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In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Available at [Victorian Government’s Additional carer respite funding web page](https://www.vic.gov.au/additional-respite-funding): https://www.vic.gov.au/additional-respite-funding

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# About

This document contains frequently asked questions and answers for the Additional Respite for Carers 2025-27 application process, to support organisations in applying. This is **not** a substitute for reading the program guidelines.

If you have further questions that aren’t covered in this document, please email the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Carers Team VictorianCarerStrategy@dffh.vic.gov.au

We aim to respond to questions within 2 business days. Applications close at 4:00pm on Tuesday 25 March 2025.

# Frequently asked questions

## Application form and mandatory attachments

### When we complete the project details section of our application form, can we select ‘Statewide’ service delivery instead of individual Local Government Areas (LGAs)?

There is no option to select Statewide service delivery in the project details section of the application form.

In this section, you should select all LGAs where you intend to deliver respite services from the list. There is no limit on the number of LGAs you can choose. If you intend to deliver respite services Statewide, you can select all LGAs.

If delivering across multiple LGAs, identify the traditional lands that you will mostly work on or where your main office is located.

In the project plan template, you will also select your regions of intended service delivery. There is a Statewide option for this question.

### We are wanting to run multiple different respite activities. Should we submit a separate application for each?

Each organisation may submit a maximum of one of each application type:

* One individual application
* One application as lead of a consortium arrangement (formal partnership)

All organisations should submit only one individual application for their respite activities. There is space in the mandatory project plan template to describe each of your proposed activities. Delivering different activities is welcomed and encouraged.

If activities are being delivered as part of a formal partnership, you should submit these as a consortium application. A consortium is where formal arrangements are in place with partner organisations to deliver activities, including allocation of funds between partners. It does not include general community partnerships your organisation may hold. Only one application should be submitted by the lead organisation.

Consortium applications are submitted using the same application form, but have some additional requirements:

* You must answer ‘Yes’ to the consortium question in the application form and list all partner organisations.
* Evidence confirming the consortium arrangement must be attached with your application (e.g. letters of intent from partner organisations).
* Your project plan and budget should clearly specify the responsibilities, respite activities to be delivered, and allocation of funds for each organisation.
	+ This includes an additional section to complete in the project plan.

If your organisation is submitting both an individual and a consortium application, you must ensure there is no duplication or overlap of services. If successful, all organisations in the consortium will be signatories to the service agreement and must comply with its requirements.

The same funding cap applies to consortium applications as to individual applications.

## Funding and reporting requirements

### How are targets calculated for this program and is there flexibility in the support provided to each carer?

Targets for successful organisations are calculated based on funding approved, using unit pricing of:

* $100 for every hour of respite support
* $2,000 for each carer per financial year.

For example, an organisation funded $100,000 per annum will have targets of 1,000 hours of respite service delivery ($100 per hour) to support 50 carers ($2,000 per carer) per year.

There is flexibility in the level of support that can be provided for each carer. Some carers may require additional support, and other may require less. It is the responsibility of funded organisations to allocate services based on need and ensure targets are met within the overall funding envelope.

### If successful, can funding be provided directly to family or carers?

This program does not provide any direct funding to service users. Funding is provided to successful organisations to deliver respite activities.

### Is any funding available beyond 30 June 2027?

Current applications are for delivery of services across the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years only.

### Are health organisations, registered as a “State Government Entity”, eligible for funding?

Yes – we welcome applications from these organisations. We understand these organisations may provide critical supports for carers, particularly in regional and rural areas.

All applications will undergo the same merit-based assessment process, outlined in the program guidelines.

## Eligible activities and costs

### Can only ‘primary’ carers access the program?

To ensure the broadest possible distribution of support for carers across Victoria, support is generally targeted to the primary carer in a care relationship.

We understand that multiple people can fulfil a caring role for a person receiving care. This distinction may not be appropriate for all carers and care relationships. For example, there may be more than one primary carer if the caring role is shared equally between family or community members. There is flexibility in these circumstances.

We encourage funded providers to reach out to discuss circumstances on a case-by-case basis when required.

### Can we spend funding on program administration costs? How are these defined?

Organisations can include program administration costs as part of their application, within the caps outlined in the program guidelines:

* If you are applying for $125,000 (excluding GST) per annum or less, you may use **up to 7.5%** of funding sought for program administration costs.
* If you are applying for between $125,001 and $1,000,000 (excluding GST) per annum, you may use **up to 5%** of funding sought for program administration costs.

For this program, program administration costs are defined as:

* costs related to the planning, management, oversight (including reporting) and coordination of programs or activities delivered under the funding (non-client facing).

For example, activities such as communications, reporting, client management setup and other back-end activities. This may include employment either fully or partially of an FTE to deliver administration activities as described above.

When submitting your application, ensure your proposed program administration costs **do not** exceed the caps outlined above. If your program administration costs exceed these caps, your application will be ineligible.

### Is intake and planning time spent with a carer considered program administration?

Time spent meeting with a carer to discuss their needs, in preparation for delivery of respite activities, is considered a service delivery cost. The program administration cost cap does not apply.

These hours spent with a carer can be reported towards your target number of hours. We recognise this is a critical part of delivering the service. While it may not be defined strictly as respite, it gives carers opportunities to have their needs heard and receive emotional or other support.

Time spent by workers on coordinating appropriate supports or brokering services, without a carer present, is also considered a service delivery cost. However, these activities cannot be reported as hours against targets. While these costs are also a critical part of service delivery, they are separate to activities that provide carers with a meaningful break from their caring responsibilities.

### We are already delivering services through the Victorian Support for Carers Program. Can we deliver similar services under this funding?

Yes, you can build on your existing service offerings through this funding.

For example, your organisation may already deliver individual respite support for carers. You could use this funding to expand this service delivery, allowing you to support more carers.

If you are funded for both programs, you will have separate targets for each. You must ensure there is no duplication of services or reporting. The services you provide through this funding must be additional.

### We are funded through Victorian Support for Carers Program or another program to deliver carer support. Can we provide services to the same carers in both programs, or does it need to be new carers?

The Additional Respite funding is intended to support different, additional carers, so more carers across Victoria have the chance to access respite. This is especially important for carers in rural and regional Victoria, where services are more limited.

We recognise that in some exceptional circumstances, a carer you have previously supported through the Support for Carers Program may have additional and critical support needs. There is flexibility to provide some additional support to that carer through Additional Respite funding in these circumstances.

These additional ‘hours of respite’ can be counted towards required program targets. However, the same carer should not be double counted under the ‘number of carers provided with respite’. They should only be counted under one program in each financial year.

Overwhelmingly, support should be targeted to new carers to ensure equitable and broad access to the programs.

### We use volunteers to deliver our services and most of our cost are related to program administration to support these volunteers. Are we eligible for this program?

Volunteer-led or Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) are eligible to receive funding through this program.

We understand costs for these organisations may relate to support for volunteers to deliver the service. These costs may be considered service delivery costs and are separate from program administration costs.

You should reflect these costs clearly in your proposed budget, separate from program administration costs.

If you are using volunteers to deliver your service and are unsure about eligible costs in your budget, please reach out to the Carers Team to discuss your specific circumstances by emailing VictorianCarerStrategy@dffh.vic.gov.au

### Can we continue to provide services to existing carers as part of the program, or does it need to be new carers?

Carers who have accessed the Additional Respite for Carers program previously are eligible to receive further support.

To improve access to respite for carers across Victoria, we strongly encourage successful organisations to:

* prioritise carers who have not previously received support through the program
* continue looking for ways to engage ‘hidden’ carers in the community (e.g. those who have caring responsibilities but do not identify as a ‘carer’, or those from groups who may face additional barriers to accessing support).

### Can we use funding to cover the cost of goods, equipment, capital costs or vouchers for fuel?

The focus of this program is on providing respite activities for carers. Goods, equipment, capital costs or direct financial support (e.g. vouchers) are not in scope for this program. All respite support delivered must be reported as hours of service delivery.

Costs for transport for carers are in-scope for the program, if they are required for carers to access respite activities. These are part of service delivery and not considered program administration costs.

We recognise that carers may need access to other kinds of support. You might like to support carers to explore other services to meet these needs, such as:

* [The Carers Victoria Carers Advisory Service](https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/how-can-we-help-you/support-services/carer-advisory-service)
https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/how-can-we-help-you/support-services/carer-advisory-service
* [Victorian Support for Carers program providers](https://www.vic.gov.au/support-carers-program)
https://www.vic.gov.au/support-carers-program
* [The National Carer Gateway](https://www.carergateway.gov.au/)
https://www.carergateway.gov.au/
* [The Financial Counselling Victoria Carer Pathway](https://fcvic.org.au/carer-pathway/)
https://fcvic.org.au/carer-pathway/

### Can we count travel time for carers to attend activities as hours for reporting purposes?

The costs for transport are in-scope for the program, if they are required for carers to access respite activities. They are considered part of the service delivery costs, and the program administration cost cap does not apply.

All hours reported against targets must be time that carers have been provided a meaningful and life-enriching break from their regular caring responsibilities. Travel time would generally not be counted as respite hours, unless you can justify how the transport time is providing meaningful respite for the carer.

For example, an individual taxi ride for a carer to attend an activity is unlikely to be considered meaningful respite. However, a group of carers engaging and travelling together to a shared activity may be considered respite.

### Can we use funding to pay for a support worker to deliver respite?

Yes, funding can be used for workers to provide direct supports to carers and the people they care for.

These costs are not considered program administration costs and is an eligible model for service delivery.

We also encourage providers to connect carers and the people they care for with ongoing supports where needed. For example, the National Disability Insurance Scheme or My Aged Care.

### Do we have to provide support for the person receiving care as part of our respite activities?

The department is open to any configuration of respite based on your carer’s needs and preferences. This could include:

* Support for the carer and the person they are supporting together (e.g. a shared activity)
* Support for the carer and the person they are supporting at the same time, but separately (e.g. separate group activities)
* Support for the person they care for only (e.g. providing the carer time to engage in their own activities, while the person they care for is supported)
* Support for the carer only (e.g. a carer support group, without those receiving care in attendance).

For any of your proposed activities, you must demonstrate how they will provide respite for the carer.

The hours reported in this program are the hours of respite provided for the carer, not the person receiving care. For example, if:

* a carer attends an activity for 4 hours.
* during this time, the person they care for is also being supported by a worker.

This would be reported as 4 hours of service delivery. The concurrent hours of support provided to the person receiving care should not be counted separately.

### Can funding be used for accommodation, transport, entry fees or other related costs to deliver respite activities?

Yes, these are eligible costs in the delivery of respite support.

All proposed respite activities must demonstrate that they provide a meaningful break to the carer from their regular caring responsibilities. You need to be able to clearly justify this for all your activities.

Costs must be reasonable in relation to the respite being provided. This means:

* The total cost of the activity is reasonable
* The costs are related to and required to deliver the respite activity for the carer or carers.

Successful organisations are required to meet targets for hours of service delivered and number of carers supported, calculated based on funding provided.

### Does a worker need to be present for all respite activities?

No, a worker does not need to be present for delivery of respite activities. However, support or facilitation is a key component of many respite activities.

For all your proposed respite activities, you must clearly demonstrate how they will provide a meaningful break to the carer from their regular caring responsibilities.

### Can funding be used to support carers in cross-border communities?

Yes, carers living in cross-border communities can access the program. We recognise that Victoria’s border communities have deep connections with their cross-border counterparts, and many of these communities aspire to operate as one.

Your organisation must still meet the eligibility requirements, outlined in the program guidelines. If your organisation is outside of the Victorian border, you may still be eligible if:

* you are an incorporated entity registered with an appropriate state regulator, and
* can demonstrate your service to Victorians.

If this applies to you, please email the Carers Team to discuss your specific circumstances: VictorianCarerStratregy@dffh.vic.gov.au

### Are there any limits of the age of carers that can be supported through this program?

There are **no age** **limits** for carers who can be supported through Additional Respite funding. This funding is designed to support carers regardless of age, background or circumstance. We recognise that people may take on a caring role across the lifespan, including children as young as 4.

While the “Project Audience” section of the online application form does not have an option to select people under the age of 12, these questions will not be used in the assessment of applications and **support for carers under the age of 12 is eligible for funding**.

The Project Audience section includes standard questions asked across all programs on the platform, to capture basic demographic data.

If your activities are supporting children and/or carers under the age of 12, you can reflect this elsewhere in the application form and project plan. For example:

* Assessment criteria questions
* “Carers your organisation aims to reach and deliver services to” section of the project plan.
* Activity descriptions in the project plan.

If you have any questions about your project's eligibility for funding, please email the DFFH Carers team: victoriancarerstrategy@dffh.vic.gov.au