



## NEARLY 200,000 AUSTRALIANS WILL HAVE ROBODEBTS WIPED

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Nearly 200,000 Australians will have their robodebt reviews wiped as the Federal Government scraps investigations into the controversial Coalition scheme introduced in 2015.

The Social Services Minister, Amanda Rishworth, has confirmed her department wouldn't continue investigations.

"The robodebt fiasco is something that should be of deep concern to all Australians," she said. "It was meant to save money, however, we know it had a significant human cost."

Executive Director of Catholic Social Services Australia, Ms Monique Earsman, said the decision to scrap the debts has hopefully now put an end to one of the most disgraceful and mean-spirited government programs forced on millions of our country's most vulnerable people.

"The decision means almost 200,000 people who have spent years fighting to clear welfare debts they didn't owe will have any active Centrelink investigations wiped," Ms Earsman said.

Following the decision, the Federal Government will scrap the cases of robodebt victims still under review, with any potential debt no longer being pursued.

The automated debt-collection system, which was found to be unlawful, was intended to recover allegedly overpaid payments to recipients. Approximately 381,00 people, partly or wholly, paid these debts totalling around \$751 million.

A royal commission into the Coalition's robodebt scheme, which was ruled unlawful in 2019, will begin public hearings at the end of October. The previous government settled a class action in 2020 for \$112 million.

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