GUIDELINES

DEFENCE COMMUNITY ORGANISATION
FAMILY DAYCARE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT - REIMBURSEMENT OF INITIAL SET-UP COSTS

Purpose
The Family Daycare Business Establishment - Reimbursement of Initial Set-Up Costs Guidelines (Guidelines) have been developed for the information of eligible ADF Partners who are family daycare service providers seeking reimbursement of their initial business set-up costs from Defence community Organisation (DCO).

Assessment of Applications
All applications submitted to DCO will be assessed and eligibility advised to the applicant in writing.

Outcome of Applications
DCO will email applicants with advice of the outcome of their applications and should anticipate that it may take a maximum of 28 days from the day DCO receives the application form.

Applicant Responsibility
Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have read these Guidelines; that their application meets the eligibility criteria and that the information submitted in their application is true and correct. Applicants and ADF Partners must sign the application form with an understanding that any reimbursement in relation to this benefit is Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) reportable.

Where the ADF Partner is not available to sign physically due to long term deployment, exercise or training, then use of Power of Attorney (for pay purposes) or an email from the ADF Partner complete with their full name rank and PMKeyS number (employee ID) indicating their support for the application and they are fully aware of the FBT implications is acceptable.

Assistance
If you require assistance in completing this application, please contact the Defence.ChildcarePrograms@defence.gov.au

More Information
More information is available on the DCO website www.defence.gov.au/dco or call the Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

Please keep these Guidelines for your information
Under the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Family Covenant and in accordance with DCO Strategic priorities, this benefit aims to help achieve a sustainable, self reliant Defence Community.

These Guidelines set out the intent of the benefit along with the eligibility criteria that applications will be assessed against.

Applicants are reminded of the requirement to provide clear and accurate information when they apply for assistance, and to advise when that information changes. Information supplied when applying for assistance is taken to be a true and accurate record of the applicant's circumstances. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth). Where false or misleading information is provided, or relevant information withheld, criminal or disciplinary action under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, Public Service Act 1999, or the Criminal Code Act 1995 may be taken depending on the circumstances.

If the applicant is a member of the ADF, or employed under the Public Service Act, administrative action may also be taken by Defence and sanctions imposed. Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

RAY BROMWICH
Director General
Defence Community Organisation

March 2015
Part 1 – Introduction

Aim
This benefit aims to aid in the retention of ADF members by supporting employment opportunities of Defence-recognised partners in their posting locality by assisting:

- eligible Defence-recognised partners’ employment opportunities as family daycare providers through reimbursement of initial business set-up costs in the establishment of family daycare businesses in their posting location; and
- in strengthening family wellbeing and thereby contributing to strengthening the capability of the ADF.

Part 2 – Principles

This benefit is available as once-off reimbursement of selected initial set-up costs associated with establishing a new family daycare business. It is aimed at alleviating the impact that relocation may have on Defence families, by supporting employment opportunities for Defence-recognised partners of ADF members, wishing to work as family daycare providers in areas of high Defence need.

This benefit is a contribution towards the costs incurred in establishing a family daycare business. It is not Defence’s responsibility to fully fund costs where these costs exceed the maximum reimbursement amounts prescribed in Part 5, or contribute to the remodelling of a dwelling to support the business.

While this benefit is available to Defence–recognised partners strictly in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy document, the benefit is not a statutory entitlement.

Depending on eligibility as prescribed in Part 3, Defence may reimburse reasonable costs incurred for the following business set-up requirements (this list is not exhaustive):

- First Aid Certificate;
- Public Liability Insurance;
- Working with Children/Vulnerable Persons Checks;
- Car Safety Certificate;
- Family Daycare Australia Registration Fee;
- National Quality Framework Fee; and
- Reasonable State or Territory required safety amendments or changes to the home such as window reinforcement plastic film for high traffic areas as per safety code (not solar tinting),
- Cupboard and drawer safety latches (to prevent child access).

In assessing the above, DCO refers to KidSafe (NSW) for benchmark child safety standards or copy this link into your browser - http://www.kidsafensw.org/information-sheets/home-and-community-safety/

DCO will not reimburse changes to the home environment that is reasonably deemed as a home improvement that would normally occur without the business.

The delegate considers each application on a case by case basis.

Part 3 – Eligibility

Eligibility for this benefit is based on the following criteria:
• Applicants must be recognised on the Defence Human Resources system (PMKeyS) as a partner (as defined by the ADF Pay and Conditions Manual) of a permanent serving ADF member.

• Applicants must be registered with a regional family daycare provider and have their business operating at the time they apply for funding reimbursement. For more information on registration with Family Day Care Schemes visit Family Day Care Australia or copy this link into your browser - http://www.familydaycare.com.au

• Applicants in rental properties must provide evidence of approval to operate a business from their residence either from Defence Housing Australia (for Service Residences) or their Landlord (private rental). A copy of the approval must be attached to the application. Approval is not required for operating a business from an applicant's own home.

The benefit is not available to partners of ADF members who are separating from the ADF. Once the intention to separate is recorded on PMKeyS, this benefit will not be approved. If the separation is withdrawn and noted on PMKeyS, the application can be resubmitted for consideration.

Part 4 – How to apply

Interested partners must read the eligibility criteria and then complete the application form. The form must be printed and signed by both the ADF member and the applicant, and emailed to defence.childcareprograms@defence.gov.au.

If the member is absent due to deployment, training or exercise, please declare this in their signature field on the application form. Use of Power of Attorney (for pay purposes) is acceptable, or an email from the ADF Member supporting the application together their Rank, name and PMKeyS number together with a statement supporting the application and awareness of the FBYT implications in the text is also acceptable.

Incomplete or unsigned application forms will not be processed until all requirements of the application and supporting documentation are met. There is no discretion to approve incomplete applications.

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria listed in this guidance. Applicants should anticipate that it will take up to 28 calendar days from receipt of the completed application form together with all supporting documentation for an assessment to be made. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

Applications can be lodged at any time and are subject to funding availability.

Part 5 - Reimbursement

Reimbursement
The approved set-up costs will be reimbursed to the ADF member’s bank account upon approval of complete application with evidence of applicant's payment. The maximum amount for reimbursement is $2,500.00.

Reportable Fringe Benefits Tax Amount
Payment of this benefit may result in a reportable Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) amount being recorded against the ADF member’s annual salary. A reportable FBT amount occurs when an ADF member has received fringe benefits exceeding $2000.00 in a FBT year (1 April to 31 March). These will which will appear (grossed up) on the ADF Members annual Payment Summary at the end of the Financial Year.

FBT does not have any income tax implications, but will have financial impacts if in receipt of any Government means-tested benefits. Therefore it is recommended that applicants seek independent tax advice prior to lodging an application for reimbursement of set-up costs.

For further information regarding the impacts of FBT refer to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) website or copy this link into your web browser - https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Working/In-detail/Reportable-fringe-benefits---facts-for-employees/
Part 6 – Administration

Disclaimer
The Department of Defence will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these Guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy or error contained in an application.

False or Misleading Information

Applicants should be aware that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth). Where false or misleading information is provided, or relevant information withheld, criminal or disciplinary action under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, Public Service Act 1999, or the Criminal Code Act 1995 may be taken. Administrative action may also be taken depending on the circumstances. If the applicant is a member of the ADF, or employed under the Public Service Act, administrative action may also be taken by Defence and sanctions imposed. Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

Our Service Commitment

This benefit aims to support recognised partners of ADF members with establishing a family daycare business upon posting to a new locality. As part of managing this benefit, the following Key Performance Indicators are in place to ensure that all enquiries and applications are managed in an efficient and effective manner:

- Telephone and email enquiries answered within 48 hours or two working days,
- Receipt of applications acknowledged within 48 hours or two working days,
- Decision on applications notified within 28 calendar days or four working weeks,
- Payments of approved applications processed within seven days of approval date.

Approving Authority

The delegate for the decision is the Manager of National Programs/Manager of Defence Childcare Programs, Headquarters, Defence Community Organisation, who will assess each application and decide eligibility against the aims of the benefit.

Discretionary Provisions

If a partner is not eligible for assistance under the provisions of Part 3 - Eligibility, they may apply in writing to the delegate requesting ‘discretionary approval for special/exceptional circumstances’. This must be emailed to defence.childcareprograms@defence.gov.au together with a completed application form and supporting comments. In forming their decision, the delegate will consider the aims of the benefit and the following factors:

- the applicant may have incurred other expenses not specified at Part 2 of these Guidelines, specifically costs for minor house modifications required by the regional family daycare scheme for family day care business safety compliance; or
- the ADF member partner may have passed away during Service, and after the applicant had established same family daycare business for which they claim reimbursement of set-up costs, or
- any other factors relevant to the application.

Appeals Process

Where an applicant wishes to dispute the outcome of their application, an appeal in writing must be forwarded to the defence.childcareprograms@defence.gov.au for consideration by a higher decision maker. A detailed statement of claims must be included as part of the appeal. Acknowledgement of receipt of appeal will be advised with five business days.
Evaluation
DCO will conduct regular assessments and evaluations of this benefit to assess that the aims of the benefit are being met and where necessary, adjust the initiatives to improve the assistance to ensure that the intent of the benefit is met.

Privacy
DCO is bound by the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988. We recognise that privacy is important to you, and that we have a responsibility to protect any personal information you may share with us. Further information on DCO and Defence’s Privacy policy at http://www.defence.gov.au/dco/DCO_Privacy_Policy.htm

Part 7 – Glossary

**Member**
A member is an officer or enlisted member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Permanent Forces or an ADF Reserve officer or enlisted member rendering Continuous Full Time Service.

**Partner**
A partner is a person who has been officially recognised by Defence as the officially recognised interdependent partner vide Australian Defence Force Pay and Conditions Manual Chapter 2, and Defence Instruction (General) Personnel 53-1 Recognition of interdependent partnerships.

**ADF Member**
An ADF member is an officer or enlisted member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Permanent Forces or an ADF Reserve officer or enlisted member rendering Continuous Full Time Service.

**Delegate**
Is an officer who is authorised to make a financial decision on behalf of DCO.

**DFH**
The Defence Family Helpline (DFH) is your first point of call for support and information.

Part 8 - FAQs

1. My partner is currently on deployment/operation/long term exercise. How do I obtain their signature for the application form?

   Ans: The application has financial implications that the ADF member must acknowledge. If you have contact with your partner, you may be able to scan the document in and email to your partner for signature, to be scanned and emailed or faxed in return. An email from them is also acceptable. The email must include a short paragraph stating that they are supporting your Application for Family Daycare Reimbursement and are aware of the FBT implications. They should include their Full name, Rank and PMKeyS number in this email which will form part of the application documentation. If you have Power of Attorney for pay purposes (POA), then indicate this in the ADF member’s signature space on the form. Evidence of POA needs to be provided with the application.

2. My partner is out of reach, what do I do?

   Ans: That’s fine. If they are away on deployment, exercise or long term training and are due home soon, delay submitting your application until they come home. If your partner is away for an extended period (more than six weeks or so) and if you have Power of Attorney (for pay purposes) you can indicate this in the ADF member’s signature space on the form. Evidence of POA needs to be provided with the application. Or, an email from your partner as described above is another acceptable option.

3. How will I know if my application has been approved or not?

FDC Guidelines – Feb 2015
Ans: You will receive an email detailing if your application has been approved or not, and if approved what to expect regarding payment. If you have not received an email acknowledging receipt, please contact the DFH.

4. We live in a Service Residence/rental property. How do I get approval to use the residence for business purposes?

Ans: If you are in a Service Residence, contact your local Defence Housing Authority and they will assist you with your request. If you are in a rental property, contact your rental agent / property manager / landlord and follow their direction.

5. What do I do if I find that I need to make some alternations to the service or rental property I want to run the business from?

Ans: Contact DHA or your rental property manger and ask them what the requirements are. Funding for alternations to property is not covered by Defence Community Organisation.

6. Our Service Residence is located on base. What if the security situation escalates?

Ans: Each base has its own procedures in place and will communicate that to you in the event of a change. If you are not already receiving communications from Base Services, please contact them in the first instance.