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Employer Super FAQs

Australian Ethical works with businesses across a diverse range of industries, from small local enterprises to large corporations. We're here to make super as easy as possible for employers and employees alike.

Superannuation Guarantee (SG) Obligations

PayDay Super

From 1 July 2026, super guarantee contributions will be required to be paid for each pay cycle (rather than quarterly) and generally must be received by the employee's super fund within 7 business days after paying employees. Please refer to the table below for key requirements and the [ATO website](#) for more information.

Requirement	From 1 July 2026
How is super calculated	Super contributions are generally calculated based on an employee's qualifying earnings.
When super must be paid	Contributions must generally be received by the employee's super fund within 7 business days of payday (unless a limited exception applies).
Reporting requirements	Employers must report qualifying earnings and super liability through Single Touch Payroll (STP) -enabled payroll software.
Late or incorrect payments	Superannuation Guarantee Charge (SGC) and other penalties may apply if contributions are not paid in full, on time and to the correct fund.
More information	Refer to the ATO website for the latest Payday Super requirements.

How much super do I need to pay?

From 1 July 2026, employers are generally required to calculate super contributions based on an employee's qualifying earnings and meet the requirements of the Payday Super regime. Please refer to the [ATO website](#) for current contribution rates and eligibility requirements.

Employers are required to **contribute 12%** of an employee's qualifying earnings (which replaces ordinary time earnings from 1 July 2026) under the Superannuation Guarantee (SG). Qualifying earnings are a broader definition than ordinary time earnings and may require updates to how payroll systems calculate super. Please visit the [ATO website](#) for more information.

What happens if I miss an SG payment or it is late?

A contribution is on time if the super fund receives it (with all required details) within 7 business days of paying the employee. Allow extra time if using a clearing house. Best practice is to pay super on payday (the "QE day"). More information about payment deadlines can be found on the [ATO website](#).

You'll be liable to pay an SG charge to the ATO. Even if you make the payment after the due date, the charge still applies. Please visit the [ATO website](#) for more information.

How to calculate SG contributions from 1 July 2026:

What are qualifying earnings?

Qualifying earnings (QE) is a new term introduced under Payday Super. It refers to the payments made to employees that are used to determine an employer's super guarantee (SG) obligations. You can refer to [ATO's website](#) for more information.

What this means for employers:

From 1 July 2026, employers will use qualifying earnings as the basis for calculating both super guarantee (SG) contributions and any super guarantee charge (SGC) liabilities. This replaces the current approach, where SG and SGC calculations can be based on different earnings definitions.

For many employers, the introduction of qualifying earnings is not expected to change the amount of super they currently contribute on behalf of their employees. Most employees are entitled to receive [SG contributions](#). In addition, individuals engaged as independent contractors may also be treated as employees for SG purposes if they are paid mainly for their labour.

Tax and contribution limits

Employer super guarantee contributions form part of an employee's concessional contributions, which are subject to annual caps (**\$32,500 for the 2026–27 financial year**). Exceeding these caps may result in additional tax for employees.

High-income employees may also be liable for Division 293 tax, which applies an additional 15% tax on concessional contributions where income and contributions exceed \$250,000. This tax is assessed by the ATO and does not affect employer super obligations.

From 1 July 2026, employers are only required to pay the super guarantee up to the maximum contribution base, being the upper limit of an employee's qualifying earnings on which super must be paid in a financial year (**\$270,830 for 2026–27**).

Employer Super Contributions Process

How do I pay super contributions?

From 1 July 2026, super contributions must be received by an eligible employee's super fund within 7 business days of payday (unless a limited exception applies) and with sufficient information to allocate the payment.

All contributions must be made electronically via a SuperStream-compliant clearing house. This ensures secure, efficient processing. The Small Business Superannuation Clearing House (SBSCH) will close from 1 July 2026. Employers will need to transition to an alternative SuperStream-compliant solution. For more information, go to the ATO.

If you don't currently use payroll software or have a clearing house, you can register to use the Australian Ethical employer portal [here](#). For more information, go to the [ATO website](#).

Can I make payments outside of a clearing house?

No. Payments must be made through a clearing house for SuperStream compliance.

Can I pay multiple employees in one payment?

Yes, clearing houses allow you to process contributions for multiple employees in one transaction.

What if I overpay contributions?

If an overpayment occurs, you can request a refund by completing the relevant form with Australian Ethical. Please contact us at 1800 021 227 from Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM, and our in-house dedicated team will be happy to assist.

How do I rectify underpaid contributions?

If you identify an underpayment, rectify it as soon as possible to avoid penalties. You may need to submit an SG charge statement to the ATO, including interest and administration fees.

Employee Super Choices

What is the Standard Choice form?

You must provide the ATO's Standard Choice form to new employees within 28 days of their start date. Keep records for five years. Click [here](#) for the [Australian Ethical ATO Standard Choice form](#).

What if an employee chooses a self-managed super fund (SMSF)?

They must provide their fund's electronic service address (ESA), bank account details, and supporting documentation.

Single default account (Stapling)

For new employees (from 1 November 2021), you must check with the ATO for their stapled fund if they don't choose a fund. If no stapled fund exists, contributions go to your default fund.

What happens if an employee does not provide super fund details?

If an employee does not nominate a fund and has no stapled fund, you can direct contributions to your default fund. Consider making [Australian Ethical your default fund](#).

Setting Up a New Employee in a Superannuation Clearing House

Log in to the clearing house portal

Access the clearing house platform (e.g., the Australian Ethical employer portal, SuperChoice, or another provider). Use your employer credentials to log in securely.

Navigate to the 'Add New Member' section

Look for an option such as **"Add Member," "Create New Employee,"** or **"Manage Employees"** within the employer portal.

Enter the employee's personal details

Provide accurate details, including but not limited to:

- Full Name (as per official documents)
- Date of Birth
- Tax File Number (TFN) (*if provided by employee*)
- Residential Address

Additional information, such as employment start date and gender, may also be required.

Select the default super fund

If the employee hasn't provided a choice of fund or doesn't have a stapled fund, select your company's default super fund (e.g., Australian Ethical). Confirm the fund's details, such as:

- ABN: 49 633 667 743
- USI: AET0100AU
- Fund Name: Australian Ethical Retail Superannuation Fund

Enter the employee's super account details (if applicable)

- If the employee already has an account with your default fund, enter their member number.
- If not, select **"Create New Member Account"** (some clearing houses automatically generate this when processing the first contribution). If a member number is required, enter **000000000** (nine zeros). Once a member account is registered, a message will be sent via SuperStream. After the employee's account is created, the member number can be located under the member maintenance tab within a few days.

Review and confirm the information

Double-check all details for accuracy to prevent processing errors. Incomplete or incorrect information can cause contributions to be rejected.

Submit the member registration

Once confirmed, submit the form. The clearing house may issue a confirmation receipt.

Make the first super contribution

After the new member is set up, process their first superannuation payment through the clearing house.

Member communications

After registration, the new member should receive member communications. If the member is registered with Australian Ethical, they will receive a **welcome email** from Australian Ethical.

Record-keeping

Retain records of the employee's fund nomination, contributions, and clearing house confirmations for at least five years, as required by law.

Managing Contributions and Changes

My employee changed their name. What should I do?

Ensure the employee updates their details with their super fund and that your payroll records match.

Why was my contribution refunded?

Refunds usually occur due to mismatched or missing information. Contact us at 1800 021 227 from Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM, and our in-house dedicated team will be happy to assist.

How do I record additional employee contributions?

Your clearing house should allow you to classify extra contributions when processing payments.

Handling employee departures:

If an employee leaves your business, you must continue to process contributions for any outstanding payments up to their final working day. We recommend placing an end date for their employment in the clearing house.

Special Cases

How do sole traders make contributions?

Sole traders can make non-concessional contributions via BPAY. To claim tax deductions, submit a Notice of Intent through your super account. If the sole trader requires the contribution to be registered under their ABN, these can be made electronically via a SuperStream-compliant clearing house. This ensures secure, efficient processing. If you don't currently use payroll software or have a clearing house, you can register to use the Australian Ethical employer portal [here](#).

Can I pay super contributions by cheque?

No, contributions via cheque are not SuperStream compliant.

Super for contractors:

If you engage contractors mainly for their labour, you may still need to make SG contributions, even if they have an ABN. Review ATO guidelines to confirm obligations.

General Information

What is SuperStream?

SuperStream is an ATO-regulated system ensuring contributions and data are sent electronically in a standard format. It improves processing efficiency and reduces errors.

What is a default fund?

A default fund receives super contributions when an employee doesn't nominate a fund or have a stapled fund. It must be MySuper-authorised.

Are there costs to join Australian Ethical?

No. There are no joining or ongoing fees for employers.

How do I choose a default fund?

Select a complying fund with MySuper authorisation and basic insurance coverage. Australian Ethical meets these criteria.

Insurance in super:

Australian Ethical offers Death and Total & Permanent Disablement (TPD) Cover as Default Cover or Fixed Cover. You can additionally apply for Income Protection Cover. Employees can adjust or opt out based on their needs.

This is general information only and does not take account of your individual or your organisation's objectives, financial situation or needs. You may also wish to speak with your accountant, payroll provider or adviser to understand how these changes apply to your business.

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