

Escaping Violence - Payment Fact Sheet

Information for referring agencies.

August 2023

What is the Escaping Violence Payment Program?

The Escaping Violence Payment (EVP) program offers financial assistance and confidential support to help people move forward and set up a home that's free from violence.

The EVP program is for people whose living situation has recently changed, or is about to change, because of intimate partner violence.

An intimate partner is a current or former romantic partner. Intimate partner violence can be:

- physically, verbally or sexually abusive
- emotionally, spiritually or psychologically abusive
- economically abusive, and/or
- threatening, coercive, or seeking to control or dominate the other person.

The EVP program provides individualised financial assistance packages of up to \$5,000, including:

- up to **\$1,500** in cash (or cash equivalent depending on the person's needs and preferences), and
- up to **\$3,500** in goods and services such as removalists, bonds, or household items.

People who need help from the EVP program can work with a case worker or referring agency, or can contact the program at

www.unitingvictas.org.au/escaping-violence-payment/

Please be aware that the EVP program is not an emergency response service.

Who is Eligible?

The EVP program is for people who:

- have Australian citizenship, permanent residency, or a protected special category visa
- currently live in Australia
- are over 18 years of age
- have experienced intimate partner violence
- have changed living situation within the last 12 weeks, or have a plan in place



to change it

- are experiencing financial stress because of the change, or upcoming change, in living situation, and
- have not used the EVP program in the last 12 months.

The EVP program is available to everyone who is eligible, regardless of their gender. Examples of changes in living situations include:

- The person experiencing violence has left their home
- The partner has left the home
- The person experiencing violence has left a refuge or temporary residence
- The partner has been removed from the home
- The person experiencing violence has a safe plan in place to leave their home the refuge, or the temporary residence soon.

How to access the Escaping Violence Payment Program

A national network of agencies delivers the EVP program on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Uniting Vic.Tas manages the program on behalf of all delivery partners and hosts the central application entry point www.unitingvictas.org.au/escaping-violence-payment/ Applicants will work with the program delivery partners most closely located to their current location across Australia.

Agencies and case workers

Agencies and case workers can check eligibility and submit applications via program www.unitingvictas.org.au/escaping-violence-payment/

Individuals

People who would like to apply for the EVP and do not have a case worker or referring agency can apply for the program via www.unitingvictas.org.au/escaping-violence-payment/

Frequently Asked Questions and Additional Information

Eligibility checks during the referral process

The EVP program conducts eligibility checks according to program policies set by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The EVP delivery agencies may request supporting documentation on behalf of the DSS as a part of the client referral process.

Family or domestic violence

People are only eligible for the EVP when the person using violence is an intimate partner that the person experiencing violence normally resides with. Other family



members or people who the person experiencing violence lives with are not considered intimate partners.

Cash Component

The EVP package can include provision of up to \$1,500 cash or cash equivalent, based on the needs of the person requiring assistance. For instance, a prepaid debit card can be provided, or a combination of cash, a debit card, and vouchers may be an option that better reflects the consumer's needs.

Accessing multiple programs

A consumer can receive support from the EVP program and access other programs simultaneously. However, the EVP program tries to avoid providing funding for an item or service that is already being funded by another program.

Please be aware that other programs or grants may have restrictions on the number of programs a consumer can access at one time.

Additionally, Services Australia's "Crisis Payment for Extreme Circumstances Family and Domestic Violence" program counts the EVP as liquid assets when assessing an application.

Time frames for EVP eligibility

To be eligible for the EVP program a person needs to have changed their living arrangements, or have experienced a change in their living arrangements, within the last 12 weeks. The violence does not need to have occurred within the last 12 weeks, it is the act of leaving or the perpetrator leaving the home that should be within this time frame.

For example, the EVP could be used to facilitate a move from a women's shelter. The violence may have occurred longer than 12 weeks ago, but the move from the women's shelter to a rented home is current and is the result of intimate partner violence.

Financial liquidity

This is not an asset tested program. It is designed for people leaving a violent intimate partner situation who are experiencing financial difficulty.

Australian citizen or permanent resident

The EVP is open to Australian citizens, permanent residents and holders of a protected special category visa living in Australia.

The Red Cross may be able to provide financial assistance to people with temporary visas, or with uncertain visa status. <https://www.redcross.org.au/get-help/help-for-migrants-in-transition/family-and-domestic-violence-financial-assistance>

Please be aware that the EVP program is not an emergency response service.

If your client needs immediate assistance, call emergency services 000 or 1800 RESPECT.

