

Family Violence Flexible Support Package Guidelines

1. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure when submitting a Family Violence Flexible Support Package (FV FSP) application they meet DHHS guidelines.

These guidelines will be used by any agencies applying for a flexible package through Women's Health West, all packages need to meet these guidelines.

2. Description

The family violence flexible support packages (FV FSP) is a funding response, where other available funding/ supports (for example, local, state or Commonwealth Government services) cannot be provided in a timely manner. FV FSP packages are designed to support case managers to deliver a personalised and holistic response to victim/survivors of family violence to assist them to access support to move out of crisis, stabilise and improve their safety, well-being and independence.

3. Available funds

Individualised packages are of an average cost of \$3,000 per package. However, packages over \$3,000 will be assessed case by case with a maximum of \$10,000. All packages must align with the FV FSP guidelines and further documentation may be requested to demonstrate how the packages are directly linked to the victim/survivor's recovery. Clients are eligible for one package per case management support period. If another incident of family violence occurs, the case manager can apply for another package along with a new case plan and risk assessment.

4. Eligibility

FV FSP will be targeted to victim/survivors who:

- are escaping; and/or
- have recently experienced family violence; and/or
- are planning to leave an abusive situation or have the perpetrator removed from the home with appropriate legal sanctions in place.

In addition to the risk assessment, current case management case plan and/or safety plan, the application needs to identify the ways in which a flexible support package intends to support a client to:

- to establish sustainable arrangements that support their long-term health and wellbeing;
- prevent an intervention by child protection;
- leave their current family arrangements in which family violence is occurring.

Note: Flexible support packages are available to people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence.

5.1 Eligibility Priority

Priority for FV flexible support packages will be given to:

- victims/survivors including children at highest risk from family violence;
- victims/survivors including children whose safety and security needs and independent living goals can reasonably be met through a Family Violence Flexible Support Package;

- victims/survivors including children experiencing significant financial hardship. Victim/survivors including children who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, CALD backgrounds, people with a disability, people from LGBTIQ+ community and older people experiencing elder abuse.

The following are mandatory requirements for case managers making an application:

- an application is undertaken in conjunction with a case management plan and risk assessment outlining goals and support needs, and how item/s purchased with flexible support packages funding will assist this plan. These must be submitted alongside FV FSP applications;
- any applications requiring a security response will be assessed by the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) coordinator. Please submit any PSI inquiries to PSI@whwest.org.au;
- where a child victim/survivor has their own case management plan, they can be eligible for their own FV FSP.

5. Flexible support package outcomes

Packages should aim to deliver the following outcomes in a manner that is flexible enough to meet the applicants varying needs and priorities:

- freedom from abuse and violence
- suitable and stable housing
- good physical and mental health
- participation in learning and education
- participation and contribution to the economy
- financial security and independence
- social engagement
- identification and connection to community

6. What the package can be used for

Flexible support packages can be used to purchase services and goods nominated in the support plan.

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Freedom from abuse and violence** – basic material needs including food, clothing, care packs, bills (utilities, phone) and utility debts;
- **Technological safety support** – CCTV, mobile phone, personal/property alarm; security doors or lighting;
- **Good physical and mental health** – medical or pharmaceutical costs not covered by Medicare or Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, physical aides, counselling or specialist services;
- **Suitable and stable housing** – public or private housing debt, mortgage costs, rent in advance, rent arrears, relocation costs, travel costs, furnishings and whitegoods in newly established housing;
- **Participation in learning and education** – schooling, educational costs, workforce readiness (for example adult education/TAFE course/school supplies for children);
- **Financial security and independence** – clothing, care or placement of pets, outings, financial counselling, wellbeing courses;
- **Identification and connection with culture and identity** – travel, culturally specific service support, sporting or cultural activities.

Family violence flexible support packages can be used where available supports (for example, local, state or Commonwealth Government services) cannot be provided in a timely manner. There is an expectation that other avenues for support are exhausted prior to application of an FV FSP, for example emergency accommodation supports are only applied when no viable alternative is possible. Similarly, for debts and fines, there are multiple alternative avenues available in the system that must be exhausted prior to support being provided through a FV FSP.

7. Exclusions and additional requirements

FV FSP cannot be used for the following purposes:

- illegal activity
- gambling
- products or services not identified in the support plan
- to replace or duplicate supports that are available in a timely manner through other funding sources, including other Local, State and Commonwealth Government programs.

Note: Flexible support packages will not be accessible to anyone who wishes to continue their domestic living arrangements with the perpetrator of the abuse. If the person returns to a domestic living arrangement with the perpetrator of the abuse, access to the flexible support package funding will cease.

A reminder, FV FSP packages are not to replace or duplicate other avenues of funding already available.

It is expected that services will continue with their case management support whilst an FV FSP is open.

8. How to make an application

1. Complete the application form.
2. Email the application form along with quotes/invoices to FSP@whwest.org.au.
If you are sending through a quote, it is expected that you will be sending the invoice within a month of application being approved to FSPaccounts@whwest.org.au. If applying for listed vouchers, a quote or a screen shot of items from the corresponding store will need to be provided with the application. Please refer to table of examples.
Note that applications will not be reviewed unless all required documentations are submitted alongside the FVFSP application and application is filled out in full.
3. WHW's FSP Coordinator will be available to discuss applications on Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm via phone or email at FSP@whwest.org.au.
4. WHW's FSP Coordinator will endeavour to respond to applications and correspondence relating to an application within a timely manner.
5. WHW will inform case managers when application is approved by email.

Due to high demand applications can take up to three weeks to be assessed.

9. Payment information

After an application has been approved, WHW will process the application and send payment/s to the appropriate business.

Payments are processed on **Wednesdays** by WHW, is the responsibility of the case manager to inform the businesses / suppliers of this process.

Note:

- no funds will be paid directly to the client. Payments will be made to businesses with an ABN;
- amendments to an application once a payment has begun will only be done in exceptional circumstances in consultation with FSP Coordinator;
- vouchers where provided will need to be collected and signed out at Women's Health West by the assigned case manager and the client;
- vouchers will not be posted out and if lost are unable be replaced;
- if needed, please include a quote for furniture assembly and/or delivery as part of your application.

10. Additional information

All communication in relation to FV FSP applications will be made with case managers via email. WHW staff contact details are not to be given out under any circumstances to clients.

Please **do not** recommend clients to contact Women's Health West directly for financial assistance, as clients must be case managed to access the FV FSP.

WHW reception staff cannot respond to any enquiries and are not able to answer any FSP related queries. In addition, FV FSP staff cannot take any calls from clients.

Please forward all FV FSP enquires to our FSP@whwest.org.au for any enquires or issues with applications.

Vouchers are now available to support clients in need of items faster than through other vendors. Case Managers will need to provide a screenshot of client requested items from corresponding stores with applications and indicate which vouchers are being requested. Vouchers are available for the following vendors:

- Coles /Myer Vouchers (can be used at Kmart, Target, Officeworks, Coles, Coles express)
- The Good Guys
- Harvey Norman
- Super Amart
- JB HI-FI
- Aldi

Please note – for all vouchers for food and petrol please follow the voucher guide.

WHW also accounts with the following suppliers/businesses:

- Fantastic Furniture – Quote can be provided by going to their website, choosing items and printing out checkout cart with total. Delivery may take up to 6 weeks following approval.
- Furniture Assembly – can be contacted on danny.anthony@gmail.com for a quote.

Appendix 1. Quote vs invoice example

WHW Approvable Quote Information Requirements	WHW Approvable Tax Invoice Information Requirements
<p>Company name</p> <p>A.B.N (Must be a registered business)</p> <p>Items being requested Cost of items being requests</p> <p>We can accept quotes with applications for approval. Applications which do not have quotes attached cannot be approved. Where quotes are provided, the case manager has one month from the approval of the application to follow up with a Tax Invoice to process payment.</p> <p>Where applications are seeking rental support, we can accept a lease agreement with the client's name, address and rental amount as an accepted quote or a letter from the Real Estate to confirm they reside at the property. Where there above is not possible to obtain, a stat dec signed by the landlord may be provided, this must be through Victoria Police.</p> <p>All voucher requests:</p> <p>Where vouchers are being requested, we can accept a cart screen shot of items being requested online as a quote for the vouchers.</p> <p>Groceries and petrol vouchers:</p> <p>Please see voucher guide</p> <p>Utility bills:</p> <p>Utility bills can be accepted as invoices.</p>	<p>Company name</p> <p>A.B.N (Must be a registered business)</p> <p>Addressed to: Women's Health West (We cannot process payments if the Tax invoice is addressed to a Case Manager or their organisation)</p> <p>Breakdown and cost of items</p> <p>Method of Payment (How is this payment being processed)</p> <p>Women's Health West can support the below payment methods: E.F.T. – Electronic Funds Transfer (B.S.B and Account Number)</p> <p>Cheque - (Who is the cheque being made out to)</p> <p>We are unable to process BPay as a method of payment.</p> <p>In some cases we are able to make payments via credit card however this is not always guaranteed.</p>