



Feedback for Applicants

Safe Places Emergency Accommodation program

Overview

The objective of the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation program (Safe Places) is to deliver new emergency and crisis accommodation places for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence (FDV). Funding was available for capital works projects including construction, alteration, extension or renovation of buildings.

The below feedback is intended to inform grant applicants what generally comprised stronger responses to the assessment criteria, and how to strengthen future applications.

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Safe Places Selection Process

A total of 131 applications were received and screened for eligibility. The 106 eligible applications were assessed and moderated by the Department of Social Services (the department) against the assessment criteria. Screening and assessments were consistent with the selection process outlined in the [Grant Opportunity Guidelines](#) (the guidelines).

Once eligibility was established, grant applicants were assessed on their merits against the guidelines. However, it is important to note this process was a competitive grant round. The Selection Advisory Panel, with a mix of relevant policy, program and delivery expertise examined all assessments and identified 66 applications were suitable to fund.

In accordance with the guidelines, recommendations were based on the strength of responses and the applicant's ability to meet the requirements and return on investment for the Commonwealth Government was prioritised through:

- Applications that met the selection criteria.
- Applications that brought forward additional funding (in-kind or cash), from other levels of government, private and philanthropic sources.
- A place-based approach to deliver accommodation where there was unmet demand for emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing FDV.

The Department's assessments of applications were provided to the Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services, the Hon Luke Howarth MP.

The Minister for Families and Social Services, Senator the Hon Anne Ruston (the decision maker) considered the assessment of the applications and the advice of the Assistant Minister in taking a decision on funding. The Minister for Families and Social Services approved funding to the successful grant recipients across various remote, regional and metropolitan locations to support the development of new safe places across Australia.

Feedback on Selection Criteria

Successful applicants proposed activities that were eligible, appropriate and effective for achieving the program objectives. They demonstrated suitability for public funding, value for money and provided strong responses to the requirements in the guidelines.

Summary of feedback: what stronger applications demonstrated

Criterion 1 - Demonstrate how your approach will deliver emergency accommodation in the location

- Accommodation would provide new safe places exclusively for women and children experiencing FDV.
- An appropriately detailed project plan with descriptions of the built form, (floor plans, bedroom configuration, security features, accessibility) or details of requirements to identify an appropriate purchase.
- Consideration of features to support the privacy, safety and dignity of clients.
- Good proximity and access to appropriate services and amenities.
- Understanding of the client base and community need.

Criterion 2 - Demonstrate how you will deliver accessible, appropriate and sensitive support

- Own FDV expertise or evidence of a partnership with specialist FDV service focussed on women and children that are client-centred, trauma informed, culturally appropriate, rights based, age appropriate, and have gender expertise.
- Supporting partnerships with Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse specialist services (where relevant).
- How they work with stakeholders to achieve intended outcomes and evidence of partnerships within the community (e.g. letters of support).
- How participants access appropriate services to assist clients.
- Strong policies and procedures to protect vulnerable people and how these policies will be enforced.

Criterion 3 - Demonstrate how your proposed emergency accommodation will deliver value for money

- Value for money to the Commonwealth in the capital works project for the location.
- Calculation of number of women and children assisted each year for new safe places only and rationale for the expected length/s of stay.
- Appropriately detailed project plans with descriptions of the built form outlining the design of dwellings and a detailed budget of how Commonwealth money will be spent.
- Evidence of the value and source of eligible co-contributions, whether cash (e.g. fundraising or loans) or in-kind (e.g. land, contributions to capital works), for the project and how the project would still be viable without unconfirmed contributions.
- Consistency of quoted figures through the application and attachments and in line within the range of available amounts stated in the guidelines.

Criterion 4 - Demonstrate your capacity and capability to deliver emergency accommodation

- Experience or capacity to deliver similar projects, including outcomes and the infrastructure to be used to deliver and evaluate the capital works project.
- Evidence of suitably experienced personnel able to deliver and effectively report on the capital works project
- Evidence of financial capacity and planning to manage grant funding, unexpected costs and the emergency accommodation for the 15-year designated use period.

Summary of feedback: applications found not suitable

Applications did not adequately address one or more of the following:

- Evidence of its own FDV and emergency accommodation management expertise or a formal partnership with a specialist FDV service demonstrated through responses to assessment criteria.
- Evidence of this expertise demonstrated on how the project would provide new safe places, address unmet demand and understanding of clients in the proposed location, and provide privacy, security and dignity to women and children escaping FDV.
 - Where a perpetrator model was proposed, how the service would provide appropriate services to support the women and children impacted.
- Evidence and details on how the capital works project provides value for money for the Commonwealth with clarity on key details including number of new safe places, women and children expected to be assisted each year, clear rationale for the chosen length of stay and satisfactory detail or evidence of co-investment claims.
- Demonstrate its capacity and capability to deliver the emergency accommodation on time and on budget by providing:
 - details of previous projects, project management staff experience and qualifications, able to deliver and effectively report on the capital works project
 - evidence of this capacity demonstrated through a detailed project plan, timeline, budget and risk assessment.
- Demonstrated clear pathways for women and children to access support services during their stay within the emergency accommodation.

Summary of feedback: applications found not eligible

Applications failed to comply with at least one of the following:

- The lead applicant was an eligible entity type.
- Demonstrate how the accommodation would provide new safe places as well as privacy, security and dignity for clients, including sufficient details of security arrangements.
- Evidence of a partnership with an appropriate FDV service provider or a statement of its own expertise.
- Evidence of capacity to deliver the project in time and budget by providing at least a brief project plan, timeline, budget and risk assessment.
- Provide a statement that demonstrated relationships with housing providers to ensure the availability of exit pathways into social and affordable housing.