



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Families and Communities Programme

Family Law Services
Funding Round Summary

August 2014

Family Law Services

The Family Law Services Sub-Activity is funded by and under the policy responsibility of the Attorney-General's Department. The Family Law Services are an important component of the family law system, which also includes legal assistance services, family law courts and Department of Human Services - Child Support.

Family Law Services aim to provide alternatives to formal legal processes for families who are separated, separating or in dispute to improve their relationships and make arrangements in the best interests of their children. Family Law Services have a particular role to help families with complex needs, including those with family violence issues.

The Family Law Services Sub-Activity has a number of components, including:

- Family Relationship Centres
- Children's Contact Services
- Supporting Children after Separation Program
- Parenting Orders Program – Post Separation Co-operative Parenting Services
- Family Dispute Resolution
- Regional Family Dispute Resolution
- Family Relationship Advice Line
- Family Law Counselling

Applications are welcome from providers who deliver services under these activities as well as new providers who meet eligibility requirements outlined below.

Sub-activity objectives

Family Law Services aim to improve family relationships in the best interests of children by providing safe alternatives to formal legal processes for families who are separated, separating or in dispute to improve their relationships and make arrangements in the best interests of their children.

To achieve these aims, Family Law Services must have an emphasis on family and the best interests of children, therefore must be child-focused and work as part of a collaborative service delivery system with links across the family law system and the broader sector.

Family Law Services should ensure:

- all families are provided with the information they need about service options available, including from other sectors and jurisdictions;
- vulnerable families are actively connected to services and supports; and
- children and families at risk of harm receive a timely and well-coordinated response from those who can keep them safe.

Family Law Services should have an early intervention and prevention focus to work with families early in the life of the presenting issues.

Selection type

This selection is an open competitive process.

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Eligibility

To satisfy eligibility requirements, applicants must be not-for-profit and must fall into one of the following categories:

- Incorporated Associations (incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc.' in their legal name)
- Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have 'Cooperative' in their legal name)
- Companies (incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (may be a proprietary company (limited by shares or by guarantee) or a public company)
- Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*)
- Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or state/territory legislation (public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc.)
- Partnerships;
- Trustees on behalf of a Trust

In the case of a Family Relationship Centre, a consortium of organisations is able to apply, but a lead agency must be appointed. The lead agency will be considered to be the applicant and will enter into the grant agreement if the consortium's application is successful. If a consortium application is received it must be stated in the application together with a list of the names of all consortium member organisations and a copy of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by a representative of each consortium member.

Statement of Requirement

Service delivery proposals are being sought from eligible organisations to deliver the following Components of the Family Law Services Sub-Activity from 1 January 2015 to 30 June 2019 in the stated locations:

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Service Type	Location	Total amount of operational funding over the life of the grant period (GST exclusive)
Family Relationship Centre	Ipswich (QLD) with outreach located at Gatton and Laidley	\$3,728,,448
Children's Contact Service	Ipswich (QLD)	\$1,131,570
Children's Contact Service	Logan (QLD)	\$1,237,653
Children's Contact Service	Gold Coast (QLD)	\$1,166,931
Parenting Orders Programme – Post Separation Cooperative Parenting Programme	Gold Coast (QLD)	\$1,483,641
Parenting Orders Programme – Post Separation Cooperative Parenting Programme	Sunshine Coast (QLD)	\$1,483,641

These figures represent the total amount of funding available over the life of the grant. Establishment funding may be provided where applicable.

Organisations must be able to deliver the services outlined in their proposal for the full term of the funding period.

A strong service proposal will:

- have demonstrated experience in working effectively with the target group or community as well as other service providers in achieving outcomes for children and their parents or carers;
- be able to demonstrate how the service would use an early intervention and prevention approach to work with families early in the life of the presenting issues;
- be able to demonstrate an evidence base for the practices and programmes undertaken in the service which supports its effectiveness with that target group or community and a commitment to ongoing service quality improvement. For more guidance on evidence-based practice, please see the Questions and Answers
- include a transition plan for existing clients; and
- not duplicate other Commonwealth or state and territory government services.

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Selection Criteria

The equally weighted selection criteria are:

1. Demonstrate your understanding of the need for the funded Activity and Sub-Activity in the specified location.
2. Describe how the implementation of your proposal will achieve the Sub-activity objectives for all stakeholders, including value for money within the Grant funding.
3. Demonstrate your experience in effectively developing, delivering, managing and monitoring Activities to achieve Sub-activity objectives for all stakeholders.
4. Demonstrate your organisation's capacity and your staff capability (experience and qualifications) to deliver the Sub-activity objectives in the specified location

Closing Date and Time

Applications should be submitted by 2:00pm AEST, 12 September 2014.

Who to contact?

Please email your enquiries to: grants@dss.gov.au.

Multicultural Access and Equity policy

Australia's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy: Respecting diversity. Improving responsiveness obliges Australian government agencies to ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity is not a barrier for people engaging with government and accessing services to which they are entitled, for example, by providing access to language services where appropriate.

Grant applicants should consider whether services, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with non-English speakers. If your Application Form states that a budget is required, costs for translating and interpreting services should be included in your application.

Assessment

The Assessment Team may be comprised of officers from the Department of Social Services and the Attorney-General's Department. These officers may be sourced from state and national offices. Teams will undertake training to ensure consistent assessment for all applications received. The Assessment Team will be bound by the APS Code of Conduct and the Secretary's Instructions.

Probity

The selection of funding recipients for the Activity must be fair and open and demonstrate the highest level of integrity, consistent with the public interest.

The following probity principles will be applied through all stages of the selection process.

- (a) fairness and impartiality
- (b) consistency, accountability and transparency of process
- (c) security and confidentiality of information

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- (d) identification and resolution of conflicts of interest
- (e) compliance with legislative obligations and government policy.

These principles are intended to achieve an equitable, justifiable and sound process.

Adherence to the probity principles means that everyone involved with the selection process will act:

- (f) impartially
- (g) with integrity, including avoiding actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

A Quality Assurance team has been implemented to review the processes to ensure DSS meet its probity obligations in relation to the Activity by ensuring that the selection processes are defensible and will withstand external and internal scrutiny.

Programme Guidelines Overview

The Programme Guidelines Overview provides the key starting point for parties considering whether to participate in the activity and form the basis for the business relationship between the Department and the funding recipient. Applicants are strongly advised to read the Programme Guidelines Overview prior to completing an Application Form. The Programme Guideline suite comprises of the following documents:

- Programme Guidelines Overview
- Funding Round Summary
- Application Form
- DSS Streamlined Grant Agreement template and General Grant Conditions
- Questions and Answers
- Family Relationship Centres Operational Framework
- Children's Contact Services Guiding Principles Framework for Good Practice

How to Apply

Please read and complete the declaration part of the Application Form carefully. Ensure all responses are true and accurate. Click the Submit Application button and follow the instructions provided. All questions will be verified. Any incorrectly entered or unanswered responses will be displayed for your correction. The Application Form will not submit until all responses have been verified.

Upon successful submission, you will be issued with a confirmation receipt and email. Submission may take several minutes. Please be patient and do not close the Application Form before receiving confirmation.

Grant Agreement Information

The type of grant agreement you are asked to enter into will be influenced by the nature of the Activity, the assessed Activity risk level, the length of the Activity and the value of the Activity.

In your Application Pack you will receive a draft copy of a grant agreement for information. The grant agreement is a performance-based, legally enforceable agreement between the Commonwealth (represented by DSS) and the successful applicant that sets out the terms and conditions governing the funding to be provided.

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Your executed grant agreement represents the Department's and your entire agreement in relation to each grant provided within it and the relevant Activity and supersedes all prior representations, communications, agreements, statements and understandings, whether oral or in writing.

Questions and Answers (Q&As)

Q&As can be submitted via email to grants@dss.gov.au.

DSS will respond to emailed questions within five working days.

DSS will not accept or respond to any applicant's questions, requests for information or correspondence about the status or progress of their application five days prior to the closure of the application period and during the assessment phase.