



TILA application and return of unspent funds reminders

These reminders should be read in conjunction with the [TILA Operational Guidelines](#). Refer to the [TILA Guide for Caseworkers](#) for step-by-step instructions on processing a TILA application.

TILA application reminders

Confirm a young person's [eligibility](#) for the TILA payment **before** processing the application. Then follow these steps:

Draft or update the young person's leaving care plan

- Discuss with the young person their [transition or leaving care plan](#) and how TILA can be used to support their needs.
- TILA purchases **must** be in line with the young person's leaving care plan and be the right time and best use of TILA funds.
- Review the [What can TILA be used for](#) factsheet for more information.

Key reminders:

- A leaving care plan must be part of a young person's TILA application process.
- TILA can be used at any time as a young person leaves care and it does not need to be a payment of last resort.

Complete the TILA application form

- Complete the TILA application form **with** the young person.
- The young person must be **aware** of and **sign or approve** the application for TILA.
- Keep a copy of the TILA application form in the young person's file for a records and audit trail.

Key reminders:

- A caseworker **cannot** sign the TILA application on behalf of a young person without their knowledge

OR

- apply for TILA funding and hold this until the young person needs it.

Submit the TILA application in the UGG

- In some jurisdictions, your organisation and yourself must be registered and approved to submit applications for TILA in the Unified Government Gateway (UGG).

- Contact your [state or territory](#) TILA representative for the UGG registration spreadsheet and how to complete the process.

Key reminders:

- Some jurisdictions have TILA administrators that will submit the TILA application for you.
- Contact your [state or territory](#) TILA representative for more information.

Make purchases for the young person

- Decide with the young person what items or services they need, and then purchase the items/services as required in line with your organisation's procedures.
- You can accept hand written receipts if purchasing goods from secondhand dealers such as garage sales, or Gumtree, etc.
- Save receipts to the young person's file which should reflect the needs identified in their leaving care plan.

Key reminder:

- All of the TILA funding must be used for the young person and no portion should be used to pay fees, even if your organisation is paying for goods and services by credit card.
- TILA funding is **not** to be paid directly to a young person by either a deposit into their bank account or as cash.

Return Unspent Funds

- Return **all** unspent TILA funding to DSS by the end of each financial year or the beginning of the new financial year.
- Refer to the Return of unspent funds process section in this factsheet, the [TILA Operational Guidelines](#) or email tila@dss.gov.au for more information.

Key reminders:

- Surplus TILA funding **should not** be carried over to the next financial year
- OR**
- used for another young person.

Return of unspent funds process

To return unspent funds to the Department of Social Services (DSS) email us at tila@dss.gov.au with the following information:

Your organisation's details

- Full name of your organisation/department
- Address of your organisation
- Organisation ABN
- Contact name
- Contact phone number
- Contact email.

Details for each young person

- Name
- DOB
- CRN
- Amount to be returned.

Once this information is received, the department will raise an invoice for you to return the unspent funds to DSS.

Important

We strongly encourage organisations to try to expend the funds for the young person if they can.

When unspent funds are returned to DSS, the total amount will **not** automatically change in the Services Australia payment system. An organisation will need to contact DSS requesting manual payment of any unspent funds.

For example, if \$1,500 was paid to an organisation for the young person but \$200 was not spent and now has been returned to DSS, the amount of \$1,500 will show as being expended in the UGG. If in the future an/the organisation applies on the young person's behalf to have the remaining \$200 spent on goods or services, the organisation will need to contact tila@dss.gov.au. DSS will then issue a request to Services Australia for a manual payment of TILA to the organisation for the young person. Understandably, if the young person has moved and is no longer in contact with you, then this is a barrier to the remaining funds for the young person being expended.

Please ensure the young person is aware they have unspent TILA funds. Then record the amount and instructions on how to claim these unspent funds on their file should they request future purchases

NOTE: the young person must use all of their TILA funding before they turn 26 years of age as they cannot use TILA funding after their 26th birthday, even if some of their TILA funding is remaining.