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Q&A on Support for Businesses

We're now in the implementation phase of the Federal Government's \$320 billion economic plan and news out today helps answer some of the most frequently asked questions I have been hearing from business.

What's my next step if I want my staff to receive the wage subsidy offered by the JobKeeper program?

To claim JobKeeper payments for April, you must register via the [ATO website](#) or via the [Business Portal](#) by next Thursday, 30 April.

How can I access cash to pay my staff before receiving the JobKeeper payment?

If you don't have the cash to pay your staff by the end of April, you should speak to your bank. Remember the Government makes JobKeeper payments in arrears and so it's up to businesses to pay their staff first.

The Federal Government has received assurances from banks that they will assist with providing bridging finance. Banks are to also pass on reduced cash rates and assist with waivers and deferrals etc.

The Treasurer spoke to the CEOs of major banks last night and again today to ensure they follow through with this commitment and they accelerate loan approvals to enable businesses to pay staff in April. Bank hotlines will soon be available for business to chase down loan approvals for JobKeeper purposes.

If my business doesn't meet the 'decline in turnover' test for JobKeeper, can I still be eligible?

You still may be eligible. The ATO today released the rules for "Alternative Tests".

If your business is in distress but it doesn't meet the Basic Test – i.e. your turnover hasn't declined by 30% or more compared to the same time last year or by 15% or more if you're a not-for-profit – you still might be eligible if you satisfy an Alternative Test which includes consideration for:

- Being in operation for less than 12 months
- An acquisition or a disposal of part of your business
- A business restructuring
- A substantial increase in turnover in the period immediately prior to the comparison period
- Affected by drought or natural disaster in the comparison period
- An irregular turnover that is not cyclical
- A sole trader or partner did not work (sick, injured, on leave) in the comparison period
- An unusual event or circumstance in the comparison period

To find out more about the Alternative Tests, read [HERE](#).

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