



Australian Government
Department of Defence

**Defence Community Organisation
Community Support Coordination Program**

Guidelines July – December 2019

Preface

Defence Community Centres play a vital role in accommodating Defence members and their families meeting and engaging with each other in a supportive, safe venue, and providing a rally point for this community including at times of deployment and absence from home with a connectivity to Command.

They connect people in local communities through the vast volunteering opportunities they provide and the wide range of activities on offer.

The success of any Defence Community Centre is contingent on the commitment, skills and hard work of committees of management, coordinators, staff, and volunteers.

The Community Support Coordination Program Guidelines provide valuable information to committees of management and coordinators about funding and reporting requirements, and ways to strengthen the governance and capacity of Defence community groups running these centres.

The Department of Defence continues to be a proud supporter of Defence community groups and the centres that they operate out of, that support Defence families.

1. Overview

- 1.1 The Community Support Coordination Program (CSCP) provides funding support to eligible Defence community groups to enable the employment of a community support coordinator at their centre/organisation who will be responsible for coordinating the delivery of services and valuable support to Defence families in their local community.
- 1.2 The community support coordinator is expected to represent the Defence community group, to be the public face of the centre/organisation and be responsible for the establishment, implementation and development of services and programs to enhance the wellbeing of Defence members and their families within the community they live in. The role is pivotal in ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of a busy vibrant community centre, providing services for a very diverse community.
- 1.3 The coordinator is expected to be part of the executive team and be responsible for the delivery of effective administrative and financial management within the centre/organisation and be the day-to-day interface with centre users, service providers and the general public. The coordinator will work in consultation and collaboration with the committee of management. The coordinator will work with community members, other services and key stakeholders in the community to determine key projects that encourage and build community participation and wellbeing.

2. Objective

- 2.1 The program will offer governance and compliance support for the coordinators and the committees that employ them, along with networking and training opportunities to strengthen the groups and provide greater community stability and communication networks. This offer of funding support is to be considered separate to the Family Support Funding Program (FSFP) grant approval process.
- 2.2 The Community Support Coordination Program aims to assist Defence community groups to:
 - establish networks with other groups to share ideas, information and innovation for the benefit of the community;
 - enhance the quality, skills and knowledge of committees and coordinators;
 - competently administer the centre to operate efficiently and ensure financial accountability;
 - establish a skilled team of volunteers to function as an essential support for the centre's operations;
 - strengthen the pay conditions of paid employees;
 - ensure the sustainability of Defence community groups; and
 - support groups in accessing appropriate resources, information and advice to maintain their services.
- 2.3 The program defines Defence community groups as an incorporated not for profit organisation that exists to facilitate building the capacity of Defence families to develop and connect with the community they live in.
- 2.4 DCO is committed to the continuation of the Community Support Coordination Program to create a community asset attractive to current and potential Defence families and current and potential coordinators and committees that employ them. These community centres must offer a variety of activities and opportunities that are inclusive for all Defence members and families.

3. Eligibility criteria for funding support

3.1 The Department of Defence will only enter into a funding agreement with an organisation that is a legal entity. The organisation must meet all the criteria below in order to qualify for community support coordinator funding. Applicants must:

- have applied for an FSFP grant;
- be an incorporated not-for-profit organisation;
- be a Defence community group; and
- accept the minimum standard requirements in accordance with this agreement

4. Minimum standard requirements

4.1 The appointment of a community support coordinator should be conducted through a selection process undertaken by the management committee which is open, competitive and transparent.

4.2 Defence community groups in receipt of community support coordinator funding are responsible for their own governance, administration, and advertising of the position and appointment of a paid coordinator. Defence community groups are responsible and accountable for ensuring:

- the appointment of a paid coordinator is in accordance with their Constitution;
- a written employment contract is in place;
- there is a duty statement;
- a supervisor is appointed;
- a performance review/policy is in place;
- services are operated in line with, and comply with the requirements as set out within all State/Territory and Commonwealth legislation and regulations;
- pay slips are provided and accurate payroll records are kept by the Treasurer, adhering to transparent and accountable book keeping and expenditure procedures;
- appropriate insurance is held; and
- the management of any risks to the reputation of the Defence community group or Defence.

4.3 The working conditions of the community support coordinator are the ultimate responsibility of the management committee. Under workplace health and safety laws, employers must provide a safe premises, safe machinery and materials, safe systems of work, information, instruction, training and supervision and a suitable working environment and facilities.

4.4 It is advisable that all committees who are employing a coordinator refer to the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 in the development of position descriptions and employment contracts. It is recommended that committees seek external advice through the Fair Work Ombudsman website at the following www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements to ensure there is an understanding of what is included in the award rates and that all legislative requirements are met in regard to pay and conditions.

4.5 Paid coordinators should refer to their individual offer of employment from their Defence community group regarding their conditions of employment. The Award, rate of pay, weekly hours, leave options, type of employment (part-time/casual), and probation/termination information should all be outlined in the employment contract.

- 4.6 Employers are required to pay superannuation to paid staff (who earn \$450 or more before tax in a calendar month) and this is paid in addition to a wage, an employer cannot deduct this from wages. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) can provide more information about taxation and superannuation at www.ato.gov.au
- 4.7 Employers also have the responsibility of ensuring staff under its command enjoy the terms and conditions of employment meeting the minimum requirements of legislation and regulation as well as the needs of the organisation and the individual by conducting a performance appraisal on an agreed regular basis. A performance review/appraisal keeps communication flowing and addresses any concerns, training or accountability issues and provides clarity on priorities. Employees work much better when they are clear on expectations and feel more positive and focused about their contribution to the organisation. Failure to conduct a performance appraisal with the paid coordinator may jeopardize the release of further funding. Coordinators should not be present at committee meetings when the coordinator's performance or remuneration is being discussed.
- 4.8 Paid coordinators also have responsibilities to their employer. Coordinators are responsible and accountable for ensuring:
- they are punctual, reliable and professional at all times;
 - comply with the code of conduct at all times;
 - they are aware of and adhere to the organisation's mission, vision, values and behaviours
 - they know and follow workplace policies and procedures including those that relate to a safe and healthy workplace;
 - they contribute to a safe and healthy workplace - ensuring you don't discriminate, bully or harass anyone you interact with as part of your role;
 - the work performed will assist your employer run their organisation, making sure it is to the best of your ability;
 - a handover is given to the new coordinator should the occupant leave the role;
 - they perform all the duties of the role and comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by your supervisor; and
 - confidential information is not revealed about the organisation.

5. Funding caps

- 5.1 DCO will determine funding support to Defence community groups according to hours of operation, responsibilities of the paid coordinator and other expectations of the role up to a capped amount of \$18,000 including superannuation costs for the July to December 2019 period. Superannuation will be calculated at a rate of 9.5% as part of the funding offer.
- 5.2 The provision of funds is subject to annual budgetary appropriation from the Department's budget and funds availability. Where funding levels are affected by appropriation, the amount paid by the department may be adjusted accordingly. Caps have been applied as part of ongoing financial management of the program.
- 5.3 Actual funding caps for the program have been based on the weekly wages prescribed in the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 for a social and community services Level 3 pay point 1 part-time employee.

- 5.5 Any salary payments above the funding caps are at the Defence community group committee's discretion and must be outlined in the employee's employment contract including any increase in classification pay points due to qualifications.
- 5.6 DCO will offer funding as part of the program that will predominately cover salary costs with an incidental component that may support the delivery of services, coverage for liabilities associated with accident or injuries and attendance at governance support training. It will be the responsibility of the committee of management to track and acquit the expenditure of all these costs at the end of the financial year.

6. Funding agreement

- 6.1 DCO is responsible for the outcome of the 2019-20 CSCP and payments. Successful groups will receive a CSCP funding agreement from DCO and will be asked to accept the terms and conditions in the agreement. The agreement must be returned by the group as soon as possible noting that funds cannot be released without the signed agreement. Funded groups are responsible for ensuring the terms and conditions of the agreement are met. Any organisation failing to accept or meet the terms of the agreement will forfeit their eligibility to funding.
- 6.2 There is no binding agreement until the agreement is signed by the funded group and the DCO delegate. Funds will be made available once both parties sign the agreement.
- 6.3 Funding will only be made available to Defence community groups who employ a community support coordinator based in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the funding agreement and these guidelines. This may include a job share situation whereby two people perform the duties of the coordinator role. Other paid staff such as playgroup coordinators, administrative assistants and bookkeepers cannot be covered under this funding support.

7. Relationship & engagement between the Parties

- 7.1 The program will be administered by the Defence Community Support Programs team, DCO. This will include managing the application and eligibility assessments, negotiation of funding agreements, undertaking monitoring and compliance checks and providing a support network for coordinators and their employers.
- 7.2 The program will offer funding support to successful groups, made in two payments covering the periods July to December and January to June. Monitoring will occur between payment schedules to maintain a strong relationship with committees and provide them with appropriate guidance and tools to ensure they adhere to the conditions of the funding support and the success of the program. Site visits will also be conducted by the administrators of the program.
- 7.3 It is expected that all Defence community groups funded through the CSCP actively engage with their local DCO office and key stakeholders including DFA, Base Managers (if applicable) and Command as part of networking and participate in the governance guidance, networking activities and training offered by the DCO. Failure to meet these accountability requirements may lead to the withdrawal of program funds.

- 7.4 DCO understands Defence community groups differ greatly based on size, budget, facilities, hours of operation, staffing arrangements, level and type of activity because the communities they serve have differing interests, needs and resources. Whilst there are no laws specifying that the coordinator cannot concurrently hold a position of committee member, it is recommended different individuals hold these positions, removing any real or perceived conflict of interest. As part of a sound and ethical governance framework a separation of duties between governance and operations provides for a higher level of transparency in business transactions. The two roles have distinctly different objectives – the committee member is recruited as a volunteer and is responsible to ensure the organisation meets its legal and stated purpose. Management and staff are employed by the committee to implement programs and operations. If this is one person there is a real and perceived conflict of interest and may present issues as it relates to the committee managing performance of employees. It is recommended that anyone in a paid position should not be a committee member.
- 7.5 The role of DCO is to work with Defence community groups, addressing the needs, issues or problems by providing information, skills and access to resources to assist Defence community groups in the process of organising itself and taking action. DCO will offer ongoing advice and support for groups to continue to thrive and will reasonably assist in disputes raised by Defence community groups.
- 7.6 The role of the committee is to appoint and work effectively with the coordinator. In practice the two are mutually dependent on one another. Committees rely on the coordinator to provide input into strategic development, implement strategy, communicate management’s perspective and alert the committee to issues that are relevant to the organisation. The coordinator relies on the committee for delegation of authority, clear direction, mentoring and support.
- 7.7 The coordinator should be part of the executive team and manage the day to day operations of the organisation, its people and resources. The coordinator should implement the strategy approved by the committee and ensure that the organisation’s structure and processes meet the strategic and cultural needs of the organisation. Primary authority for the governance, direction, control and management of an organisation is usually constitutionally and legally vested in the committee. Therefore, it is necessary for the committee to empower the coordinator to take responsibility for the day to day operations and management of the organisation.
- 7.8 The process of formalising the coordinator’s powers and responsibilities in writing with a position description and employment contract will help the committee to clarify its expectations. At the same time the committee’s responsibilities should be made clear in its own policies. These documents are intended to give both sides freedom to act within boundaries, rather than to constrain them.

8. Payments

- 8.1 The Department is responsible for ensuring that funds are paid accurately and on time, subject to financial and program requirements being met.

- 8.2 Funding will be made available upon receipt of a tax invoice. Payment will be effected by electronic funds transfer (EFT) to the specified bank account via a purchase order number. It is important that the correct bank details are provided by the Defence community group and must pertain to the CSCP recipient, not to personal accounts. Defence's payment policy is up to 30 days from receipt of a correctly rendered tax invoice. Payment schedules are from July to December and January to June. Payments may be withheld if there is any uncertainty related to governance, performance or capacity to deliver the services agreed by the Defence community group.
- 8.3 Funding should be accessed within 30 days of signing the funding agreement and within the payment schedule for which the funding has been offered. There is no opportunity to request funds outside the funding payment schedule period.

9. Funding compliance

- 9.1 Funding must only be used for the purposes for which it was provided. All funding must be expended by 30 June in the year following the approving of coordinator salary funds. Groups will be emailed a financial compliance report to acquit the funding from the previous financial year. This report should be forwarded to the Defence Community Support Program team as soon as the completion of expenditure for that financial year. Failure to return the completed financial compliance report may impact the release of future funding.
- 9.2 At the end of the financial year, compliance reports provided by groups will be used to determine any unused funds provided by Defence. Unspent funds must be returned to the DCO. There is no discretion to carry over funds into the next financial year and there is no capacity to pay a community support coordinator over and above their initial funding allocation. DCO will recover all unspent funds by issuing an invoice to affected groups.
- 9.3 It is the responsibility of the Defence community group to maintain a complete set of policies and procedures as part of good governance as well as records for acquittal purposes, including all receipts and financial statements via an appropriate accounting payroll system. At any time the committee may be asked to supply documentation and financial records in support of expenditure. CSCP funding is public money and great care must be taken in the administration of expenditure and committee members are fully accountable for their actions in respect of these funds.
- 9.4 Defence community groups who do not exist to: facilitate building the capacity of Defence families to develop and connect with the community they live in; meet program compliance; or are in breach of their employment contract conditions will no longer be entitled to program funding. Defence community groups will be advised if they fall into this category and will be transitioned out of the program.

10. Training

- 10.1 DCO will continue to enhance Defence community groups with training and strategic advice to support them to thrive. During the financial year, tools, resources, governance guidance for committees and coordinators will be offered to maintain a level of support and increase networking opportunities. DCO has responsibility for program development, strategic planning and future program directions.

11. Conflicts of interest

11.1 Committee members and coordinators must not put themselves in a position, real or perceived, where there is a conflict between their duties and responsibilities to the organisation and their personal interests. Members of the committee as well as coordinators must disclose any material personal interest they may have in any contract, or proposed contract, entered into or being considered by the committee. A committee member has a material personal interest when that member has a personal interest in a matter which could be seen to compromise their ability to act in the interests of the organisation and make an impartial decision. The interest may be financial or non-financial. Disclosures must explain the nature and extent of the interest and be made as soon as the member becomes aware of it.

12. Other Important Information

12.1 To meet the high standards of governance, performance and accountability and to comply with the program it is important recipients read the FSFP Guidelines which underpin this program. Other reference documents include:

- Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013;
- Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines; and
- State/Territory legislation and regulations for the not for profit sector.

Contact Information

Further information is available at defence.communitygrants@defence.gov.au