National Seniors AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

SURCHARGE BAN WELCOMED

25 September 2026

National Seniors Australia (NSA) welcomes the Reserve Bank of Australia's decision to return to a ban on surcharges for most debit and credit card payments from 1 October 2026.

NSA Chief Executive Officer Mr Chris Grice said as put forward in NSA's Review of Retail Payments Regulation 2024 submission and highlighted in NSA's Keep Cash campaign – the frequency of card surcharges certainly adds-up and is just one reason why older Australians, and others, use cash.

"As cost-of-living pressures continue to squeeze household budgets, the decision to ban these surcharges will make a difference for many at a time when every dollar counts," Mr Grice said.

"While NSA understands some businesses are also struggling, especially smaller and family owned, we hope any incurred costs are passed on to customers conservatively and transparently. If necessary, these costs should be included upfront and in the overall pricing strategy – not as an additional charge.

"In addition to the Cash Mandate introduced in January this year, the surcharge ban on most debit and credit card payments is a win for older Australians in our fight for fairness and the assuredness of viable payment options.

"We give credit to the Reserve Bank of Australia and acknowledge Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services Daniel Mulino for leading and instigating this ban.

"At the same time as the surcharge ban, the RBA is requiring a lowering of the 'interchange' fee charged between banks and payment providers. Some of these fees were used to pay for rewards programs only some people accessed.

"This change is clearly significant as evidenced by the number of banks who have curtailed their rewards programs that are linked to credit cards. Consumers should make sure they understand how their credit card may be different going forward, such as a higher interest rates, higher fees, or no longer including travel insurance."

For more information, please visit Frequently Asked Questions – Removal of Card Payment Surcharges From 1 October 2026 | RBA.

Since the launch of NSA's Keep Cash campaign in 2023, NSA supporters have distributed "We Accept Cash" stickers to participating retailers country-wide, displayed "KEEP CASH" bumper stickers, helped to keep cash in the media spotlight, informed NSA's submission to the Cash Acceptance Consultation Paper, and helped to influence the introduced Cash Mandate. NSA thanks its supporters and atmx for supporting this campaign.

Media enquiries Media & Corporate Communications Manager Anna Townend 0488 047 380