

Flexible Support Packages

April 2020

The Tasmanian Government has provided funding to deliver Flexible Support Packages to enhance the safety and wellbeing of people affected by family violence.

The Program will be delivered through Safe at Home: the Tasmanian Government's Integrated Criminal Justice Response to Family Violence.

OBJECTIVES

Flexible Support Packages are designed to contribute to a holistic response to people experiencing family violence by providing practical supports to enhance safety and wellbeing when leaving an abusive relationship.

Family violence risk assessment and safety planning are key components of the program, to assist in addressing a victim-survivor's risk and safety needs.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible a victim-survivor must meet the following criteria:

- has experienced family violence as defined in the *Family Violence Act 2004*;
- is planning to leave their current spouse or partner (the perpetrator of abuse) or have left their spouse or partner within the last 12 months; and
- has no intention of reconciling with the perpetrator of the abuse.

Priority will be given to:

- victim-survivors and their children at risk of experiencing family violence;
- victim-survivors whose safety and security needs can reasonably be met through a FSP; and
- victim-survivors experiencing financial hardship.

SUPPORT PACKAGE USES

The Flexible Support Package Program aims to complement existing practical resources and support, and is not intended to replace them.

Packages of up to \$6,000 can be applied for to support victims and their children to cover the following types of expenses:

- Relocation costs or bond;
- Bills including utilities;
- Food;
- Clothing;
- Medical supplies;
- Medication not covered by Medicare or the PBS;
- Medical appointment gaps not covered by Medicare, including dental;
- White goods;
- Mobile phone and credit;
- Educational equipment;

- Furniture.

This is not an exhaustive list, and applications should be tailored to the needs of the victim-survivor and their children.

Transitional accommodation costs can be sought, however other avenues for support need to be exhausted prior to making such a request, such as shelter accommodation or the rapid rehousing scheme.

Requests for property security upgrades need to be submitted to the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program.

ACCESS TO THE PROGRAM

Government or non-government services (the Service Provider) can submit an application on behalf of a client after they have undertaken a family violence risk assessment and created a safety plan.

Applications will be assessed on a case by case basis by the Integrated Case Coordination Committees, and the Safe at Home Coordination Unit will assess those applications where an applicant has not yet reported to police.

Applications may be approved in full, in part or declined, based on an assessment of risk and safety needs of the client to ensure that the objectives of the Program are achieved within the funding available. The maximum grant is \$6,000.00.

Flexible Support Packages (FSP) will be available from 27 April 2020. An application form is available by contacting the Safe at Home Coordination Unit at: safeathome@justice.tas.gov.au.

FINANCE

The Service Provider will receive a confirmation email from Safe at Home within 7-10 working days advising of the outcome of the application.

Payment

Re-imbusement model:

The Service Provider can purchase the approved items and invoice the Safe at Home Coordination Unit for total expenditure by providing receipts.

Invoice model:

The Service Provider submits an invoice to the Safe at Home Coordination Unit to facilitate the transfer of funds to the Service Provider at the earliest opportunity. Service Providers must provide receipts for expenditure, and return any unspent money to the Safe at Home Coordination Unit, to be re-allocated to the FSP program.

Reimbursement will not be provided for unapproved expenditure, or previous expenditure prior to an FSP application being submitted.

PRICING GUIDE (*indicative only*)

To assist with applications, a pricing guide is outlined below. The cost of some items will be dependent on the number of people in the household.

Relocation costs, rent or bond	\$300.00-\$3,000.00
Transitional accommodation	\$300.00-\$3,000.00
Bills including utilities	\$50.00-\$1,000.00
Food	\$50.00-\$1,000.00
Clothing	\$50.00-\$500.00
Medical supplies	\$50.00-\$150.00
Medication	\$50.00-\$150.00
Medical appointment gaps	\$70.00-\$140.00
Fridge	\$545.00-727.00
Washing machine	\$500.00-773.00

Mobile phone and credit	\$150.00-\$500.00
Dining table	\$500.00-545.00
Couch	\$455.00-545.00
Educational items	
- Stationery kits (ie. pencils, pens, scrap books, exercise books)	\$25.00-\$200.00
- Kids arts and crafts	\$25.00-\$100.00
- Books	\$25.00-\$200.00
- Tablets	\$200.00-\$350.00
- Headsets	\$30.00-\$100.00
- Wifi-boosters	\$60.00-\$100.00
- Sim card and credit	\$40.00-\$250.00
Bus passes	\$30.00-\$200.00
Cab vouchers	\$50.00-\$200.00

The use of the FSP must represent the most cost-effective, timely and appropriate response to meet the risk and safety needs of the victim-survivor and their children.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Leaving an abusive relationship

To be eligible for a FSP, a victim-survivor must have no intention of reconciling with the perpetrator of the abuse. This criteria can be satisfied through effective safety planning with the victim-survivor to mitigate the risk the perpetrator poses and ascertaining the victim-survivor's intentions regarding the future of the relationship. However, victim-survivors may change their mind about

reconciliation as leaving an abusive relationship is incredibly difficult. There is no obligation on the victim-survivor or Service Provider to repay the cost of an approved FSP if it has been spent and the parties reconcile.

Bond

If a contribution is requested towards bond, there is no obligation on the victim-survivor to return the bond when they move to another property. However, it is incumbent on the Service Provider to use their best endeavours to ensure bond is applied for in appropriate circumstances and for the purpose of enhancing the wellbeing and safety of the victim-survivor and their children.

Medical costs

Fixed amounts can be requested based on the Medicare costs or by using a quote for service. If receipts are not available, please contact the Senior Consultant – Safe at Home.

Returning items

There may be occasions where the item ordered is not fit for purpose and needs to be returned. The Service Provider assisting the victim-survivor may support such returns. However a FSP must not be used to purchase items with the aim of returning them for a financial payment.

Vet/kennel costs

On a case by case basis, vet or kennel costs could be incorporated in a FSP application if it enhances the safety and wellbeing of the victim-survivor and their children. An additional allocation may be required if the animal is not collected from the kennel.

Multiple applications

One FSP application can be submitted per victim-survivor. In extenuating circumstances, a second

application may be considered. The Service Provider must outline the reasons for a second application.

Gift cards or vouchers

Gift cards or vouchers can be used to assist with the purchase of groceries, clothing or other items. However, to reduce the risk of FSPs being misused, the total value of a single card should not exceed \$200. The preferred option is to order items online for delivery at the home of the victim-survivor.

Distribution of funding

The total grant for FSP's will be distributed equally between the four ICC regions – West, North, East and South. Budget adjustments may be made from time to time, based on demand for FSPs.

For more information, please contact:

Safe at Home Coordination Unit on
SafeatHome@justice.tas.gov.au

Seeking Help and Support:

Family Violence Response and Referral Line – **1800 633 937**

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service – **1800 608 122**

Safe Choices - **1800 806 189**

Australian Childhood Foundation – **1300 381 581**

Engender Equality - **6278 9090**

Yemaya - **6334 0305**

RAIN (Relationship Abuse of an Intimate Nature) - **1800 243 232**

Huon Domestic Violence Service - **6264 2222**

1800 RESPECT – **1800 737 732**

DAISY

Daisy is a free App which connects you to local and national specialist family violence and support services. Download Daisy from the App Store or Google Play.

www.1800respect.org.au/daisy

In an emergency always call 000

To report a family violence incident call Tasmania Police on 131 444 or attend your nearest police station