com.

If you're calling from overseas, please call us on +61 3 9192 4446. We'll guide you through the necessary steps and documentation required.

If you're unable to call, you can also let us know by post:

Mercer Super Claims
GPO Box 4303
Melbourne VIC 3001

How long will it take to assess my claim?

We provide timeframes for each of the steps involved in making a claim in our *Claiming a terminal illness benefit guide*. But generally, we aim to complete the process (including payment to you) within **four to eight weeks**.

We adhere to industry standards about timeframes for handling claims. However, there may be times where *exceptional circumstances* can lead to delays in processing times.

What are *exceptional circumstances* that may lead to processing delays?

Exceptional circumstances broadly cover claims where:

- There are delays in the supply of documents
- The claim is complex and requires investigation beyond expected timeframes
- Any additional medical information is required and the time it takes to receive the reports

How can I speed up the claim?

We understand that this process can be overwhelming, and we want to help you move your claim forward as smoothly as possible. To ensure your claim is processed quickly, please provide all requested documents and information as soon as you can.

If you have any questions or are unsure about any of the documents or forms, don't hesitate to reach out to us before submitting them. We're here to assist you, as unclear or incomplete documentation can lead to delays in processing your claim.

Call **1300 008 605**, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (AEST/AEDT). If you're calling from overseas, please call us on +61 3 9192 4446.

What happens if my claim is denied?

If the insurer informs us that they've decided not to pay the claim, the trustee will review their recommendation within **15 business days**. If the trustee requires extra information or does not agree with the insurer's decision, the claim will be referred back to the insurer for reconsideration. We'll contact you to advise of the next steps.

Who else can start a claim?

In addition to the member themselves, there are certain individuals who can start a claim on your behalf.

- Family members, such as a spouse, parent, or an adult child.
- A lawyer/solicitor appointed by you to represent you can also start a claim on your behalf.

In all cases you'll need to provide your authority before the claims process can proceed. This requirement ensures your privacy and rights are protected throughout the claims process. Your Case Manager will be able to help with this.

9. Documents and evidence

What documents do I need to provide?

We've listed the main documents in Step 3 of the *Claiming a terminal illness benefit guide* to assist. However, depending on your individual claim, we'll outline these separately to you in a letter.

Do I need medical reports or evidence?

Yes, these will be outlined in the letter from your Case Manager.

How recent do my medical documents need to be?

Your medical documents can't be more than 24 months old. Additionally, the dates of certification from your two doctors must be on or after your insurance started. See the question *What dates are important to my insurance claim?* earlier in these FAQs.

Your Case Manager will provide specific guidance on the timeframe required for your claim.

How do I get a certified copy of an official document?

Documents must contain the original signature of the people who certified them. For more information about certified identification, including how to get your documents certified, please read the *Completing proof of identity factsheet*. You can find this at:

mercersuper.com.au/identitychecklist.

What if I can't find some of the details needed for identification?

Your Case Manager will be able to help you with other options to identify yourself.

10. Financial considerations

When can I expect to be paid?

From when you first contact us, the process to payment is usually within **four to eight weeks** from the date you notify us of your decision to claim.

While we aim to keep the process as smooth as possible, some factors may affect processing times. Please refer to the *Claiming a terminal illness benefit guide* which includes timeframes for each of the steps involved in making a claim.

Will the payment go directly to me?

If your claim is approved by the insurer, any payment will go into your super and form part of your account balance. Please refer to Step 7 within the *Claiming a terminal illness benefit guide*.

Can I access both my super and any insurance?

Yes, if your super includes any death insurance payment from the insurer, and you satisfy a condition of release (Terminal Medical Condition) you may receive both.

If your insurance claim is not approved, you may still be eligible to access your super account balance, provided you meet the same condition of release.

If you withdraw your entire super benefit, you will lose any remaining insurance you currently have. If you want your remaining insurance to continue you will need to leave a sufficient balance in your account to fund future premiums.

This information is intended as a guide only and does not constitute advice. Before making a withdrawal, you should speak to a licensed financial adviser about the impacts this could have on your remaining insurance entitlements.

As a Mercer Super member, you have access to limited financial advice about your Mercer Super account at no extra cost. Find out more here: mercersuper.com.au/advice

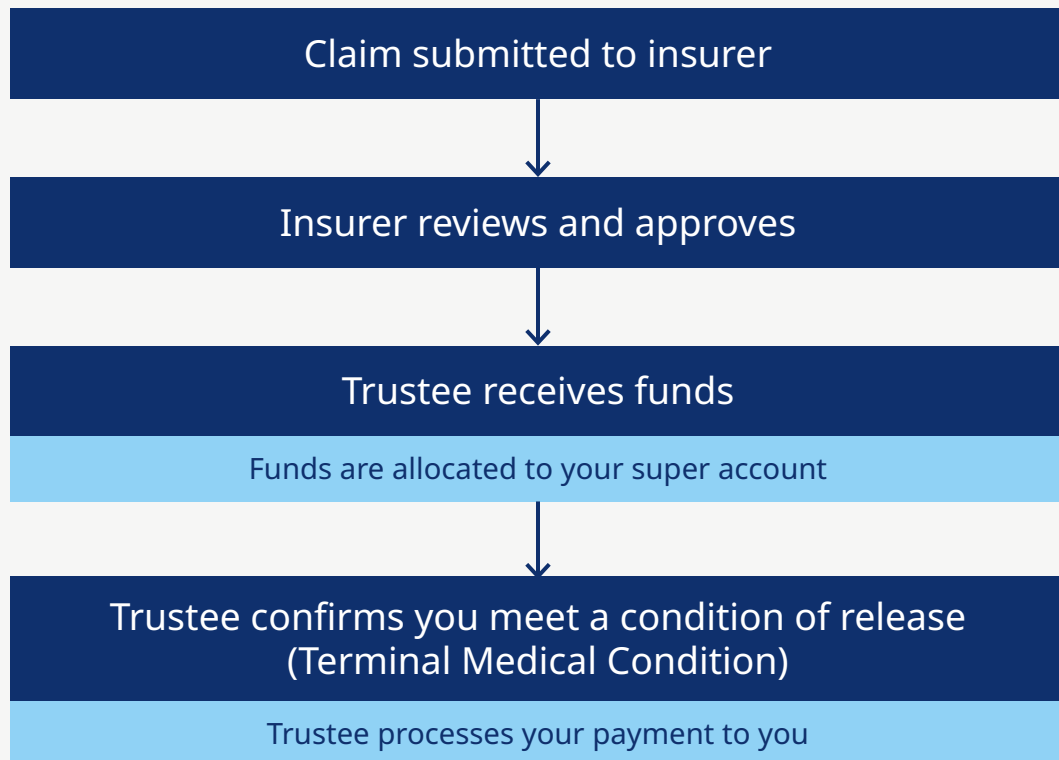
For more information, please see Step 7 within the *Claiming a terminal illness benefit guide*. Your Case Manager can also assist.

Will the benefit be taxed?

If approved due to a terminal medical condition, the benefit can be withdrawn from your super fund as a tax-free lump sum.

We recommend seeking financial advice to understand how this type of benefit payment could impact your financial circumstances.

Steps to payment



11. Additional considerations

Will I still be covered by any insurance if my claim for terminal illness is successful?

Generally, no, unless your Mercer super plan has features that allow some cover to remain.

Terminal illness cover is provided as part of death cover. Once you receive a terminal illness insurance payment, your death cover usually ends. Any Total and Permanent Disablement (TPD) cover you hold in the Mercer Super plan also usually stops.

Your Case Manager will let you know if you hold any remaining cover.

What happens if I take all of the money out of my account?

If you withdraw your entire super benefit you will lose any remaining insurance you currently have. If you want your remaining insurance to continue you will need to leave a sufficient balance in your account to fund future premiums.

This information is intended as a guide only and does not constitute advice. Before making a withdrawal you should speak to a licensed financial adviser about the impacts this could have on your remaining insurance entitlements.

As a Mercer Super member, you have access to limited financial advice about your Mercer Super account at no extra cost. Find out more here: mercersuper.com.au/advice.

What if I have multiple super accounts with death cover? Can I make multiple claims?

Yes, each claim will be assessed separately in accordance with the terms and conditions of the insurance policies providing death cover in other accounts, whether within Mercer Super or other super funds.

What if I pass away before I receive the money?

If you pass away prior to the insurance approval, your dependants or your legal personal representative will need to get in touch with us.

To ensure you have peace of mind that your wishes are met in the event of your passing, it's important to make a valid beneficiary nomination to let us know how you'd like your super to be distributed.

If you don't nominate a beneficiary, the trustee of your super fund must follow the law in working out who should receive your death benefit.

By nominating a beneficiary, you can have peace of mind your money will be paid to the people you care about most. Find out more here: mercersuper.com.au/nominate.

Is there another way I can access my super?

Under some circumstances, like severe financial hardship or compassionate grounds, you may be able to access some of your super early. You can find out more about eligibility together with support services available to you on our website at: mercersuper.com.au/superannuation/accessing-your-super-early/.

What are my advice options?

There may be financial or tax implications you should consider when accessing your benefit. Advice from a licensed professional, such as a financial adviser, may be helpful to decide the best option for you when it comes to your superannuation benefits. See our website for more information about advice options: mercersuper.com.au/advice



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This document provides important information to assist with claiming a Terminal Illness benefit through a Mercer Super plan. You should not rely solely on this document as a full and complete description of the terms and conditions (and exclusions) of the insurance policy that applies to you. In the event of any inconsistency between this document and the insurance policy, the full terms and conditions (including exclusions) of the insurance policy will apply. Benefits can only be paid in accordance with the Mercer Super Trust Deed and the applicable insurance policy terms and conditions (including eligibility requirements). Your Case Manager can help to answer any specific questions you may have about a claim.

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For information on privacy and the handling of your personal information please refer to the Mercer Australia Privacy Policy available at mercersuper.com.au/privacy. You can contact our privacy officer at mercersuper.com.au/privacy

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