

## Defence, Veterans' and Families' Acute Support Package

Changes to Family Support Package from 14 October 2022

The Defence, Veterans' and Families' Acute Support Package (ASP) will start on 14 October 2022 and will replace the existing Family Support Package. Veteran families accessing support through the Family Support Package will be contacted by DVA to discuss their individual circumstances.

Eligibility:

You can access support through the Acute Support Package if you are:

Widowed partners:

- under 65 years old at the time eligibility is determined; and
- a War Widow(er) under the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA), a Wholly Dependent Partner under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA) or a partner under the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related claims) Act 1988 (DRCA) whose veteran partner's death was related to service; including suicide; and
- the veteran's death was less than two years ago.

Veteran families:

- The family is experiencing new and challenging life circumstances that give rise to the need to support the family unit; and
- The veteran is under 65 years of age at the time eligibility is determined; and
- The veteran is eligible for Incapacity Payments under the DRCA or MRCA, SRDP under the MRCA, or a Special or Intermediate rate of Disability Compensation Payment, or Veteran Payment under the VEA.

Family Circumstances

The package is designed to support families who are experiencing new and challenging life circumstances that mean the family unit need support to get back on track. The circumstances are about more than an event, they are about the impact on a family's ability to function. The circumstances of each family will be considered by experienced staff at DVA.

The sorts of circumstances that may impact a family and lead to a crisis may include but are not limited to:

- mental and physical health episodes including attempted suicide;
- substance abuse issues;
- family and domestic violence incidents, including child abuse;
- homelessness;
- family conflicts and family breakdowns;

- sudden, significant events such as loss of employment or death in the family;
- at risk of disengagement with the community (particularly young people);
- at risk of engagement with the criminal justice system;
- other instances identified at the professional judgement of a DVA case manager.

#### Services available

Services available will include a range of wellbeing and skills-based support services to build capacity and the functioning of the family. A DVA case manager will work with you to develop a support plan based on your assessed needs.

The services available can include:

- child care (including home based care, centre based care, family day care, occasional care and outside school hours care)
- counselling for adults and children (including clinical, financial and other life skills counselling where required)
- household assistance (including meal delivery and preparation, cleaning, and household and garden maintenance)
- services to build capacity (including financial literacy, relationship skills, cooking lessons and mental health first aid)
- wellbeing, academic and extra-curricular support for children (including tutoring, music lessons and sporting activities)
- transport for children to attend school and services provided through the program if required.

#### Funding limits for eligible veteran families

An eligible veteran family can access services:

- up to the value of \$7,500 in the first year and \$5,000 in the second year for any ASP services;
- up to the value of \$10,000 each year for services for each child under school age, for supports for the child;
- up to the value of \$5,000 each year for services for each primary school child, for supports for the child, until the child reaches high school.

An eligible widowed partner can access services:

- up to the value of \$27,835 each year for two years for any ASP services;
- up to the value of \$10,000 each year for services for each child under school age, for supports for the child;
- up to the value of \$5,000 each year for services for each primary school child, for supports for the child, until the child reaches high school.

A DVA case manager will work with you to develop a support plan based on your assessed needs. The support plan will set out the services you can spend the capped amount on. The duration and level of support may vary as you progress through your journey based on your assessed needs.

Widowed partners can access support for two years from acceptance into the program, rather than date of death of the veteran.

More information

If you want to find out how you can get support you can call [1800 VETERAN](tel:1800338372) (1800 838 372) 8AM to 5PM Monday to Friday. You can also go to [www.dva.gov.au/general-enquiries](http://www.dva.gov.au/general-enquiries) and follow the prompts to send us a message.