



Australian Government

Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Family Support Program

FSP Data System Protocols

Objectives of this document

This document provides guidance to services receiving funding under the Family Support Program (FSP), which are required under the terms and conditions of their funding agreement to collect client data using the FSP Data System.

It provides program business rules and common definitions for specific data elements that assist in the collection of data and ensure that data is of a high quality and is consistent.

It should be read in conjunction with the FSP Guidelines and your funding agreement.

Note that this document is subject to revision to reflect any changes to the FSP Program and the Department's data and reporting requirements.

Family Support Program – (FSP)

The Australian Government helps to support Australian families, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged families, through the provision of integrated services under the Family Support Program, to improve children's wellbeing, development and safety and to enhance family functioning.

Family and Children's Services

To provide services to families, particularly those who are vulnerable disadvantaged or live in disadvantaged communities to improve family functioning and safety, child wellbeing and development.

Family Law Services

To provide alternatives to formal legal processes for families who are separated, separating or in dispute to improve their relationships in the best interests of children.

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FSP Client Data Collection – FSP Data System

Service providers receiving FSP funding for Family and Relationships Services (FARS), Family Law Services (FLS) and Specialist Services are required as part of their funding agreement's terms and conditions to collect client data through the FSP Data System or a compatible third party software application.

This client information constitutes a key component of the FSP's national data collection. The purpose of the data collection system is to collect and report reliable, nationally consistent information about the delivery of FSP services. The relevant data is available to Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) and service providers and contributes to other relevant research and program evaluation activities.

Evidence base - why data is important

Client data contributes to evidence-based policy development and supports program management by demonstrating the overall effectiveness of the FSP and the accountability of government funding. It also complements outcomes data collected through the FSP Performance Framework. Client data also informs your own planning and resource allocation of the delivery of services.

It does this by providing valuable information on the following:

- The numbers of individuals, families and children using FSP services.
- The issues or factors which lead people to access FSP services.
- The demographics of people accessing FSP services.
- The types of services or activities which are provided to respond to individuals' and families' needs.
- Where clients go when they leave FSP services.
- The client outcomes achieved as a result of participating in FSP activities.

Your obligations and role in the collection of data

Your role in the collection of client data and its subsequent quality and comparability is critical. It requires that you and your staff, including practitioners and data administrators, have a clear understanding of:

- The reasons why data is collected.
- The use of the FSP Data System forms to collect the necessary and relevant data.
- How to enter client data into the FSP Data System, or a compatible third party application.
- The data definitions and/or business rules for each of the data questions and responses in the FSP Data System.
- How to transmit data in accordance with funding agreement requirements, within 28 days of a service delivered to a client.
- The need to register all clients, with the exception of those clients who do not provide consent to transmit data into the FSP Data System, and
- How to access available reports through the FaHCSIA reporting portal.

Reporting Framework

The client data service providers collect against their specific funded service activities contributes to the following:

- Regular reporting to the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services and the Attorney-General.
- Monthly National reports for the Family Support Program Branch.
- Monthly State based reports for State and Territory Network offices.
- Service provider reports on their services.
- The FSP Performance Framework's performance indicators, for example percentage of clients from specific client target groups.
- FaHCSIA's Annual Portfolio Budget Statements.
- Program performance and evaluation activities.

Funding agreement obligations - when is data to be provided to FaHCSIA?

FSP service providers are required to enter data into the FSP Data System or compatible client management system within **28 calendar days** of service delivery for each client. This is to ensure the Department has the most current information that reflects FSP service delivery for performance monitoring and reporting purposes.

It is important to note that it is a breach of the terms and conditions of your funding agreement if this data is not transmitted on a regular basis, and in accordance with the 28 day requirement.

This is clearly outlined in the funding schedule; **Item E: FSP Data System:** You are required to collect and transfer data to us within 28 days of the actual occurrence of the client service activity as specified in the FSP Data System Protocols (or its successor). This is also referred in **Item B.3 Activity Objectives and Service Compliance.**

Lead agencies and consortia arrangements

There are number of consortia arrangements in the delivery of FSP services. It is the responsibility of the lead agency to meet the data collection requirements of the funding agreement. Service providers need to have clear processes in place with their consortia partners to determine how client data will be collected and transmitted throughout the duration of the funding agreement.

Use of third party applications or organisation's own client data collection system

The Department does not provide approval or accreditation of external or third party client data collection systems. Neither does it promote or endorse any particular systems. The sole requirement is that any third party application is compatible with the FSP Data System. It is also important to ensure that all required data is transmitted by your third party application.

Organisations that choose to use their own systems to transmit data must also meet the 28 day requirement. If there is system or resource issues that impact on your ability to transmit client data, it is your responsibility to have contingency plans in place in order to ensure that you continue to meet your contractual obligations. For example, this may include reverting to the FSP Data System whilst your system's issues are being resolved, or planning for and testing before any transition to a third party application.

It is also important to alert your State and Territory Network agreement manager as soon as possible if you have any issues in meeting your funding obligations including the transmission of client data.

28 day data lodgement period

From 1 July 2012, service providers will only be able to enter data into the FSP Data System within the 28 day period of the date of actual client service activity. Service providers will be unable to enter data after the required 28 day period has passed.

The implementation of this function will help to ensure data consistency and will aid in more accurate Departmental and Program reporting. If circumstances arise where a service provider is unable to meet the 28 day lodgement requirement, an extension to the 28 day period may be arranged through the FSP Data System Helpdesk.

FSP Data System forms – mandatory data elements/Use of forms

FSP Data System forms reflect the FSP Data System application. The purpose of the forms is to collect information on the mandatory data elements that the Department needs to collect for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and accountability purposes.

FSP Data System forms can be directly downloaded from the Department's FSP Data System web page.

From July 1 2011 the following forms are available:

Client forms:

Consent - Client consent

Form 1 - Client details

Service provider forms:

Form 2 - Client activity

Form 3 - Session details

Form 4 - Referral details

Form 5 - Client activity outcomes and parenting agreement outcomes

These forms are available in a format that can be modified. The forms are available from the FSP Data System helpdesk. It is a requirement for any customised forms to include the mandatory data elements.

Record keeping - retention of FSP Data System client / activity forms and records by service providers

It is a funding agreement requirement to retain client records, including FSP Data System forms, in their original form for at least five years after the end date of the Activity period. The Activity period refers to the end of the funding agreement. This provision enables the Department to access any relevant records to assess a funding recipient's compliance. Client information collected electronically, such as by electronic forms or other applications also constitute client records and must be retained for the same period under the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, and in accordance with any other legislative or regulatory requirements that pertain to the service delivered by the funding recipient.

Where records are destroyed by the funding recipient beyond five years after the Activity end date, it must be done in accordance with Privacy legislation based on the types of records that are to be disposed. Some States and Territories may have additional legislative requirements regarding the retention of records where vulnerable children or child protection issues are identified in the course of service delivery. FaHCSIA is unable to provide advice on State or Territory legislation, as this legislation is not administered by FaHCSIA. Furthermore, FaHCSIA cannot provide legal advice to parties that are not part of the Commonwealth Government, such as service providers.

Records (including client records), kept by a funding recipient are not Commonwealth records, so therefore are not subject to the requirements in regard to Commonwealth records imposed under the Archives Act 1983.

Protection of client information

Both the Department and service providers have an important responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of individual client information. There are a number of ways listed below in which security may be assured.

De-identified client data

The Department introduced the additional privacy measure of de-identified client data in 2010. The intention of de-identified client data is to provide further assurance that clients' personal information is protected and to encourage clients to give their consent to be registered clients.

This option means that a registered client's first and last names are not stored in the FSP Data System database, and are instead substituted with a unique Statistical Linkage Key (SLK).

(Note that a SLK is generated for all registered clients not just for service providers that have de-identified client data).

FSP Data System generates a SLK when data is first entered for each client. The SLK is made up of the letters of the first given name and the surname of the client, the client's D.O.B. and their gender, (M or F).

It is only the SLK and Client Id that are recorded in the FSP Data System. The clients' names are only accessible by the service providers' electronic or paper-based records or their own client management or data collection systems.

The SLK is unique to an individual client, not the organisation, whereas a Client ID number is attached to a specific organisation.

The SLK is also used as part of research and evaluation activities that both FaHCSIA and AGD undertake over the program cycle.

If a service provider wants their client data de-identified, they complete an application form available from the FSP Data System web page. Once completed, the application is submitted and signed-off by the relevant FaHCSIA State and Territory Network agreement manager. It is then sent to the FSP Data System Helpdesk who will negotiate and confirm with the service provider the date of effect of de-identified client data.

It is also important to note that once an organisation has selected the de-identified option for a client, it is not possible for a service provider at a later stage to request client details from the FSP Data System Helpdesk. Using a de-identified process means that there is no storage of client names in the FSP Data System.

The Department's security policies

FaHCSIA has the responsibility to ensure the efficiency, privacy, security and confidentiality of the system and the relevant client data. The Department takes the security of its data collection seriously by adherence to relevant privacy and security policy responsibilities.

The Department's privacy policy may be viewed at:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/about/overview/Pages/Privacy.aspx>

Confidentiality – the service provider's role

Service providers and their staff are required to comply with the Department's security policies, standards and procedures. It is important that each service provider has its own internal policies to ensure the confidentiality of client information. These policies should ensure compliance by:

- Adhering with funding agreement requirements, including the FSP Approval Requirements, with regard to security of client information and data.
- Undertaking security planning or developing risk mitigation strategies, and,
- Developing appropriate service provider governance strategies to ensure that all staff, employees and sub-contractors are aware of and comply with the relevant security policies.

A breach of the funding agreement may result in a service provider being required to develop remediation strategies to address breaches, and in more serious cases may result in the termination of the funding agreement.

Keeping data collection records private and secure

Information relating to client data collection, including client records, client forms and access to the FSP Data System application also need to be kept private and secure. This means making sure that the forms are only visible to relevant staff, and are locked away in a secure facility. It also means that user names and passwords **must not** be shared with other staff within your organisation.

FSP Data System – users' responsibilities

The service provider must take all reasonable steps to ensure that any employees, members, agents or sub-contractors who are provided with an FSP Data System user name and password protect information and meet their service obligations in regards to the following:

- **Access privileges and use of passwords**

FSP Data System users must be authorised to access the FSP Data System. A system user must not attempt to bypass the security systems by using another person's account or password. Passwords must be protected by users, who are personally responsible for any actions performed under their user account. Any breach will result in suspension of a user's account pending a review.

- **Confidentiality of information**

Information can only be accessed that is relevant to services being delivered to a client. Essentially on a 'need to know' basis, and any use of client data must be consistent with the Information Privacy Principles (Privacy Act, Section 14).

- **Data transmission security**

Only approved methods are used to transmit data from compatible client management systems.

- **Inappropriate use**

The inappropriate use of the FSP Data System resources, such as to harass, defame, abuse or disclose personal information is not permitted.

- **Monitoring and review**

The Department reserves the right to monitor and review all use of the FSP Data System, including the entry of data and relevant records.

- **Reporting lapses of security**

Any known or suspected attempts to obtain unauthorised access to the FSP Data System or other attempts to bypass or defeat security must be reported immediately to the FSP Data System Administrator.

- **Security training**

All users must read and comply with the relevant policies, plans and procedures for the FSP Data System.

In the event of a breach, or suspected breach, the service provider should immediately notify the FSP Data System Helpdesk via email at FSPDataSystem@fahcsia.gov.au, which will suspend the relevant account pending investigation.

Service access to the FSP Data System

Organisations should have designated roles in regard to the relevant FSP Data System access for their staff. It is up to organisations to determine the appropriate internal processes to enter client data, including whether it is a centralised administrative process, or whether each practitioner enters their own client data.

Administrative forms

Service providers can obtain access to the FSP Data System by completing systems access forms available from the FSP Data System web site. Applications for access or changes to organisation's records, including outlets, will be actioned within five working days. Forms need to be authorised by the appropriate service provider contact.

The creation of users can be completed by an organisation's FSP Data System administrator.

FSP Data System user roles

The user roles that are available to a service provider are:

Service provider administrator

Is any person that has a user name and password allowing access to the FSP Data System to input client data. This access will allow a person to enter data into FRSP Online, create Service Provider Users, Professionals, and modify Outlets and Organisations. The CEO or equivalent senior manager must authorise the creation of a Service Provider Administrator. Each organisation should have a designated administrator.

General/service provider user

Is any person that has a user name and password to access the FSP Data System for the input of client data.

Professional/practitioner role

A professional role is used to record all client service delivery against a specific worker or practitioner (such as a counsellor, family dispute practitioner or educator). If a professional is required to input data into the FSP Data System they also need to have a service provider user account.

Informed Consent – what is it and why is it necessary?

For the purpose of the Family Support Program (FSP) client data collection, obtaining the client's informed consent is necessary to enable you to comply with section 14 of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) ('Privacy Act') and the terms of your agreement with FaHCSIA. Consent is usually a signed statement by a client that they agree to have their personal information collected and stored by a service provider and then disclosed (in a de-identified form) to the FSP Data System application for statistical and reporting purposes.

It is important that the client has been given appropriate background information about why the information is being collected, how it will be used and to whom in general the information will be disclosed.

You are under an obligation to adhere to the Information Privacy Principles specified in section 14 of the Privacy Act. In particular, Principle 2 states that the information provider should be made aware of the purpose for which the information is being collected, whether there is a legal authority or requirement to collect the information and who is likely to have access to that information. It is also consistent with the prevailing views about the ethics of data collection.

Gaining informed consent

In order for clients to make an informed decision about whether they will participate in data collection, they should understand:

- the reasons for data collection and how it will be used.
- that they should decide for themselves whether to give personal information,
- that their privacy will be protected when they give personal information, by:
 - having their information kept confidential and only used by people who need the information, and,
 - forms containing their personal details are kept secure.
- that they will not be identified in any report or publication,
- that their information will only be used for statistical and evaluation purposes, and not for any legal, administrative or other purposes unless required or authorised by law, for example, to protect someone from harm and,
- that data collection is very important to the service provider and to the FSP.

Clients should also be advised that additional information may be collected (such as dates of providing services, what services were provided, referral information) during the time they receive services, without consulting them directly.

Recording client consent

Consent information outlined in the FSP Data System forms

Client consent only needs to be obtained once, and applies to all mandatory items outlined in the FSP Data System forms. Consent is given when clients agree to the following:

- the reasons for collecting personal information and details about how that personal information will be used, including it being disclosed to FaHCSIA and/or AGD;
- that their personal information is kept securely and only used by people who need the information;
- that their information will be entered into the FSP Data System;
- that their personal information will not be identified in any report or publication; and
- that their information will not be further disclosed unless authorised or required by law.

Note that these consent questions apply specifically to the FSP Data System data collection only

From 1 July 2012, service providers have the below options when gaining client consent and creating consent forms.

- Service providers can use the client consent form provided by the Department, – the form is available from the FSP Data System login page called: FSP client consent. If a client signs this form they do not need to sign the consent question on client form 1.
- Service providers can provide clients with the consent information fact sheet - the form is available from the FSP Data System login page called: FSP client consent fact sheet. Once the client has read and understood the information, clients will need to tick and sign the consent question on form 1 (Do you consent to your information in this form being collected by this service provider and it being disclosed in de-identified form to FaHCSIA and/or AGD for the purposes of FSP data collection?) They will not have to complete the FSP client consent form provided by the Department.
- Service providers may develop their own client consent forms, as long as the form includes the key consent issues covered above.

For example, a service provider may develop its own forms to include a request for consent to exchange relevant information with other organisations for service delivery and referral purposes.

If a client does not provide consent, they may be entered into the FSP Data System as an *unregistered* client. The absence of consent should be the primary reason for the recording of unregistered clients.

Service Delivery for young people and children - consent issues

Parental permission should routinely be sought before a person under 18 years of age accesses an FSP service, however this may not be appropriate in all circumstances.

Common law

A person under 18 has the legal capacity to consent to receive a service, provided the child or young person has sufficient intelligence and maturity to understand the nature of the service and any consequences in participating.

Statute law

In some jurisdictions there are relevant laws that override the common law. These apply where the service is considered to be, or may involve, medical treatment (which may include the receipt of services from a registered psychologist). In these jurisdictions, service providers should ensure that treatment they provide to under 18 year olds does not breach the relevant law.

It is recommended that service providers develop and implement policies to address service provision to children and young people under the age of 18 years.

These policies should address:

- Confidentiality and privacy provisions for service users under 18 years old and release of information forms.
- Inform clients about duty of care responsibilities and mandatory child protection reporting requirements.
- Ask under 18 year old service users if they agree to their parent(s) or guardian(s) being informed about the services being delivered.
- Use of support persons for under 18 year olds during service provision as the preferred option and support person waivers where applicable.

In regard to the FSP Data System consent if a child or young person participates in a service without parental consent they may be recorded as a registered client provided the above policies and laws are taken into consideration.

Telephone consent

Services providing telephone services can also obtain client consent on the telephone as long as they convey the three key consent questions above to the client. They can then note that consent was provided on their own records, or request clients to complete the consent form at a later stage.

FSP Data System Helpdesk support and training

The FSP Data System Helpdesk provides a support service to authorised users of the FSP Data System application. This service is available Monday to Friday (excluding National and ACT public holidays) from 8:30am to 5pm (Eastern Standard Time).

FSP Data System training for service providers

The FSP Data System Helpdesk offers over-the-phone training to assist service providers in data entry and the use of the reporting portal.

This support is subject to the following service level standards:

Emails

All emails will receive an auto-reply that the email has been received. Emails must include return contact details and a description of the problem or query. The FSP Data System Helpdesk will respond as soon as possible usually within 1-2 days. More complex procedural queries may take up to 2-3 working days. Service providers will be advised of any specific delays.

Telephone and fax enquiries

All telephone and fax queries will be responded to in 1-2 working days.
The FSP Data System Helpdesk can be contacted via email, phone or fax.
Email: FSPDataSystem@fahcsia.gov.au
Phone: 1300 137 305
Fax: (02) 6212 9143

FSP Data System website

The FSP Data System website has all current FSP Data System client forms, training task cards and other information to provide guidance to FSP Data System users (<https://frsponline.fahcsia.gov.au>).

FSP Data System data reports - what types of reports are available from the FSP Data System data?

The Department's reporting gateway provides service providers secure online access to their own organisation's reports via a secure online reporting portal. Reports provide information relevant to each service provider, including summary information on client numbers, services provided, client profile information and demographic data.

Individual client information is not identified in any reports

The following functions of the FSP Data System ensure that individual clients are not identified in any reports:

- A system generated unique client identification number (client ID) is given to each registered client entered into the system. These client identification numbers are used for reporting purposes.
- The FSP Data System reporting database is a separate database, updated in real time, with all clients' identifying details removed.

By law, FaHCSIA cannot release any information that can be used to identify an individual.

An unauthorised release of information is punishable under the Public Service Act 1999. The Privacy Act 1988 also ensures that any identifiable data from the FSP Data System database cannot be shared with other Government or Non-Government organisations. Any information released to other persons or organisations will contain only statistical information that cannot identify individuals. Information will be used for statistical purposes only and will not be used as a basis for any legal, administrative or other purpose.

Additional or ad hoc reports

Service providers can request an 'ad hoc' report via the FSP Data System Helpdesk if they require reports or information not available from the reporting portal.

Note that reports can only provide information that the service provider has entered into the FSP Data System. For example, client demographic information is only available from registered clients.

In order to process any report request, it is important to be clear what information or data you request and when you require it. Ad hoc requests should be sent to the FSP Data System Helpdesk, FSPDataSystem@fahcsia.gov.au or by faxing (02) 6212 9143.

Key FSP Definitions

FSP organisation

An organisation is a service provider in receipt of funding under the FSP.

Client

For the purposes of the FSP data collection, an FSP client is an individual, family or child/ren who receives a service or assistance from a service provider who is in receipt of FSP funding to deliver a particular service activity.

This can include the time taken for the intake and assessment but only if this process leads to another FSP service activity being provided. For example, the provision of 'information and referral', which is an eligible activity. However, a person presenting to an FSP service provider for other services, such as state government or other government funded programs, cannot for the purposes of the FSP data collection be included or entered into the FSP Data System as a client.

Registered client

Is a person who has received support or assistance from a Family and Relationship Service, Specialist or Family Law Service and has completed or provided the relevant information on the Client form and given consent for their details to be stored by the service provider and entered into the FSP Data System.

Note that demographic data can only be reported from the FSP Data System data for a registered client.

Un-registered client

An un-registered client is a client who does not consent to their personal information being entered into FSP Data System.

An un-registered client is generally included as part of a one-off group e.g. information session for a skills parenting course, or community promotional activity where collecting registered client information may not be feasible.

The Department acknowledges that there will be a small percentage of clients that do not consent for their information to be entered into the FSP Data System. However, it is important to inform and assure clients that only specific, non-identifying, personal information is collected or provided to the Department. Consent can be obtained at any time during the delivery of services.

Session

A session is each instance a client receives a service from an FSP organisation.

For example, when a client is registered for supervised contact and presents six times for the supervised contact, each instance is counted as a session.

A session is broken up into contact and non-contact time. Contact time is the direct contact with the client with non-contact time including all of the preparation time for client service delivery.

Client activity

A client activity record contains all information about a service or activity provided to one or more clients by a service provider. This includes information regarding the professionals, clients, sessions, referrals and activity outcomes involved in a specific service or activity.

From 1 July 2012, client activity records that have not been updated for more than three months will be automatically closed by the system. Client activity records closed in this manner will be marked as 'System closed' for easy identification. If the client activity record is still required at a later date, the functionality to reactivate the record is available.

The following pages describe the contents of each FSP Data System form and a brief explanation of the context and purpose of each question.

Form 1: Client details

Client to complete

All client demographic questions are mandatory for service providers to collect through the initial client registration forms and should be entered into the FSP Data System. For some of these questions, providers have the option to enter 'Not stated' to allow clients to be registered if they do not provide responses to the following questions; client income, income support status, employment status, marital status & education level. In these incidents the following additional information will need to be collected 'Not stated - client did not provide' and 'Not stated - service provider did not collect'.

Note all questions on form 1 need to be completed and entered into the FSP Data System in order to register a client and create the related client activities.

Refer to the FSP Data System Task cards 04, 05 & 06 for further information.

Today's date

The date on which the client registration form is completed.

Client name (First Name, Last Name)

The names that a client provides when they register.

FSP Data System prevents unnecessary duplication of registered clients by performing a systems check to search for any existing identical client record. It matches a record where a client's statistical linkage key (based on their first name, last name, date of birth and gender) are identical.

If there is an existing client record you should *re-activate* this record rather than re-registering a client. This will ensure that reports better reflect actual client numbers for each organisation.

Date of birth

The date a client provides as their date of birth (D.O.B.).

Enter date in the following format: dd/mm/yyyy.

or

Age

Only requires completion if a D.O.B. is not known or there is no estimated D.O.B. given. An estimated D.O.B. should use the following format: dd/mm/yyyy, for example 01/01/1960.

For the purposes of FSP Data System data collection, a client under 18 years of age is considered to be a child or young person.

Gender

Client indicates male or female gender.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin

This field is completed if a client identifies as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person is one of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, who identifies and is accepted by the community in which they live as such. It is the person's decision to identify themselves as Indigenous.

Information generated from this data field will be used to report Indigenous access to the FSP Program and contributes to program level reporting of this specific client group. This data also contributes to the FSP Performance Framework.

Main language spoken

Main language spoken by a client at home. If a client indicates a language other than English, there is a list of language options in the FSP Data System application based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Standard Classification of Languages.

English proficiency rating

This data field is only completed if the client has indicated that they speak a language other than English. The proficiency rating is self-assessed by the client. The service provider may need to assist the client in completing this field.

Information generated from Main language Spoken at Home data field will be used to indicate Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients and contributes to program level reporting of this specific client group. This data also contributes to the FSP Performance Framework.

Current marital status

The client indicates their current relationship status.

If a client indicates the following:

- De facto separated.
- Separated but not divorced, or
- Divorced,
(the client must indicate the date of separation). If a client cannot specify a date, then an estimation can be used with the following format: 01/01/yyyy.

This information indicates whether a client or couple are newly separated or divorced, or whether the client/s is presenting to a FSP service to address a longer term post-separation relationship or parenting issue.

The data also provides information on whether clients are seeking FSP support early in their separation.

Note that the date field is not mandatory for children, single or intact relationships.

For example, if the 'N/A – person under 15 years' is selected the FSP Data System application does not require a date.

Highest education level

The highest level of education or training attained by the client.

Employment status

The client's current labour force status.

The available options are:

- Employed, including self employed
- Unemployed, actively looking for a job, or
- Not in the labour force (e.g. stay at home parent, volunteer, not looking a job, student, retired).

Information in this data field is an indicator of financial vulnerability, low income families and clients who are eligible for the waiver of fees.

Current family income before deductions

A client indicates their annual family income before deductions. If a client is unsure, an estimation is acceptable.

Information in this data field is an indicator of financial vulnerability, low income families and clients who are eligible for the waiver of fees.

Do you receive Centrelink income support payments?

A client indicates whether they receive Centrelink income support payments including: Youth Allowance, Newstart Allowance, Carer Allowance, Bereavement Allowance, Widow Allowance, Austudy, Abstudy, Disability Support Pension, Sickness Allowance and Age Pension.

It should not include clients in receipt of Family Payments or Family Tax Benefits.

Information in this data field is an indicator of financial vulnerability, low income families and clients who are eligible for the waiver of fees.

Where do you currently live?

Client's place of residence including suburb, state and postcode.

Information from this data field indicates service patterns specific to particular locations and postcodes.

Main purpose for attending service

The key issue or reason the client identifies for presenting to an FSP service.

Referral source/ who referred the client?

The main referral source that led a client to present to an FSP service.

This information indicates how FSP clients find about FSP service/s, or a client's experience of the service system. It can also serve as an indicator of collaboration and shared service support for clients.

Optional client contact details

This is for internal service provider use only.

The information provided in the optional details area is recorded in the FSP Data System.

Presenting Needs

Service provider to complete

The key issue or reasons a client is presenting for an FSP service. This should be completed by the service provider. It can be done in consultation with the client. It is mandatory to select at least one option; however multiple presenting needs may be selected.

This data can be used to assess if a client is presenting with one specific issue, for example post-separation parenting which is relevant to Family Law Services, or where there are a number of options selected, can be an indicator of client complexity.

Although it is at the practitioner's discretion to determine what presenting needs options are chosen, it is suggested that service providers adopt a standard or consistent set of presenting needs against the relevant Activity types.

For example:

- Family Law Services,
 - Primary presenting need should be those relevant to post-separation issues, such as those under the Legal and Relationships sections; 'parenting agreements' or 'family separation'.
- Family and Relationships Services,
 - Primary presenting need for pre-marriage courses should select the 'pre-marriage' option, in addition to any other relevant selections where applicable.
 - Primary presenting need for services to support carers should select 'carers' or 'succession planning', whichever option is applicable, to the specific client's needs and the service support they are requesting.
- Specialist Services,
 - Kids in Focus activities primary presenting need should be 'drug/alcohol/substance abuse' in the first instance.
 - Specialised Family Violence activities should select options under the 'Violence/abuse' category, in addition to other relevant options such as 'family Violence orders' etc.
 - Family Relationships for Humanitarian Entrants, should select as the primary presenting need 'refugee', supplemented by any other applicable options.

Forms 2: Client activity

Service provider to complete

Client activity

A client activity is a means of collecting data that is directly linked to a client or a group. Information recorded here may include client/s, sessions, professionals, referrals and parenting agreements.

Commencement date

The date the activity commenced. This is generally the date of the first session.

Folio reference

This is an administrative, free text field relevant only for service providers to enter their own activity number as a cross reference to paper or any other files. It is not mandatory for reporting purposes.

Clients involved in the activity

A list of registered clients that will participate in the activity

Statistical Linkage Key (SLK)

A unique identifier generated from the client's first name, last name, date of birth and gender attached to a specific client.

FSP Data System client ID number

A system generated number that is a unique identifier for a client record.

Professionals involved in the activity

A list of professionals that will participate in the activity. If multiple professionals are listed, one of the listed professionals must be indicated as the primary or lead professional.

Client activity code

A numeric identification code automatically generated by the FSP Data System for each activity recorded in the system. Service providers can use this code to search for a specific activity.

Form 3: Session details

Session

A session is each instance or interaction between a professional's or practitioner's time against a particular eligible activity. This includes both contact time with a client and non-contact time (or preparation), in the delivery of a client service.

For example a client attends six sessions of counselling therefore six sessions would be recorded.

Session ID activity code

An FSP Data System generated unique code for each distinct session.

Outlet

The location where a particular service or session is delivered from. Any specified outlets in the FSP Data System should reflect the activity delivery areas listed in your funding agreement.

Date of session

The date that the session occurred. If the session does not occur no data is recorded.

Group work

This refers to a session that involves the participation of a number of clients.

Unregistered clients in attendance

Indicates the number of unregistered clients that actively participate in the session

Did a practising legal practitioner assist with the service strategy?

This field applies only to Family Law Services: (FRC, POP, FDR & RFDR).

Total fees charged – Excl. GST

If a fee has been charged for a specific session, it is a requirement to record the fees against each session. This should accord with the service provider's fee policy. It is important for a service provider to use a consistent format when recording this data. The FSP Data System will not accept fees in excess of \$9,999.

Number of clients charged a fee

Indicates the number of clients attending this session that were charged a fee

Number of clients who were not charged a fee for each of the following categories

Indicates the reason why clients were not charged a fee

- Incapacity to pay
- Government exemption
- Organisation policy not to charge a fee

FRC use only

- 1 hr. policy
- 4 hr. policy with interpreter

FRC use only if income less than \$50,000 per annum

- 2nd and 3rd hr. policy (note if income less than \$50,000 per annum)
- 5th and 6th hr. policy with interpreter (note FRC use only, if income less than \$50,000 per annum)

Note please refer to the Operational Framework for Family Relationship Centres for examples of when the above is applicable.

Session venue

This indicates where the session or service was provided to the client. The options include:

- Centre-based, refers to the service provider's outlet.
- In-home, refers to a service delivered in a client's home.
- Outreach, where a service is provided in another outlet, for example a Community Centre.
- Internet, telephone and videoconference.

Interpreter used

Indicates whether an interpreter was required in a specific session.

Client attendance

A record of a registered client attending a session

Professional attendance

A record of a worker attending a session, including contact/non-contact time associated with the session in question.

Contact and Non-Contact time

Contact time: Is the time spent by the professional with the client addressing their needs (i.e. during a session).

Non-Contact time: Is any time spent by the professional not with the client in preparation for their upcoming session or following up matters from the session (i.e. booking appointments, obtaining relevant information, completing paper work and following up referrals). Non-Contact time can be used to record a session where a client does not show / cancels the session and travel time (where a professional has to travel to see a client).

Client needs addressed

The practitioner's description of which of the client's needs were addressed during this session. The available options to select from are listed on page 3 of the FSP Data System session form.

Client waiting period

The length of time from when the client first initiated contact with a service provider and the first session they attended. A client's response should be reflected in weeks.

This is only to be asked at the first session of a client activity.

For example, at the first session, (an intake and assessment session), the client is asked when they first contacted the service provider. If the client indicates that they contacted your organisation less than one week ago a 1 should be entered into the data field. If a client's response is approximately 3 weeks then a 3 is entered into the relevant field. If a client indicates 3 months ago then 12 weeks will be entered into the system.

This information is used to generate reports on client wait lists.

Eligible activity employed

Note that eligible activities were previously referred to as service strategies in the FSP Data System application.

Eligible activities are linked to a specific service type or activity that a service provider is funded to deliver.

For example: service providers receiving funding to deliver Family and Relationships Services (FARS) can record clients against the following eligible activities:

- Information & Referral
- Support
- Education & Skills Training
- Counselling
- Dispute Resolution
- Outreach
- Community Capacity Building & Development

Further information on what eligible activities against each service activity or type are outlined in the FSP Guidelines. They are also outlined in Form 3, and in the FSP Data System application.

Note that when there is more than one eligible activity employed, they are recorded as separate sessions. For example a client attends counselling over a six week period, this would be recorded as six sessions against the client. They subsequently attend a weekly parenting program over four weeks, this equates to another four sessions. In total there will be ten sessions against this particular client.

If a client attends a single session and there are multiple eligible activities addressed, for example Counselling and Outreach, then they will be entered as two sessions.

Refer to Task Card 09 – Creating a session, FSP Data System website for more information.

Client sessions - additional eligible activities

There are also additional eligible activities that client sessions can be recorded against that apply to all services (FARS, FLS and Specialist services).

The following definitions for these eligible activities are also referred to in the FSP Guidelines, and the program glossary.

Intake and assessment only

The initial process of meeting with the client during which the practitioner gathers information to address the clients' presenting needs as well as assessing the clients' willingness and readiness to engage in a service. Referrals to another relevant service or activity may also be identified at this stage.

Note that if a referral to another service is provided at this stage, the service provider should complete referral out details, (as outlined in Form 4).

Intake and assessment plus service

As per Intake and assessment, however the delivery of other service activities may commence within the same sessions.

Note the above two options (Intake and assessment only and Intake and assessment plus service must be selected for the first session of a new client activity unless 'yes' has been selected for group work.

Intake and assessment – other client/s

This option should only be used when other clients, such as family members, are required to undertake this process. It is suggested that in most instances use the above intake and assessment options.

Intake and assessment – group

This option can be selected when intake and assessment takes place prior to a client participating in group based activities. The assessment process may focus on identifying specific needs of the individuals within the group.

Information & referral

A session that has a primary focus on the provision of information, and /or resources to the client(s). It may be prior to the commencement of service delivery or result in a referral to another service. This refers to any other support service.

Education and skills training

A session, either one-off or as part of a series of sessions, that is focused on the education of clients in the context of family relationships.

Examples include but are not limited to: pre-marriage, conflict management and parenting strategies courses. The term is often used interchangeably with skills training.

Counselling

A broad service strategy where the session assists couples and families to manage relationship issues arising from relationship changes, separation or divorce.

Community capacity building and development

Community capacity building and development assists communities to become resilient and sustainable in order to achieve benefits for children, families and all community members.

It includes community education, service promotion and networking with other stakeholders and services to support community initiated activities, and could also involve bringing community leaders together through activities such as conferences and forums.

Community capacity building may also include liaison and promotion to other services with a view to establishing referral pathways and / or service linkages.

The aim of community capacity building must be to achieve benefits for children, families and community members.

Note that this option can only be used for unregistered group work.

Family Reconnection

Assisting (locate, prepare and follow up) Forgotten Australian and Former Child Migrant clients reunite with family members they were separated from as a result of being in care as a child.

Outreach

Outreach enhances coverage for families experiencing difficulty accessing services. While outreach is often associated with rural/remote areas, it is not restricted to geographical challenges. Services may be delivered to a client or group away from the usual provider premises, for example in the client's workplace, home or shopping centre.

Dispute resolution

Dispute resolution is the legal name for services such as mediation and conciliation that help people affected by relationship issues to sort out their disputes with each other.

Preparatory – Family Law Services only

Preparatory is an eligible activity for the Family Law Services: FRC, FDR, RFDR and POP. It is used to record time spent with clients between intake and assessment and commencement of service delivery. This is usually Family Dispute Resolution, essentially for preparation for mediation. A common example is child-focused sessions conducted by FRCs to prepare a client for Family Dispute Resolution sessions.

Family Dispute Resolution – Family Law Services only

The delivery of Family Dispute Resolution services is linked to the Family Law Act 1975. Family Dispute Resolution practitioners must comply with the requirements of the Family Law Act 1975 and its Regulations. Dispute resolution is the legal name for services such as mediation and conciliation that help people affected by relationship issues sort out their disputes with each other

Change-over and supervised contact – (Children's Contact Services only)

When a child in a separated family needs to be given back to the parent or other family member who does not have the day to day care of them, and a parent is not comfortable meeting face to face, a Children's Contact Service (CCS) worker will facilitate or supervise the changeover.

Supervised contact is when a child needs to have a safe, controlled situation in which to spend time with their other parent or a family member. The visit can be supervised by a Children's Contact Service worker.

Records: Searching

Assisting Forgotten Australian and Former Child Migrant clients identify locate and obtain personal records about their time in care as a child, including Birth Certificates.

Records: Supported Release

Personally assisting Forgotten Australian and Former Child Migrant clients to understand the historical context and interpret information in their records, providing access to counselling and other support services as required.

Support

Support may include the identification of a person's needs, assistance with those needs, discussion about relevant services and options, referral to other services, either in-house or external, and client follow up. This activity may also be a hand-over between practitioners, collaboration and / or the sharing of information.

Support, about client with other professionals (non contact)

Session(s) held by practitioners in direct relation to ongoing service delivery without the client(s) present (e.g. a hand over of an activity between practitioners, collaboration and /or the sharing of information or a service strategy requested by the AGD to provide a visible measure of this element of the service delivery process).

Form 4: Referral details

The collection of referral information is an important indicator of service system responses for clients and collaboration across the FSP. This specific information is also used to generate reports on referrals.

Please refer to the FSP Guidelines for further information on the types of referrals.

Referral

In assessing the broad range of client needs, other services may be identified as being appropriate to provide assistance. Where a FSP service is unable to provide assistance or another agency is better able to do so, there are a variety of ways FSP services can refer clients to other services.

Client referred to another FSP service

Service provider to indicate to which FSP service a referral was made.

Date of referral

The date on which the referral was made.

Where is the client being referred to?

Select the type of agency or service the client is referred to.

Time spent completing client referral

Allows the reporting of professional/practitioner time spent organising a client referral.

Clients referred

The names of all clients associated with this referral.

Referral follow-up

Service provider records date of referral follow-up.

It is important at this stage to attach the client record to the referral. Refer to FSP Data System website for further information.

Form 5: Client activity outcome

This form may be used to record client activity outcome, parenting agreements or both.

This information is also used to close a client activity on the FSP Data System application.

Date of completion

The date that the client activity was closed.

Reason for activity completion

The main reason that the activity has ceased.

Family Law Services - Parenting Agreements Only

Date of agreement

The date the parenting agreement was reached or the date of the session.

Assessment by FDR practitioner

The practitioner's assessment, in relation to Section 60 (i) of the Family Law Act (1975).

The practitioner will complete the certificate indicating (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) as the outcome of the assessment.

Was a certificate issued?

Service provider indicates whether or not a certificate was issued in relation to this agreement and the issue date if applicable.

Type of parenting agreement

Indicate the format in which the agreement was recorded.

- Full agreement - reaching agreement on all issues that were the subject of dispute resolution.
- Partial agreement - reaching agreement on one issue or some issues (but not all issues) that was/were the subject of dispute resolution.

Outcome of parenting agreement

Indicate the nature of the agreement reached.

Did a legal practitioner assist?

Indicates the assistance provided by a legal practitioner in formalising agreements.

Intention to seek consent orders

Indicates the intention of clients to seek consent orders through the Family Court or other suitable source.