

## About this fact sheet

This fact sheet explains to service providers the requirements for applying for the *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment* and describes the payment and reporting schedule.

### Support and assistance

If you have any questions or concerns, contact your DCJ contract manager (listed in the Partner Community portal) or send an e-mail to [COVID-19ComplexNeedsPayment@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:COVID-19ComplexNeedsPayment@facs.nsw.gov.au)

## COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment

The COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment has been introduced as a supplementary payment to support service providers being reimbursed for their reasonable costs associated with having to take emergency action in response to:

- a child or young person in their care, or an employee or carer, meeting the “COVID-19 case definition” – that is, a confirmed, probable or suspected case (or a case that meets the definition of close contact) as per NSW Health guidance.
- COVID-19 related systemic staffing shortages due to unplanned leave of

staff during this time (for ITC/residential care), and

- COVID-related discretionary extraordinary expenses incurred due to the purchase of unplanned additional services or placement supports.



The NSW Health guidance on meeting the ‘COVID-19 case definition’ can be found at: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/2019-ncov-case-definition.aspx>.



The *Appendix of the COVID-19 Emergency Action – Payment Application Form* describes examples for additional funding

## Application process

Where your agency had already incurred extraordinary costs in response to COVID-19 and these were outside of your business continuity plans, DCJ will on a case-by-case basis, consider retrospective applications.

As such, this is only applicable for the period a pandemic was announced by the World Health Organisation on 11 March 2020 and prior to DCJ issuing advice about this emergency payment option, on 1 April 2020.

Where extraordinary costs are anticipated as a result of these measures, you should seek DCJ approval within the next business day.

In this instance, you must complete the *COVID-19 Emergency Action – Payment Application Form* and send your application to [ACAapprovals@facsnsw.gov.au](mailto:ACAapprovals@facsnsw.gov.au)

The Deputy Secretary or their representative may consult with the Director Commissioning and Planning and/or your Lead Contract Manager, when considering your application for a *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment*.

In collaboration with DCJ Districts, and/or the Central Access Unit (CAU), the program area will consider if:

- emergency action taken is consistent with a shared understanding of your agency’s overall business continuity planning measures
- the response is consistent with current NSW Health published advice and the Public Health Order
- your agency has already utilised some of your existing funding allocation in response to COVID-19 and where this has occurred, if there is any further capacity to reasonably absorb these extraordinary costs whilst ensuring business continuity during the pandemic. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - the redirection of resources from non-essential services
  - family contact time not continuing, resulting in savings that your agency could redirect to emergency measures
- emergency actions are consistent with your agency’s workplace relations and meet industrial requirements.

 For more information on the NSW Health published advice, this can be found at: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

You will receive a response in writing to confirm whether or not your application of the emergency measures is supported. This will be done within:

- 4 hours where your application was received by DCJ within business hours
- The next business day where your application was received by DCJ outside of business hours

Where an application is approved, this may be subject to an amendment to one or more of the emergency measures. For example, the approved application is subject to your agency’s ability to secure emergency accommodation at a lower cost, if requested by the Deputy Secretary or representative.

 The *Checklist for service providers completing the COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment process* describes the steps involved in the application process.

 The *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment Flowchart* shows a diagram of the application, payment and reconciliation process.

## Submitting the payment

Where a *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment* application is approved, your Lead Contract Manager will then submit your application to Central Office for payment.

If approved, DCJ will pay a one-off payment, per applicable month, via COMS through your Funded Contract.

Your DCJ Lead Contract Manager will submit any approved applications via e-mail to: [COVID-19ComplexNeedsPayment@facsnsw.gov.au](mailto:COVID-19ComplexNeedsPayment@facsnsw.gov.au)

In this instance, approved applications are due to Central Office by your DCJ Lead Contract Manager on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of each month. Where this date falls on a weekend or a public holiday, approved applications are due by the next business day.

This reporting schedule will be effective from April 2020 – June 2020, with a possible extension following a review period.

For April 2020, the approved application/s are due from your Lead Contract Manager on Tuesday, **21 April 2020**.

## Reconciliation process

The reconciliation process forms part of the application process, with evidence due to your DCJ Lead Contract Manager as soon as available and no later than within 30 days of commencement of emergency costs.

Each month, you must provide DCJ with evidence of your emergency true costs and the total, once verified, will be recorded on the *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment Reporting Template* which will be completed by your DCJ Contract Manager and submitted to Central Office for payment.

Where a variance of these emergency true costs has occurred, these will be adjusted accordingly in the payment for the following month. In addition, if there are any estimated costs for the following month, then the variance total will be either added together with or deducted from any new approved applications for the following month.

Where a variance results in a surplus to DCJ, and there are no applications for the following month, these funds must be returned to DCJ in accordance with current financial processes.

### Evidence of true costs

The evidence you provide to DCJ must include your true costs and outline the

circumstances to support the emergency COVID-19 needs. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Clinical evidence and professional assessments
- Receipts or invoices for fee-for-service arrangements
- Rosters and/or associated extra costs to show net costs
- An outline of the circumstances that will de-escalate or reduce the need for the support to continue
- Leave records (for special allowance) and associated medical certificates where appropriate
- Pay slips

Your DCJ Lead Contract Manager will review this evidence and determine whether the expenses incurred are accurate. During the course of reviewing your reconciliation costs, DCJ may debate your reason(s) and if applicable, request further justification and supporting documentation as evidence of these emergency true costs.

Where this occurs, you must submit this additional information within the required reporting period, to ensure on time payment.

## Payment schedule

The schedule for payments will occur on the second Wednesday of each month commencing in May 2020.

For approved applications received in April 2020, a payment will occur on Wednesday, **20 May 2020**.

This payment will be made in advance for approved estimated cost and will be subject to a monthly reconciliation of these emergency true costs.

The *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment* is separate to the quarterly funded contracted care placements and your agency will be

required to record this as a separate line item on the annual accountability profit and loss statement, as a supplementary payment.

## Reporting Template

The total approved estimates and verified reconciliation costs per application form, will be recorded on the *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment Reporting Template*, which will be completed by Central Office staff.

The reporting template will detail the number of approved application forms received from your agency, the total estimated and/or, reconciliation costs, as applicable and will show the dates these amounts were paid.

Each month, following approved payments, DCJ will share the *COVID-19 Emergency Action Payment Reporting Template* with you so that your agency can monitor payments received.



The *COVID-19 Emergency Action Reporting and Payment Schedule* explains this process in more detail.

## Late submissions

If you do not submit evidence of the true costs within 30 days, and where your reconciliation requires additional funds, then this will result in a payment being delayed until the following month – subject to approval.

If your Lead Contract Manager does not submit any approved applications or on-time verified reconciliation costs, by the due date each month, then this will also result in a delay to the payment.