

# Free from Violence Local Government Program 2023–2026

Questions and answers

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and Housing

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Available at [Local Government Victoria's Free from Violence Local Government Program webpage](https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/grants/free-from-violence-local-government-program) <https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/grants/free-from-violence-local-government-program>

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# Key program dates and deliverables

## What are the key dates?

Milestone	Date
Applications open	9 August 2023
Applications close	27 September 2023
Applicants contacted for further information if applicable	28 September-3 October 2023
Successful recipients announced	From November 2023
Contracts prepared	December 2023
First instalment paid	December 2023

## What will grant recipients need to deliver throughout the three-year Free from Violence Local Government Program?

Grant recipients will be expected to fulfil the following requirements throughout the three-year Free from Violence Local Government Program (the program):

- carry out a 'health check' on your council's primary prevention work, which is a central part of the *Local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women* (the Guide).
- identify key areas of action or priorities within the council domains and/or critical elements, and implement actions across the three-year program (see Figure 2 in the *program guidelines*)
- implement or enhance the existing organisational capability to respond to and manage disclosures of family violence or violence against women
- participate in forums and other relevant capability development activities
- share learning, best-practice tools, and resources (including shared intellectual property on any resources developed) with other councils and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- contribute to an evaluation of the effectiveness of the guide in supporting a whole-of-council approach, the outcomes of your work, and contribute to improving and augmenting the guide
- participate in at least one MAV Councillor Development session.

## What are the grant program objectives?

The core objectives of the Program are to:

- Support Victorian councils to promote positive attitudes, behaviour, and culture change in their workplace and through the community programs and services they deliver, to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.
- Increase awareness and understanding across Victorian councils and communities of the drivers of family violence and all forms of violence against women, and how to stop this violence before it starts.
- Test the appropriateness, useability, and effectiveness of the guide as a tool to support councils to implement and embed a whole-of-council approach to preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women.

# Funding

## Who is funding the program?

The program is funded by the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence and Reform in Family Safety Victoria, in the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). This is within the Ministerial Portfolio of the Prevention of Family Violence. Participating councils will need to make a co-contribution.

DFFH is partnering with Local Government Victoria (LGV), within the Department of Government Services (DGS) to administer the grants process and oversee funding agreements with successful applicants. Please note that LGV is currently being supported by, and using the platforms of, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industries and Regions (DJSIR) until DGS is established.

## Is there a minimum target or proportion of regional or rural councils that will be awarded a grant?

No, there is not a target number of regional or rural councils for the program. However, we are looking for strong representation across metropolitan, regional, and rural areas.

## What sort of program activities can be funded?

Please refer to the *program guidelines* for detailed examples of activities that can be funded under the four domains of council as a workplace; council as a service provider; council as a connector; and councillors as leaders and decision makers.

## Can we request variations to the funding model outlined in the program guidelines?

No, the program model is fixed, and changes cannot be made. This includes, but is not limited to:

- asking for a lower financial contribution by the state government than is outlined in your council category
- requesting the state contribution to be distributed in different proportions than is outlined in the model
- making in-kind contributions only
- requesting different proportions of in-kind versus monetary contributions
- participating for less than three years.

## What can be covered as part of the 5-10% overhead costs?

Overhead costs include those incurred as part of delivering the project. Please detail the overhead costs in your budget and provide a response to explain the items included in the budget.

## What cannot be funded?

Refer to the *Program Guidelines* for overarching activities that can and cannot be funded. Further information is provided below regarding ineligible activities.

Activities without a primary prevention focus cannot be funded. This includes, but is not limited to:

- family violence crisis response activities, such as case management for victim survivors, perpetrator accountability and behaviour change programs
- training and development that focuses on tertiary response to family violence and all forms of violence against women – **note** that training for identifying family violence and responding to disclosures, in line with MARAM (Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management) tier one responsibilities, can be funded to support primary prevention activities
- standalone research or projects primarily focused on building the evidence base solely through research. Employing research to guide activity is suitable, using action research methodology.
- interstate or international travel
- activities already funded by the Victorian Government, including by another grant program. Extending or adding to an existing activity will be considered on a case-by-case basis if the need can be demonstrated.
- activities to implement your Gender Equality Action Plans that do not have a primary prevention of violence focus
- evaluation activities of the Program not authorised by Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

## What are in-kind contributions?

An in-kind contribution is a contribution of goods or services other than money, for example:

- council staff time and labour outside those funded through the program (such as administrative, finance or communications assistance)
- goods (such as campaign collateral)
- services (such as professional advice from a consultant).

In-kind contributions cannot include operating expenses that are not directly associated with delivering the project.

## How do we calculate in-kind contributions?

The calculation of an in-kind contribution is based on your best estimates. A budget component is included in the application form. The following figures may help guide you:

- calculate council staff time at their relevant hourly rate, for example \$50 per hour
- campaign collateral purchased by council, for example base estimate on purchase cost and proportion used for the program
- calculate specialist labour (for example, training provider) at their relevant hourly rate, for example \$100 per hour.

## Do we need to provide detail of in-kind contributions?

You will need to include an outline of your commitment to your in-kind contributions, including those:

- that count towards your organisation’s required funding contribution
- you make in addition to the minimum requirement.

This information is required as part of your proposed budget in the application form and as a formally verified in-kind contributions summary supplied as part of annual program reporting. The application form is available via the [Local Government Victoria’s Free from Violence Local Government Program webpage](https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/grants/free-from-violence-local-government-program) <<https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/grants/free-from-violence-local-government-program>>.

## **Will an additional co-contribution contribute to my application’s scoring assessment?**

Councils have the option to contribute funds in addition to the minimum monetary and in-kind contribution amounts. However, additional contributions will not affect the assessment or scoring of the application. Councils are required to meet the minimum monetary and in-kind contribution requirements, as set out in the Council Contribution Categories.

## **When do we complete the project plan?**

One of the first milestone requirements for successful grant recipients is to complete a project plan. The project plan will be developed after you complete your first health check. We understand that the approach and activities proposed in your application may change based on the needs and priorities identified through the health check.

## **What does the evaluation involve?**

An external agency will be engaged to conduct an evaluation of the program. The evaluation will look at the collective outcomes and impact of the program, across all participating councils. The evaluation will consider the barriers and enablers to implementing the guide and undertaking primary prevention in local governments, as well as opportunities and learnings that can be applied to other locations. Participating councils will need to prepare a monitoring and evaluation plan, which aligns to the overall monitoring and evaluation framework for the program. Councils will also be required to participate in data collection activities as part of the evaluation.

## **We plan to do an internal evaluation of our project. Can that work contribute to our in-kind contribution?**

You are not expected to undertake a separate evaluation of your project, in addition to the evaluation of this program managed by Family Safety Victoria. You will be expected to collect data, monitor program performance, and report on outcomes. This activity can also be counted towards in-kind contribution.



# Application process

## How do we apply?

Applications are open to all Victorian councils that did not receive funding in the first grant round (2022-2025).

Submissions will close at **5:00pm on 27 September 2023**.

Submit your applications using the [DJSIR Grants Portal](https://businessvic.secure.force.com/GrantsPortalLogin) <<https://businessvic.secure.force.com/GrantsPortalLogin>>.

You will be able to save your application and return to it later, if needed. There will be one to two questions per assessment criterion, as outlined in the *program guidelines*.

## What is the word limit per question on the application form?

The word limit per question is 2,000 characters, which is approximately 450 words. We recommend that you draft your responses in a Word document where you can check the word count, before pasting the response into the online application form.

## Is the application form the same as the form used in the last funding round?

The questions asked in this year's application form are the same as last year, however, there have been some minor adjustments to the application form. We recommend you review the current application form and guidelines when completing your application. The application form is available as a PDF document for your review, which you can obtain via emailing at [freefromviolence@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:freefromviolence@dffh.vic.gov.au).

## Can we speak to someone about our application before we submit it?

Yes. Please [email the Free from Violence Program](mailto:freefromviolence@dffh.vic.gov.au) <[freefromviolence@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:freefromviolence@dffh.vic.gov.au)> so we can direct your query to the most appropriate person. Include 'Free from Violence Local Government Program' in the subject line. Where there are questions relevant to all applicants, LGV can send an updated Q&A to all applicants with a draft application in train. The Q&As will also be updated on the website.

## When is the last date to submit questions?

The last day to submit questions is 3 business days before applications close, meaning 21 September 2023. This will enable the Department to ensure you receive a response to your question before the close of applications.

## What will councils be assessed on?

Please see the *program guidelines* for the relevant criteria that will be used to evaluate all applications and determine successful grant recipients.

## How many councils will be funded?

This round of funding will support 10 councils to deliver the program.

## In prevention work, we are likely to encounter disclosures and need to make referrals as part of our project. Is this in scope?

Yes, we recognise that in primary prevention work, workers are likely to encounter disclosers and support staff to be able to make referrals and respond. As outlined above in the question ‘What cannot be funded?’, training for identifying family violence and responding to disclosures, in line with the MARAM (Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management) Framework Identification responsibilities, can be funded to support primary prevention activities. There is a space on the application form for you to outline this aspect of your proposed program.

## What evidence is needed about our processes for managing disclosures of violence?

As part of the program deliverables, councils must include evidence of:

- their processes for responding to workplace disclosures or suspicion of violence
- how these processes are embedded across business areas, with the aim of embedding practices across the whole-of-council (including community facing services) by the end of the program.

## What documents or information, do councils need to provide?

Your grant application will require you to nominate a primary contact person with relevant contact details. This will be the primary person responsible for the grant application. Your application will also require:

- answers to the assessment criteria
- your council contribution category (further information on this in the Guidelines and through the application portal)
- summary of anticipated expenditure items
- supporting documentation, including confirmation of executive endorsement; evidence of partnership arrangements with other organisations (if applicable); and any other additional supporting materials you wish to submit
- an application checklist and declaration.

## How do we submit supporting documents for our application?

Multiple supporting documents may be submitted through the online grants system, where each file is not larger than 5 MB. Files that exceed 5 MB may be emailed before the application deadline to **FFV@ecodev.vic.gov.au**. Include the council’s name and project title in the subject line to ensure the documents are attached to the correct application.

## Will late applications or extensions be accepted?

Late applications **cannot** be accepted. Extensions will not be granted.

## Assessment

### Who is on the assessment panel?

The panel will comprise representatives from DFFH, DGS and the MAV. The Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence will approve organisations to be funded.

### We want to apply because we do not know what our needs or priorities are, can we apply?

Yes. Grant recipients will represent a range of council types and regions and reflect various stages of capability and experience in primary prevention of family violence and violence against women.

Smaller rural councils, councils with limited resources or councils that are at the early stages of primary prevention work are strongly encouraged to apply.

### Can councils which submitted a proposal in 2022 and deemed unsuccessful, reapply?

Yes. When submitting your application, you will be asked to demonstrate how your council is in a stronger position of organisational readiness since your last application. This may include activities your council has implemented since your last application. The panel will consider these activities in the context of your entire application and your responses will form part of the competitive application process.

### Does our application need to be a program of work across all domains of council's influence outlined in the guide?

**i.e., workplace, service provider, connector, leaders, and decision makers? Or can we apply for funding for just one domain?**

Councils will need to commit to implementing the whole-of-council model which requires that you address primary prevention and gender equality in all aspects of your business - over **all four** domains of council - throughout the three-year program. If there are specific areas that you have identified as priorities or places you would like to begin new initiatives or develop existing ones, there is an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate this in the application form. However, the program is not designed to fund a specific project – rather it is designed to facilitate long-term, organisation-wide change by providing a framework that helps councils embed primary prevention and gender equality in every aspect of their work. So, while you may start developing initiatives in a specific area, like sports and recreation, the grants program requires that councils look at every area of influence and are committed to embedding primary prevention and gender equality work in every area.

## Can we use this grant funding for actions included in our Gender Equality Action Plan?

There will inevitably be some cross over in the activities that councils are carrying out as part of their Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) and activities that councils may wish to carry out as part of this grant program. Funds from this grant program should only be used on activities that have a primary prevention focus and aim to address the drivers of violence as outlined in *Change the Story*. You may also wish to draw on data and learning from your GEAPs (Gender Equality Action Plans) to inform the work your councils undertake as part of this grant program.

## What is an intersectional approach and how do we demonstrate this in our application?

For more information on understanding intersectionality in a family violence and violence against women context, we recommend you refer to the following resources:

- [Local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women](#)
- [Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement](#)
- [Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities](#)
- [Pride in Prevention Evidence Guide](#)
- [Intersectionality Matters: A new resource for preventing violence against women](#)
- [Safe and Equal's commitment to intersectionality in primary prevention](#)

Taking an intersectional approach within your council could include:

- Capability building, strengthening the skills and capability of council staff at all levels of the organisation to understand intersectionality and what it means for their practice, building upon existing competencies in working with individuals from a diverse range of community groups.
- Integrating the voices of people with lived experience into service design and planning processes, governance, and workforce structures
- Policies and procedures: Alignment of all organisational policies and procedures and service delivery to an intersectional approach.

Taking an intersectional approach to your external community-based activities may include:

- Communication: Communicating in ways that will make people feel that the service is appropriate for them, and they are confident in approaching council services and staff. Ensuring inclusive language and incorporation of photographs that represent the diverse community in signs, website, publicly available policies, promotional materials etc. Organisations need to provide responses and supports that reflect their inclusive messages about what they provide to service users.
- Collaborative relationships and partnerships: Collaboration and partnerships with other community-led services and organisations, including those who have experience and expertise in working with communities that systematically discriminated against across sectors and the wider community.

## If we are not successful, can we appeal the decision?

No. This program is a competitive, merit-based package. All decisions by DFFH or the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence regarding any aspect of the funding application and assessment process are final, including any decision to offer or award a grant or to withdraw the offer or cancel the grant funding agreement.

## Funding agreements

### What happens if activities are delayed or unable to be delivered?

Grant recipients should contact DGS as soon as possible if delays are expected.

Recipients are responsible for project delivery, including any project cost overruns that may occur.

In cases where a project is delayed for an unreasonable length of time, where substantive changes of scope are made after funding has been approved, or where a component of a project fails to be delivered, DFFH and DGS reserve the right to withhold payments until appropriate actions have been taken to ensure the funded project is being delivered as agreed, or cancel the grant and recoup any payment that has already been provided.

In the instance of an unprecedented occurrence that is out of the control of the grant recipient, support and flexibility will be provided with a revised approach, determined on a case-by-case basis.

### When and how are payments made?

Successful grant recipients will be paid on completion and approval of agreed project milestones and deliverables. The final financial milestone will not be processed until all requirements outlined in the activity deliverable schedule including the final acquittal report, are completed to the satisfaction of DGS and DFFH. Milestone payments are made via electronic funds transfer (EFT) once deliverables are met, in line with the VCFA (Victorian Common Funding Agreement).

Payments will be made by DGS on behalf of DFFH.

## More information on the guide

### Consultation and development

[The final guide is available on the Municipal Association of Victoria website here.](#)

The guide was co-designed through consultation with:

- councillors
- council executives
- local government employees with primary prevention expertise
- local government employees without primary prevention expertise
- primary prevention specialist services

- family violence specialist services that support people who have experienced family violence and other forms of violence
- victim-survivors of family violence.

The purpose of the guide is to support councils to embed primary prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women across their domains of influence, including:

- as a workplace
- provider of services
- community connector
- through the role of Mayor and Councillors as community leaders and decision-makers (see Figure 2, *Program guidelines*).

In 2023 the Victorian Government is funding 10 additional councils through the Free from Violence Local Government Program. This is in addition to the [15 councils](#) that received funding in 2022. The funding will also support councils to:

- meet their obligations under the [Gender Equality Act \(2020\)](#) that relate to the primary prevention of family violence and violence against women <<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/gender-equality-act-2020/002>>
- implement measures to prevent family violence in line with their *Municipal public health and wellbeing plan 2021–2025* – more information is on [Health.vic's Municipal public health and wellbeing planning page](#) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/population-health-systems/municipal-public-health-and-wellbeing-planning>>.

The application articulates a commitment to embed primary prevention across all domains of council over the life of the program, regardless of the current level of engagement with primary prevention and gender equality work.

## How will the guide be implemented?

The Guide is designed to be accessible to anyone in a Victorian council, offering guidance on primary prevention implementation, regardless of their role within the council or the council's current progress in engaging with primary prevention.

The guide will support you to:

- understand what your role in primary prevention is and the roles of others across council
- identify effective ways of engaging people across the organisation
- understand how to respond to the different attitudes of people across council.

The guide provides plain language educational content, practical exercises, resources, and real-life examples that will equip people to act and contribute to a whole-of-council approach to preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women in your community.

The guide contains the following sections:

- a comprehensive introduction to family violence and all forms of violence against women
- a health check to ascertain where your council is in its primary prevention journey
- strengthening engagement across council
- strategy integration
- building organisational capability
- embedding the work into everyone's roles

- tailored action plans
- monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination.

## Accessing the guide

The guide is [available on the Municipal Association of Victoria's website](#).