

## **COVID-19 EMERGENCY RELIEF INFORMATION FOR SECTOR PARTNERS**

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The Australian Government has provided Red Cross with funding to support people who are highly vulnerable to destitution as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are for people who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents, have no way to support themselves, and have urgent needs.

The Red Cross has recently engaged a vendor to develop an online portal that enables us to send information securely online. We have established a portal at <https://www.redcross.org.au/covidrelief> for applicants to submit their applications and securely upload their data and documentation.

The majority of people submitting an application who are found to be eligible for assistance will be provided with a small one-off payment. We do, however, have a small amount of financial assistance available to provide short-term support to a very small group of extremely vulnerable people who have no other means of support.

We know that there will be a large number of applications submitted on the portal. To ensure we can urgently assess the need for support of those who referring agencies have already assessed as being most in need, we are providing an expedited referral pathway. Information about how to refer is provided later in the document.

We will continue to keep our sector partners updated about our services throughout the project so you are aware of how we can work together to support people on temporary visas vulnerable to destitution over the next few months.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

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To be eligible for financial assistance an applicant must meet the following;

- Hold a temporary visa (includes those who are undocumented)
- Not be in receipt of any income
- Not have savings in their bank account over \$200 for single adults, \$300 for couples, or \$400 for families with children
- Not be eligible for mainstream support eg. Centrelink
- Not be eligible for other supports on offer eg. International students are eligible for financial support through Study Adelaide

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR DIRECT REFERRAL**

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As there is significant demand for support at this time and our financial assistance is limited, we request that you only directly refer clients whose wellbeing and/or safety is at serious risk in at least one of the five domains below. All other clients requiring financial assistance should be directed to the online portal that can be accessed via the Red Cross website at <https://www.redcross.org.au/covidrelief>

### **Family and/or Social Connections**

- Currently experiencing family violence

### **Mental health**

- Immediate and/or ongoing risk to self and/or others, current suicidal ideation/ self-harm, serious concerns about presentation, current hospitalisation

### **Physical health**

- Acute health symptoms requiring urgent response
- Disability and/or severe health need not being met
- Inability to afford life-saving medicine/treatment

### **Wellbeing and safety of children is at serious risk**

- Child/prenatal safety concerns/indicators of abuse and/or neglect
- Involvement of Child Protection statutory authorities
- Environment poses risk of serious harm to child/unborn child
- Child has high needs (disability, health, behavioural) which are not being appropriately managed

### **Housing**

- Experiencing violence/ abuse in accommodation
- Client is sleeping rough
- Client has no stable accommodation and has children in their care

## **REFERRAL PROCESS**

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For any client you have assessed as requiring urgent assistance due to their vulnerabilities, please support them to submit an application through the portal. This enables us to ensure that their data and banking information is protected.

The portal registration process requires an email address to set up an account. Applications in draft can be returned to at a later time to update information or attach documentation.

Applicants will be asked to provide demographic information, visa information (so we can verify visa status) and a recent bank statement with a one month transaction history showing the account name, BSB and account number.

When an application has been submitted, please email us at [misp@redcross.org.au](mailto:misp@redcross.org.au) with the applicant's name and why you have assessed them as requiring urgent assistance due to their vulnerabilities, so we can prioritise their application.

## **ASSESSMENT OUTCOME**

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Following receipt of an application, a caseworker will conduct a strengths and needs assessment with the applicant to confirm their eligibility for ongoing financial support.

If found eligible, we will provide the client with short term financial support. If your service is unable to continue providing casework support to the client, Red Cross may be able to offer casework support in addition to financial assistance.

If the client is found to be ineligible for support, we will offer referrals and information on other external services in the client's area, such as food parcels and housing assistance. They may also be eligible for one-off financial assistance.

We will seek the client's consent to share the outcome of the assessment with you.

## **CASEWORK SUPPORT**

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If Red Cross is able to provide short term casework support, we will develop a case plan focused on their vulnerabilities in the context of COVID-19. Our casework support will be centred on keeping the client safe and improving their situation, to the extent this is possible during short term support.

The client will be contacted at least monthly via telephone, and we will discuss their needs and goals. If the client begins working or obtains access to alternative financial support during this time, then they will no longer be eligible for ongoing support.

At three months, our team will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the client's situation and vulnerabilities, in order to determine ongoing eligibility. If the client is no longer eligible for support, we will offer referrals and information on other external services in the client's area.