Victorian Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

Tip Sheet 4: Personal & financial counselling (Category A - Clause 4.2.2 (g))

## Introduction

Victoria's Natural Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFA) scheme is available to Delivery Agencies including local councils, to relieve some of the financial burden that may be experienced following a disaster in accordance with the [Australian Government’s Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)](https://www.disasterassist.gov.au/Documents/Natural-Disaster-Relief-and-Recovery-Arrangements/disaster-recovery-funding-arrangements-2018.pdf). The DRFA does not cover all costs resulting from a disaster.

This *Tip Sheet* relates to Clause 4.2.2 (g) under Category A of the DRFA for the provision of **Personal and financial counselling**.

**Examples of costs associated with personal & financial counselling**

Examples of costs associated with the provision of personal and financial counselling intended to help individuals who are suffering personal hardship and distress as a direct result of an eligible disaster, in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, includes those associated with the following activities:

* + the assessment of the financial, personal, emotional, and psychological needs of disaster affected individuals and families;
  + offering specialised individual or group/specialised psychosocial counselling services to those suffering the effects of the eligible disaster. These counselling services can include personal/psychosocial resilience building as long as the primary intent of the counselling has a direct disaster recovery focus;
  + providing information about the range of assistance measures available to disaster affected individuals and liaising with disaster assistance delivery agencies;
  + undertaking outreach strategies to provide eligible measures in remote and regional disaster affected communities;
  + assisting with disaster related claims to insurance companies; and
  + providing referrals to specialist financial, legal, and psychological services regarding disaster and non-disaster related matters.

Examples of eligible personal and financial counselling costs are provided in Table 1 below:

|  |
| --- |
| Table 1: Eligible costs |
| The **engagement of additional temporary personnel** (i.e. short-term contractors to assist with assessing applicants and providing payments or vouchers, and contract counsellors to provide counselling to affected individuals. |
| **Basic catering** (i.e. tea/coffee/cold rinks/biscuits) for impacted individuals and households provided during the holding of counselling sessions. |
| The **engagement of service providers** such as a specialist counselling organisation. |
| The **hiring of a facility** to hold personal and financial counselling sessions. |
| Costs associated with **transportation** (i.e. car hire, fuel, and accommodation) for counsellors while undertaking the service. |
| **Publication/printing of the specific counselling information** for affected individuals. |
| **Overtime and allowances** for state or local council counsellors. |

**Table 2: Ineligible costs**

Examples of costs ineligiblewith the provision of personal and financial counselling are provided in Table 2 below:

|  |
| --- |
| **Table** 2: Ineligible costs |
| Normal **day labour** associated with impacted local council staff assisting with the coordination of personal and financial counselling. |
| Engagement of **food trucks** for **individuals and households not able to be directly attributed** to receiving counselling support following a disaster. Please note that catering is required to be basic as per Table 1 above and associated with impacted individuals and households. |

## Key time limits

The following table presents the time limits for the provision of personal and financial counselling and claims lodgement for eligible costs under the DRFA.

Table 3: Key time limits

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Claim type | Works completed | Claims lodgement |
| Personal and financial counselling | **Within 3 months** from the eligible disaster occurring.  Subject to the severity and nature or longevity of a disaster, the effects of the immediate impact and the need for supports to individuals and the community may be longer than 3 months. Further time may be required for personal and financial counselling and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests for an Extension of time (EOT) are required to be lodged in the CMS two weeks prior to the end of the allowable time limit. | Regular claims are to be submitted. All claims including supporting documentation are to be submitted as expenditure is incurred throughout the financial year and no later than the 31 July (one month after the end of the financial year) |

## Claims requirements

Delivery Agencies are required to provide the following supporting documentation in the format and separate zip files, no more than 2 GB per zip file associated with the provision of Emergency food, clothing, or temporary accommodation, as specified in Table 5 below to support their claims, **in the Administering Authority’s Claims Management System (CMS).** The required documents outlined in Table 4 are to be uploaded in the Claims module of the CMS when lodging a claim. **All supporting documentation lodged are to be structured and cross referenced to allow third party verification. This will facilitate the timely processing of claims and the State and Commonwealth audit review process.**

Table 4: Documents to be lodged into the CMS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Supporting documentation required** | **File type and name** |
| Claim Lodgement Declaration Form - **Form ID V Form D-DEC** | V Form D-Dec.pdf or V Form D-Dec.xlsx |
| Claim form - **Form ID V Form A-Relief Recovery**  Claim form provided must reconcile to the final amount in the claim lodgement declaration form. | V Form A-RR.xlsx |
| **Proof of expenditure/General Ledger** (providedfrom the Council’s financial system) including a detailed general ledger/transaction report displaying all expenditure incurred for eligible activities, being claimed within a specific financial year. General ledger provided must reconcile to the final amount in the claim lodgement declaration form.  In the case where works on an invoice is only being partially claimed, the General Ledger should reflect the full invoice amount. The invoice should show the works which are being claimed, with the claimed amount entered on the claim form. Delivery Agencies should refer to How To Sheet 1: Examples of Best Practice Claim Forms for Category A & B Counter Disaster Operations for examples of a Delivery Agency can provide best practice examples of claim forms, general ledger and invoices relating to Category A or Category B CDO expenditure. | Zipped folder: **Financials.zip** |
| **Invoices to include:**   * Reference to the disaster event (including the eligible event name (AGRN) if that is available, descriptions of works/activities and dates when undertaken. * Source documents (e.g. contracts, purchase orders, emails or other supporting information) supporting the invoice to be available for sampling upon request. * Where invoices do not fully outline the link to the event and/or the works/activities undertaken, source documents are to be provided when lodging that claim. |
| **Payroll**  Payroll reports for extraordinary payroll costs (overtime). Timesheets to be available for sampling upon request. | Zipped folder: **Payroll.zip** |
| **Reports and additional supporting paperwork**  Other examples of source documents that may be provided include customer service requests, agendas, minutes of meetings, any reports developed on particular works/activities being undertaken, copies of handout materials etc. | Zipped folder: **Reports/additional supporting documents.zip** |

## Funding contributions

Funding assistance provided to Delivery Agencies for early relief and recovery activities and counter disaster operations undertaken as a direct result of an eligible disaster event are outlined in the table below.

**Table 5:** **Funding contributions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assistance type | Delivery Agencies (with no insurance arrangements in place) |
| Personal and financial counselling | 100% of approved works  For these amounts to apply the total state expenditure for the eligible event must be more than $240,000.  Where the event has not been notified to the Commonwealth, Delivery Agencies are required to incur the first $100,000 in eligible expenditure prior to receiving assistance under the NDFA. |

## Further information

For further information, refer to the:

* [*How To Sheet 1: Best Practice Examples – Category A and B CDO*](https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/disaster-recovery-funding-arrangements-drfa/disaster-recovery-funding-arrangements-drfa-claims/victorian-drfa-how-to-sheet-1-category-a-b-cdo-best-practice-examples)which provides best practice examples on claim forms, general ledger and invoices for Category A and B CDO expenditure; and the
* [*Victorian DRFA Guideline 3: Claims and eligibility for relief and recovery activities (Category A) and counter disaster operations (CDO) – Category A & B*](file://G:\NDFA\NDFA%20Working%20Documents%20for%20DTF%20Website\2024\mockup%20of%20new%20GLs%20tip%20sheets%20etc\Cat%20A%20and%20Cat%20B%20CDO%20-%20February%202024\Victorian%20DRFA%20Guideline%203:%20Claims%20and%20eligibility%20for%20relief%20and%20recovery%20activities%20(Category%20A)%20and%20counter%20disaster%20operations%20(CDO)%20–%20Category%20A%20&%20B.)*.*