



What is a Tax File Number (TFN)?

A Tax File Number (TFN) is an eight or nine digit number given by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). All individuals receive a nine digit TFN and businesses may have either an eight or nine digit TFN. A TFN is an identifier used to collect income data and verify and individual or business particularly for government agencies. A TFN is allocated for the lifetime of the individual. The same TFN will be used though job changes, moving house, or even if you return after working overseas.

What do you need a TFN for?

The ATO will need to know your Tax File Number for taxation purposes, but you'll also need it if you change jobs, apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN), apply for Centrelink services or payments, apply for a student loan and make Pay-As-You-Go withholding tax.

Your TFN will be data matched with other ATO paying entities, such as banks, employers, public companies, superannuation funds, Centrelink and others. The ATO can match reported income against other paying entities, including:

- PAYG from employers which include Fringe Benefits Tax and superannuation
- Interest from banks and other financial institutions, including term deposits, bonds and debentures
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- Dividends from public companies and distributions from trusts
- Unemployment information
- Health insurance information
- The purchase and sale of property

When do you need to get a TFN?

You should get a TFN when you want to work or if you need it for governmental benefits that are to be paid to you. If you are a minor, your parents or guardian can apply for a TFN for you.

How do you apply for a TFN?

If you are an Australian resident, you can apply for a TFN via an Australia Post Office, at a Department of Human Services (Centrelink) or by post.

Australia Post Office

The easiest way to apply for a TFN is to:

- Complete the online form found in the ATO website <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Tax-file-number/Apply-for-a-TFN/>
- Print out the summary and keep your application reference number
- Apply for an interview through a participating Australia Post outlet within 30 days of completing the online form
- Sign the application at the Australia Post outlet upon completion of the interview