Community Legal Services Program Agreement 2025–28 Schedule 4 Funding Guidance

**Document Control**

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VLA Business Area: Community Legal Centre Funding and Development

Effective date: 1 July 2025

Version: 1

Contents

[Community Legal Services Program Agreement 2025-28 Schedule 4 Funding Guidance 1](#_Toc202021686)

[Background 4](#_Toc202021687)

[Victoria Legal Aid 4](#_Toc202021688)

[Community Legal Services Program 4](#_Toc202021689)

[Purpose 5](#_Toc202021690)

[Attachments 5](#_Toc202021691)

[Enquiries 5](#_Toc202021692)

[Section 1. Funding Principles 6](#_Toc202021693)

[Funding principles 6](#_Toc202021694)

[Principle 1. Evidence-based decision making 6](#_Toc202021695)

[Principle 2. Effective management and good governance 6](#_Toc202021696)

[Principle 3. Coordinated and integrated legal assistance 6](#_Toc202021697)

[Principle 4. Efficient service provision, including value for money 6](#_Toc202021698)

[Principle 5 Effective service provision including a focus on outcomes 7](#_Toc202021699)

[Section 2. Funding Application Process 8](#_Toc202021700)

[Types of funding offered by VLA under the CLSP 8](#_Toc202021701)

[CLSP standard application process 9](#_Toc202021702)

[Further information 10](#_Toc202021703)

[Section 3. Reporting guide 12](#_Toc202021704)

[CLSP Plan 12](#_Toc202021705)

[Annual Progress Report 13](#_Toc202021706)

[Annual Budget 13](#_Toc202021707)

[Funds Reports (FR1 and FR2) 14](#_Toc202021708)

[Surplus or Deficits 14](#_Toc202021709)

[Proposal to expend Excess Surplus 15](#_Toc202021710)

[Audited Financial Statements 15](#_Toc202021711)

[Annual Report 16](#_Toc202021712)

[Reporting Schedule 16](#_Toc202021713)

[Recording services against CMS Funding Categories 16](#_Toc202021714)

[Section 4. Funding Stream specific requirements 19](#_Toc202021715)

[Commonwealth: All funding 19](#_Toc202021716)

[State: Baseline Family violence funding 19](#_Toc202021717)

[State: Specialist Family Violence Court funding 22](#_Toc202021718)

[State: Pre-Court Engagement (formerly Early Resolution Service) funding 24](#_Toc202021719)

[State: Courts Legal Service funding 25](#_Toc202021720)

[VLA: Child protection funding 26](#_Toc202021721)

[Section 5: Financial Reporting Guide 29](#_Toc202021722)

[Purpose 29](#_Toc202021723)

[How to use the template 29](#_Toc202021724)

[Completing the Annual Budget (due 31 July) 30](#_Toc202021725)

[Completing Funds Report 1 (due 31 January) 31](#_Toc202021726)

[Completing Funds Report 2 (due 31 July) 31](#_Toc202021727)

[Common issues for clarification 32](#_Toc202021728)

[Explanation of Financial Items 33](#_Toc202021729)

[Attachment 1: Standard assessment rubric i](#_Toc202021730)

[Attachment 2: Plan and Progress Report template iii](#_Toc202021731)

[Attachment 3: Budget and Funds Report template iii](#_Toc202021732)

[Attachment 4: Excess Surplus Proposal template iii](#_Toc202021733)

[Attachment 5: Auditor certification template iv](#_Toc202021734)

# Background

## Victoria Legal Aid

Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) is an independent statutory authority established under the *Legal Aid Act 1978* (Vic). Our vision is for a fair, just and inclusive society where people can get help with their legal problems and have a stronger voice in how laws and legal processes affect them. VLA partners with the community legal sector and private practitioners in the [mixed model of legal assistance](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/mixed-model-service-delivery) services, towards our common aims for access to justice. Under VLA’s [Outcomes Framework to 2030](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/outcomes-framework) and [Strategy 26](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/strategy-26), we are committed to improving access to justice for clients and the community, working collaboratively across the legal assistance sector, and contributing to fairer laws and systems.

## Community Legal Services Program

The purpose of the Community Legal Services Program (CLSP, the Program) is to support Victorian Community Legal Centres (CLCs) to provide legal assistance and related services that are client-centred, efficient, and effective in meeting legal needs and improving access to justice.

The Program currently supports 40 community legal centres across Victoria; including Women’s Legal Services (WLSs) as well as the Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria (the Federation) (referred to collectively as CLCs, centres, or organisations throughout this guidance).

The Program is administered by VLA on behalf of the State of Victoria, as delegated by the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS). VLA works closely with DJCS in the management of the program, in alignment with the [National Access to Justice Partnership (NAJP) Agreement 2025-30](https://www.ag.gov.au/legal-system/legal-assistance-services/national-access-justice-partnership-2025-30), and the [Victorian Legal Assistance Strategy 2022-25](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/justice-system/legal-assistance/victorian-legal-assistance-strategy-2022-2025) (next strategy to be developed).

The community legal services and funding delivered in the CLSP include:

* Services funded by the Commonwealth. DJCS makes decisions on CLC funding allocations, and VLA administers the funding on behalf of the State of Victoria.
* Services funded by State Departments. The relevant department makes decisions on CLC funding allocations, and VLA administers the funding on behalf of the State of Victoria.
* Services funded by VLA. VLA makes decisions on CLC allocations and administers the funding.
* Services funded by other funders if applicable. The relevant funder makes decisions on CLC allocations, and VLA administers the funding, where requested by the funder.

The CLSP Agreement 2025-26 between VLA and each organisation sets out the conditions and requirements of the Program. While VLA must pass on government requirements for services and funding, VLA and government seek to standardise and streamline service and funding requirements via the Program.

## Purpose

The Funding Guidance sets out the CLSP procedures, guidance, and reporting requirements and templates.

This document has five sections:

1. **Funding principles** that VLA usesto make decisions about funding to CLCs where VLA is the decision maker on CLC funding allocations.
2. **Funding application process** that VLA uses when offering funding to CLCs or responding to CLC requests for VLA funding where VLA is the decision maker on CLC funding allocations.
3. **Reporting guide** that explains the CLSP Plan and key reports to complete and what these should contain.
4. **Funding Stream specific requirements** that set out the unique requirements of some of the main Funding Streams, to have this information centrally. This section does not include all Funding Stream specific requirements. Refer to Schedule 2 of the CLSP Agreement and Funding Advice Letters for further information.
5. **Financial reporting guide** that explains how to complete the annual budget and six-monthly funds reports.

## Attachments

Templates and guidance documents are attached.

* Attachment 1: Standard assessment rubric
* Attachment 2: Plan and Progress Report template
* Attachment 3: Budget and Funds Report template
* Attachment 4: Excess Surplus Proposal template
* Attachment 5: Auditor certification template

## Enquiries

To register for information about CLSP funding opportunities or for direct enquiries regarding the CLSP, email clcfdp@vla.vic.gov.au.

# Section 1. Funding Principles

The Funding Principles aim to ensure there is transparency of the underlying principles used by VLA to make decisions about CLC funding allocations.

Most funding decisions are made by government. Occasionally, VLA will:

* determine how government funding will be allocated to centres, or
* provide grants to centres from its own funds.

For transparency, VLA will communicate its role and scope of the decision-making responsibility when administering funding.

Eligibility for funding under the Program is set in the CLSP Agreement. VLA will not review any applications from organisations that do not fulfil the eligibility criteria.

**Relevant attachments:**

* Attachment 1: Standard assessment rubric

## Funding principles

VLA applies the following principles to guide its decisions on CLSP Funding. The principles have been used to create a standard rubric (Attachment 1: Standard assessment rubric), which will be used to guide the development of a given grant’s application assessment criteria.

## Principle 1. Evidence-based decision making

* The proposed activity / service will contribute to meeting a clear legal need
* Evidence that the proposed activity / service is an appropriate response to the legal need and / or specific client groups identified

## Principle 2. Effective management and good governance

* Demonstrated capacity and capability of the organisation to undertake the proposed activity / service and accountability tasks associated with the grant
* Effective identification and management of risks associated with the proposed activity
* Demonstrated ability to responsibly manage funding

## Principle 3. Coordinated and integrated legal assistance

* Effective partnerships with a range of legal assistance organisations and allied service providers
* Evidence of collaboration with legal and non-legal assistance sector partners including in service and / or activity delivery including through integrated models of service delivery
* Confirmation that the activity complements existing efforts

## Principle 4. Efficient service provision, including value for money

* Confirmation that the service or activity does not (unnecessarily) duplicate existing programs or projects
* The service or activity impact targets priority clients
* Demonstrate reasonable costings for service or activity delivery
* The funded service or activity represents value for money (including any co-contributions being made)
* The service or activity plan demonstrates a sustainable benefit beyond the funded period e.g. through demonstrable additional funding, development of referral pathways which allow target communities to continue to receive services and / or the service / activity has a planned process for wind-down of services or activities once VLA funding ends

## Principle 5 Effective service provision including a focus on outcomes

* Overall objectives, and the outcomes that will be achieved, are clear and respond to a clearly identified need
* Provision of culturally safe services
* Ability to collect data and measure the success of the proposed activity in accordance with best practice research and evaluation methods
* The findings of monitoring and evaluation inform future service design and delivery.

# Section 2. Funding Application Process

The Funding Application Process aims to ensure there is transparency in the way CLSP funding is awarded where VLA is the funding decision maker, including how funding opportunities are advertised and how applications are assessed. While the standard process is outlined in this document, each funding opportunity will have its own documentation which outlines the process and the specifics of a particular opportunity, as these may vary depending on the requirements.

Information on the standard conditions of CLSP services and funding can be found in the CLSP Agreement.

For information about the principles which underpin VLA’s funding decisions, see Section 1. Funding Principles.

#### Related Attachments

* Attachment 1: Standard Assessment Rubric

## Types of funding offered by VLA under the CLSP

VLA provides a range of fixed-term or recurrent funding to CLCs from our own funding allocations (whether from government allocations to VLA or other funding sources).

VLA usually offers CLC funding for the following purposes:

* **Generalist** – funding for community legal service provision that is not tied to specific law types or specific clients other than as specified by the recipient – normally recurrent with deliverables negotiated between VLA and the funded organisation.
* **Specialist area of law** –funding for community legal service provision that must be used towards assisting clients in relation to a specific area of law or associated activities (for example, child protection, family law, etc) – both project-based and recurrent, with deliverables negotiated between VLA and funded organisation.
* **Project-specific** – funding to provide services or activities for a specific purpose or project that is complementary to the effective operation of the CLSP and/or has sector wide benefits – normally fixed-term funding with deliverables usually specified by VLA.
* **Innovation** –This category of funding may include pilot projects and other initiatives that are designed to introduce or test new practices, ideas or technologies in the legal assistance sector. Priority will be given to innovative projects that can be thoroughly tested, adapted and scaled up if they are considered successful – normally fixed-term funding with activities proposed by funded organisation and deliverables agreed between VLA and funded organisation; or
* **Other** – other funding not described as above.

Depending on the individual funding opportunity, the applications may be open or restricted, and for recurrent or fixed-term funding as described below.

**Selection types:**

* Open– usually a public call for application from any organisation meeting the eligibility criteria
* Restricted– eligible organisations will receive a direct invitation to apply or express interest

**Assessment process:**

* Competitive – where applications are assessed against each other against criteria available to all eligible applicants
* Non-competitive – the proposals are not assessed against other applications. They are assessed individually against purpose-designed criteria that will be made available at the time of the process.

**Funding term:**

* Recurrent – funding that is intended to be provided year-on-year if funding conditions are met, and funding is available
* Fixed-term – funding that is provided for a set period, usually to test suitability of a service or activity (e.g. a pilot), or to meet a specified need for a fixed term.

## CLSP standard application process

CLSP funding provided by VLA will, where possible, follow a standardised advertisement, application, and assessment process.

The standard process is outlined below:

1. VLA will call for applications for the funding. For open calls, the application documents will be made available on VLA’s website and all organisations receiving CLSP funding will be notified of the opportunity via email. VLA may choose to provide details to other organisations to assist in the sharing of the application pack more broadly, for example, VLA may ask the Federation of CLCs to distribute information to their wider membership. For restricted opportunities, VLA will notify invitees directly.
2. The application documents will contain all details, including the purpose of the funding and specific application details. The application pack will provide details of the VLA contact person who can answer any questions about the grant, application process, and eligibility.
3. Applicants, who meet eligibility criteria, will submit the application to VLA for consideration.
4. The panel assigned to assess applications will be convened to assess and prioritise applications received in line with the CLSP eligibility and selection criteria detailed in the application pack.
5. Where the panel believes decision-making would be supported by additional information from applicants after review of submitted applications, the VLA contact person will seek this information from applicants.
6. Informed by recommendations from the panel, the appropriate decision-maker (such as the CEO, Board, or other person or group as noted in the application pack) will make a final decision on successful applications.
7. Successful applicants will be notified by VLA, initially by phone, and then in writing through a letter of offer and a CLSP Agreement (if needed). VLA will work with the successful applicants to develop any additional requirements and/or agreements as needed.
8. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and provided with feedback on request. If an applicant disagrees with a funding decision, they can seek a review of the decision through Schedule 8 Complaints Procedure in the CLSP Agreement.
9. VLA and the successful applicants will manage the grant in line with the CLSP Agreement, Funding Advice Letter, and Funding Guidance.

## Further information

### Applicants requesting additional information about grants

If potential applicants request information about the grant which would be materially useful to other potential applicants, VLA will respond to these queries by updating information on the VLA webpage relevant to the grant and/or updating the application pack.

### Assessment Panel

An assessment panel of VLA representatives and external representatives (where appropriate), will be formed to assess applications and proposals and make funding recommendations. All members of the panel will sign Conflict of Interest declarations to ensure they are acting independently. Where a conflict exists the relevant panel members with declared conflicts should be removed and replaced on the panel where practicable, otherwise the conflict will be managed according to VLA’s Conflict of Interest Policy. The composition of the panel and details of the final decision-making responsibility will be made clear in the application pack provided for each grant.

### Assessment of grant applications

The Assessment Panel will assess grant applications using the specified rubric, based on Section 1. Funding Principles. The final decision on any grant is reserved to VLA CEO or Board or other Delegated Authority. The application pack will include a copy of the assessment rubric which applications will be assessed against, and any other requirements set by the Commonwealth and State Governments. Applications from organisations which do not meet eligibility criteria will not be assessed.

When assessing an eligible grant application against the assessment rubric, panel members will take into consideration organisational capacity within centres. Furthermore, VLA is committed to working with centres and the Federation of CLCs to support centres to build on their capacity for evidence-based planning across the life of the agreement, such as building capacity to undertake monitoring and evaluation and conduct outcomes reporting.

### Requesting clarification from applicants or additional information about applications

VLA may request additional information from applicants to shortlist applications or differentiate between shortlisted applications. Where similar information is missing or inadequate from multiple shortlisted applications, VLA will request the same clarification and/or additional information from all relevant shortlisted applicants.

### Assessment Rubric

New grants will be assessed using a rubric designed to reflect the Funding Principles which will be made available in the relevant application pack. A sample standard assessment rubric is attached and will be adapted for each grant and funding round.

### Successful applicants

Before any CLSP funding is provided, the recipient organisation is required to enter into a CLSP Agreement with VLA, if not in such an agreement already. This Agreement sets out the terms and conditions under which the funding is to be provided. Additional requirements will be found in the Funding Guidance*.* Additional information will also be provided in the Funding Advice Letter.

These documents together will outline, in detail, the terms, conditions and obligations of service delivery, performance, accountability, and reporting requirements for both VLA and the recipient organisation.

### Unsolicited grant proposals

VLA may accept, without obligation, unsolicited strategic proposals from CLCs. If VLA considers that it would be appropriate to accept an unsolicited proposal, it will be assessed in accordance with the CLSP Funding Principles, with any final grant amount subject to VLA’s discretion. Any decisions by VLA related to the receipt, assessment, or funding of unsolicited proposals will be final.

# Section 3. Reporting guide

Most CLSP Reporting is annual on a Financial Year basis. The planning and reporting requirements are:

* CLSP Plan (options for a 1, 2 or 3-year period)
* Annual Budget
* Funds Report (FR1)
* Progress Report and Funds Report (FR2)
* Annual Report, alongside Audited Financial Statement, and
* Auditors Certificate (required for all organisations, except Small Charities).

For all ongoing funding, reporting requirements align to this schedule. For fixed-term funding, the CLSP Plan, Progress Report and Funds Reports will be the avenues for reporting on activities where possible. Where Funding Stream timing does not align with the CLSP Financial Year schedule, the process for reporting will be outlined in the Funding Advice Letter. In general, VLA will endeavour to align reporting for fixed-term grants with the substantive CLSP planning and reporting schedule. However, an additional Final Report may be required to close and acquit a fixed-term grant. If this is required, details of this will be found in the Funding Advice Letter received in relation to the grant.

**VLA will endeavour to acknowledge receipt of any of the above Reports or Plans within two business days and provide a formal response as required or within three months.**

In reviewing CLSP Reports, VLA will acknowledge and take into consideration extenuating circumstances such as climate disasters and pandemics and their impact on operation, administration and provision of service delivery and outcomes against the CLSP Plan.

#### Related Attachments:

Attachment 2: Plan and Progress Report template

Attachment 3: Budget and Funds Report template

Attachment 4: Excess Surplus Proposal template

Attachment 5: Auditor certification template

## CLSP Plan

The CLSP Plan (as defined in the CLSP Agreement) sets out centres’ work undertaken with CLSP Funding.

Centres can opt to submit either a one-, two- or three-year plan for the period of the Agreement. The CLSP Plan is due as set out in Schedule 2 of the CLSP Agreement or subsequent Funding Advice Letters.

Centres update their CLSP Plan during the CLSP Agreement period as required for any significant changes and adjust outputs in consultation with VLA.

The CLSP Plan should outline basic organisational information, strategic goals for the organisation, and activities to achieve those goals. The CLSP Plan should include:

* Operations including:
* List of the organisation’s Accreditations
* Key personnel contact details (e.g. Board Chair, CEO)
* Operational contact details (e.g. Finance Manager, Operations Manager and any others who should be on a CLSP mailing list)
* Service Summary
* Location and Service details of all at-centre services, regular outreach and integrated services as well as court services
* Summary of planned community legal education, advocacy and engagement work
* Main areas of law being serviced
* Strategic Plan incorporating Legal Needs Analysis
* Service Plan

More detail and guidance on these requirements can be found in the CLSP Plan and Progress Report Template.

## Annual Progress Report

The Progress Report is due on the 31 July each year, for the reporting period of 1 July (previous year) to 30 June (12 months). It provides updates on how the organisation is tracking against measures and targets (where required for specific Funding Streams) specified in the CLSP Plan for both outcomes and activities/outputs. It needs to include numerical measures where these are available.

Where an organisation is not on track to meet its targets or planned service delivery, it should provide an explanation of why this occurred. Comments for targets which have been met can be included, as these are still useful information in assessing the organisation’s progress against their plan.

VLA will provide necessary feedback to centres following the Progress Report.

## Annual Budget

The Annual Budget is a line-item budget for each stream of funding which an organisation receives. The specific line items which must be reported are outlined in the Budget and Funds Report template, and the relevant Funding Streams will be outlined in Schedule 2 of the CLSP Agreement or subsequent Funding Advice Letters from VLA.

The Annual Budget must be completed using the Budget and Funds Report template unless agreed in writing by VLA. Instructions on how to complete the Budget can be found in Section 5: Financial Reporting Guide.

If the Consolidated Budget (combined Budget including all Funding Stream income and expenditure) is in in deficit, notes should be added to show there are strategies in place to make up the deficit and meet all liabilities in full during the term of the agreement. In-kind contributions to support CLSP activities can be shown separately.

The Annual Budget includes a Workforce Summary tab to report total FTE and CLSP-funded FTE by position type as of 1 July for the financial year.

When reviewing a Centre’s Annual Budget, VLA:

* Acknowledges the cost of delivering legal services includes operational costs that support direct service delivery such as appropriate support and training for staff and on-costs
* Recognises that centres which operate in regional and rural areas may have operational costs that differ from metropolitan-based centres and specialist centres that operate state-wide services may have specific operational considerations that differ from other centres.

## Funds Reports (FR1 and FR2)

The six-Month Funds Report (FR1) is due on the 31 January each year, for the reporting period of 1 July to 30 December (six months).

The 12-Month Funds Report (FR2) is due on the 31 July, for the reporting period of 1 July of the previous year, to 30 June of the current (12 months).

The Funds Reports include line-item expenditure reporting against each stream of CLSP funding which the organisation provided a budget for. In this report expenditure which varies by more than 20% of the line-item budget or varies by $5,000 or more must be explained in the Notes.

Any new Funding Streams received in the Budget period should also be included.

The Funds Reports must be completed using the Budget and Funds Report template unless agreed in writing by VLA. Instructions on how to complete the Funds Reports can be found in Section 5: Financial Reporting Guide.

Any CLSP-funded FTE changes must be updated in the Workforce Summary tab when completing the FR1.

## Surplus or Deficits

In accordance with the CLSP Agreement, organisations may carry over an Allowable Surplus for each Funding Stream they receive under the CLSP without approval from VLA, for service delivery in the following year. Allowable Surplus is defined as the equivalent value of 15% of the organisation’s Funding (being the combined Commonwealth , State and VLA Funding specified in Schedule 2 of the Agreement or subsequent Funding Advice Letters for the relevant period).

An Excess Surplus is any amount above the Allowable Surplus for an individual Funding Stream. For the purposes of usual CLSP administration, VLA will calculate Excess Surplus for all streams of Baseline Funding as a single pool.

If the organisation’s Annual Budget submitted as part of 31 July reporting, shows a projected Excess Surplus in any Funding Stream, the CLC will be required to add brief notes in the Budget which explain reasons that an Excess Surplus is projected and proposed use for the Excess Surplus.

If the organisation’s Funds Report 2, submitted as part of 31 July reporting, shows an Excess Surplus which was not projected in the Budget, the CLC will be required to add brief notes in the Funds Report 2 which explain reasons that an Excess Surplus has accrued and proposed use for the Excess Surplus.

VLA will review these notes as part of usual assessment of the Budget or Funds Report 2 and, if accepted, no further action is required.

If the audited financial statements show a change in Excess Surplus value of more than 5%, this must be noted by the organisation when submitting the audited financial statements.

## Proposal to expend Excess Surplus

VLA may elect to request an Excess Surplus Proposal from a CLC after reviewing Funds Report 2 or the audited financial statements, where further information is required to support approval.

The proposal must be completed using the Excess Surplus Proposal template.  The proposal will be assessed based on a range of factors including:

* the merits of the proposal, both on an individual basis and against competing national and/or state priorities.
* whether the organisation has demonstrated that the Allowable Surplus has been committed in an appropriate way to support continued service provision; and
* any exceptional circumstances identified in support of the proposal.

VLA will assess the proposals to retain and/or spend the Excess Surplus on a case-by-case basis. If VLA does not approve the proposal, VLA may exercise its rights to recoup the Excess Surplus in accordance with the Agreement.

## Audited Financial Statements

Financial Statements audited by a Registered Auditor and an Auditor Certification must be provided to VLA by 30 November. A template for the Auditor Certification is attached. Small Charities (as defined by ACNC) are not required to provide audited Financial Statements.

The Audited Financial Statements must include:

* cumulative and accruals-based Funds Report (being the final, full year Funds Report (FR2) required under this Agreement) in respect of all funds provided under this Agreement and Service Generated Income for all Funding Categories in that Financial Year, and
* Surplus Funds clearly identified as a liability in the Organisation’s Statement of Financial Position.

Where CLSP Surplus Funds are not able to be clearly identified as a liability in the ‘Grants in Advance’ or ‘Prepaid Income’ in the Organisation’s Statement of Financial Position, the Organisation must:

* clearly indicate that the CLSP Surplus is reserved for service delivery under the CLSP in the following financial year in the Audited Financial Statement Notes, or
* provide a declaration from the CEO or CFO (or equivalent), indicating that the CLSP Surplus is reserved for service delivery in the following financial year.

## Annual Report

An electronic copy of the organisation’s Annual Report must be submitted. In this report, the organisation must acknowledge funding received from Commonwealth, State Departments, and/or VLA. The report should include Board or Committee of Management membership.

## Reporting Schedule

The CLSP has a standard reporting schedule across the year. Refer to the CLSP Agreement Schedule 3 for more information.

Deliverables need to be submitted by the due date to clcfdp@vla.vic.gov.au.  Please note, additional regular or ad hoc reports for specific purpose Funding Streams may be required. Details of the requirements will be set out in the respective Funding Advice Letter.

## Recording services against CMS Funding Categories

Services funded via the CLSP must be recorded in an appropriate case management system (CMS). Where possible, each centre must attribute the services provided to the correct Funding Stream and corresponding CMS Funding Category in CLASS or alternative system.

Where new funding is provided to centres during the life of the Agreement, the Funding Category to use will be specified in the Funding Advice Letter which outlines details of the funding, and the Funding Guidance will also be updated to reflect this. For centres using an alternative database, equivalent data collection must be used.

For CLSP funded services, the following Funding Categories in Table 1 are to be used to assign service delivery data to the appropriate Funding Stream. This Table will be updated from time to time for new or changed Funding Streams and reporting requirements.

For services delivered with NAJP Baseline funding, record this under the Generalist Funding Category (Generalist Services VIC – 12100) in CLASS or other CMS. OPTIONAL: If centres prefer to continue to use previous National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP) funding codes to disaggregate their now NAJP funded services, they can use the codes from the previous NLAP Funding Streams in Table 2.

Table 1. CMS Funding Categories

| **Funding Stream** (Refer to Agreement Schedule 2 and Funding Advice Letters) | **Funding Category; currently in CLASS** (Services > Basic Data) | **Funding Category Code** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commonwealth Base funding - Generalist  | Generalist Services VIC | 12100 |
| Commonwealth Base funding - Family Law or Family Violence | Family Violence  | 12200 |
| Commonwealth and State - Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) or Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) - Bushfire Support | Bushfire Support | 3010 |
| Commonwealth and State - ERV - Flood Support | Flood Support | 3040 |
| State (DJCS) Base funding – Generalist | Generalist Services VIC | 12100 |
| State (DJCS) Base funding – Family Violence  | Family Violence | 12200 |
| State (DJCS) - Legal Services in The Orange Door | Services in the Orange Door | 32800 |
| State (DJCS) - Victims Legal Service | Victims Legal Service | 32900 |
| State (DJCS) - Courts Legal Service | Courts Legal Service | 32101 |
| State (DJCS) - Specialist Family Violence Courts | SFVC | 32100 |
| State (DJCS) - CLC Family Violence and Assistance Fund | CLCFVA | 32200 |
| State (DJCS) - Pre-Court Engagement (previously Early Resolution Service) | Early Resolution Service | 32700 |
| State (DJCS) - Integrated Service Project | Civil Law | 32600 |
| State (DH) - Mental Health Legal Rights Service | Mental Health Legal Rights Service | 32950 |
| State (DJSIR) - International Students Employment and Accommodation Legal Service  | ISEALS | 32500 |
| VLA (State) - Child Protection | Child Protection | 32300 |
| VLA (Commonwealth) - Family Law Continuity | Family Law Continuity | 32400 |

Table 2. OPTIONAL – NLAP Funding Categories from 2020-25, for centres that prefer to record NAJP Baseline funded services under the previous NLAP codes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Previous NLAP Funding Streams**(Refer to CLSP Agreement 2020-25 Schedule 1 and Funding Advice letters from the NLAP period) | **Funding Category in CLASS** (Services > Basic Data)  | **Funding Category Code**  |
| Baseline – Commonwealth Generalist or State Generalist  | Generalist Services VIC  | 12100  |
| Baseline – Commonwealth Family Law or Family Violence or State Family Violence  | Family Violence  | 12200  |
| Family Law Access Project  | Family Law Access Project  | 12400  |
| Commonwealth – Health Justice Partnership (HJP) / Domestic Violence Unit (DVU)  | HJP/DVU – Women’s Safety Package  | 12300  |
| Commonwealth – NLAP Bilateral Grants - Mental Health  | NLAP Mental Health Funding (Vic)  | 12700  |
| Commonwealth – NLAP Bilateral Grants - Vulnerable Women Frontline Service Delivery  | Vulnerable Women - Frontline Service Delivery  | 12800  |
| Commonwealth – NLAP Bilateral Grants - Vulnerable Women -Family Law Capacity  | Vulnerable Women - Family Law Capacity  | 12810  |
| Commonwealth – NLAP Bilateral Grants - Workplace Sexual Harassment and Discrimination  | Workplace Sexual Harassment & Discrimination  | 12900  |

# Section 4. Funding Stream specific requirements

Some Funding Streams have specific conditions which apply to use of these funds. Where the Commonwealth or State governments or other funders set conditions on use of funds, VLA will pass on these requirements.

The Funding Streams which an organisation receives will be outlined in their CLSP Agreement Schedule 2 and in Funding Advice Letters. Centres are to check Schedule 2 of their CLSP Agreement and Funding Advice Letters to determine if additional requirements apply to funding received.

Specific funding conditions apply to:

* Commonwealth funding
* State funding:
	+ Family Violence Funding
	+ Specialist Family Violence Court Funding
	+ Pre-Court Engagement (formerly Early Resolution Service) funding
	+ Court Legal Service funding
* VLA funding:
	+ Child protection funding

## Commonwealth: All funding

Funding source: Commonwealth

Decision maker on CLC funding allocations: DJCS

All services funded with Commonwealth funding must be delivered according to the Commonwealth priorities and principles. As part of the [National Access to Justice Partnership (NAJP),](https://www.ag.gov.au/legal-system/legal-assistance-services/national-access-justice-partnership-2025-30) the Commonwealth Government has set principles for use of Commonwealth funding allocated to CLCs and Women’s Legal Services. These are laid out in full in Schedule A in the NAJP. The Commonwealth priorities and principles for eligibility

## State: Baseline Family violence funding

Funding source: State

Decision maker on CLC funding allocations: DJCS

Where State Baseline Family Violence Funding is provided, this funding must be used to provide family violence-related legal services including:

* At-court duty lawyer services (including ‘online’ duty lawyer services)
* Advice and information services
* Casework services
* Community legal education
* Stakeholder engagement
* Law and policy reform activities

The primary purpose of the State Family Violence Funding is to provide at-court duty lawyer services (including ‘online’ duty lawyer services) to the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria in the Organisation’s catchment. As such, duty lawyer services must be preferenced when expending these funds.

Organisations receiving State Baseline Family Violence Funding must work collaboratively with other service providers and agencies to provide effective and high-quality family violence services.

#### Service types

#### Duty lawyer services

The duty lawyer service will primarily be focused on providing assistance to applicants for family violence intervention orders, affected family members in police-initiated family violence intervention order matters and other persons who may have experienced family violence and require information, advice or casework services.

The service will also act for and assist respondents to applications for family violence intervention orders and persons alleged to have perpetrated family violence in circumstances where such persons cannot utilise the duty lawyer service provided by VLA (whether provided by in-house VLA staff or a VLA-funded private practitioner service), or in accordance with local arrangements agreed between VLA and the Organisation.

Duty lawyer services include advice regarding matters before the court on the same day, negotiation and appearances in court in interim matters such as mentions, directions hearings and adjournments. It is not expected that Organisation lawyers will appear in final hearings or in matters where it is expected that parties would be cross examined.

#### Advice services

Legal advice will be provided to affected family members, applicants and respondents - parties to the application for an intervention order. As is the case for duty lawyer services, the Organisation will primarily respond to affected family members (adult and children) and VLA will primarily respond to respondents (adult and children) but role swaps will occur if required. Legal advice must only be provided by legal practitioners qualified under the *Legal Profession* Act 2004.

Legal advice includes providing an opinion on individual legal rights and obligations regarding intervention orders, civil jurisdiction of the Magistrates’ Court, Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal, criminal prosecutions, and opinion on cross-jurisdictional issues such as family law, child protection and child support agency matters. Advice can be provided on, between, or before, the court hearing day.

#### Representation services

Representation services (casework) include additional tasks and follow up required for both contested and uncontested cases, and other legal matters such as assistance with family law, infringements, fines, VOCAT, and criminal matters where appropriate.

#### Community Legal Education, Community Education, Stakeholder Engagement and Law Reform

The Organisation is expected to provide community legal education and community education and produce related resources as the need is identified. Stakeholder engagement and law reform activities may be conducted where these contribute to positive outcomes for people experiencing family violence or support the delivery of legal services delivery to individuals experiencing family violence or related legal issues.

#### Reporting requirements

State Family Violence Funding is pooled with other Commonwealth or State Baseline funding for the purposes of Budget and Funds Reporting. However, as State Family Violence Funding must be used to provide family violence-related legal services, funding must be maintained as a separate cost centre by the Organisation or be able to be acquitted distinctly from other Funding Streams if required.

Activities attributable to this funding must be recorded as required by the *Client and service delivery data collection requirements* section of the *Funding Guidance*, under the Funding Category ‘Family Violence’ in CLASS or similarly in an alternative database with VLA approval.

In addition to the minimum data requirements laid out in the *Client and service delivery data collection requirements*, the following data must be collected:

**Type of Assistance** – It is to be used for court-based activities only and have the following variables:

* Advice Only
* Adjournment/Mention
* Negotiations/Draft terms of Settlement
* Hearing/Representation
* Not recorded

**Outcomes** – It is to be used for court-based activities only and have the following variables:

* Bail
* Consent Orders
* Dismissed
* Final Order
* Interim Order
* Revocation
* Undertaking
* Variation
* Withdrawn
* Not Specified

The CLSP Plan must include reference to the activities planned using this funding, to be reported on in Progress Reports. Additional data reports summarising “Outcomes” and “Types of Assistance” data above may be requested.

## State: Specialist Family Violence Court funding

#### Funding Source: State

#### Decision maker on CLC allocations: DJCS with VLA making recommendations on allocations.

Where Specialist Family Violence Court (SFVC) funding is provided, this funding must be to provide services under the SFVC Legal Practice Model. The SFVC funding received under this grant can only be used for the purposes of a range of family violence related legal services at the local SFVC including:

* At-court SFVC duty lawyer services, including online service delivery in accordance with Magistrates’ Court Practice Directions requirements
* Advice and information services related to family violence matters
* Ongoing casework for [priority family violence applicants](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/key-definitions-guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%22priority-family-violence-client), [affected family members in conflict with police applicants](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%2281a-%E2%80%93-affected-family-members-in-police-applications), and [Respondent women and LGBTIQ+ people misidentified as the predominant aggressor by police](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%2282-%E2%80%93-respondents). Where service capacity does not allow for ongoing casework in such matters, warm referrals to an alternate legal service should be provided.
* Family violence community legal education and community development (where appropriate)

These are outlined in the Activities section below, alongside the Activity Outcomes and Measures applicable to this funding.

The funding may also be used for the following purposes:

* Recruitment, induction, training and set-up costs of employees hired to service the SFVC
* To implement, follow and monitor adherence to processes and policies that form part of the SFVC Legal Practice Model
* Any data-collection and reporting as identified as part of the terms of funding

#### Court Location

The court location is the SFVC outlined in the funding advice letter provided by VLA, referred to in this document as “local SFVC”.

**Activity Outcomes and Measures**

That clients are receiving safe and easy to access legal services that are integrated within the family violence service system through:

* Duty lawyer legal services
* Legal information and advice prior to, between and after court hearings
* Ongoing client representation and case work for [priority family violence applicants](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/key-definitions-guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%22priority-family-violence-client), [affected family members in conflict with police applicants](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%2281a-%E2%80%93-affected-family-members-in-police-applications), and [Respondent women and LGBTIQ+ people misidentified as the predominant aggressor by police](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%2282-%E2%80%93-respondents)
* Warm referrals to legal and non-legal services
* Policies and processes developed through the implementation of the SFVC Legal Practice Model
* Ongoing monitoring of activities provided pursuant to the SFVC Legal Practice Model

#### Activities

* Provide quality duty lawyer legal services for family violence applicants, affected family members in police-initiated family violence intervention order matters and respondents on all the local SFVC sitting days through information, advice and/or in-court advocacy
* Provide quality legal information and/or advice prior, between and after the court day to applicants, affected family members and respondents with family violence matters at the local SFVC
* Provide on-going client representation and case work for [priority family violence applicants](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/key-definitions-guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%22priority-family-violence-client), [affected family members in conflict with police applicants](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%2281a-%E2%80%93-affected-family-members-in-police-applications), and [Respondent women and LGBTIQ+ people misidentified as the predominant aggressor by police](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/guideline-8-family-violence-intervention-order-cases%22%20/l%20%2282-%E2%80%93-respondents)
* Collaborate with practice partners to support the equitable delivery of legal service delivery where possible at the local SFVC and the implementation of the SFVC Legal Practice Model
* Participate in training and professional development to support the delivery of the above activities.

#### Targets

Any targets relevant to this funding are those outlined in the relevant funding advice letter or as otherwise varied in writing by agreement with VLA and the funded organisation.

#### Reporting requirements

You will be required to record all service delivery data under the SFVC Funding Category in CLASS, or similarly in an alternative database with VLA approval, as outlined in the *Client and service delivery data collection requirements* section of the *Funding Guidance*. In addition, you must collect data about:

* Whether the client is an applicant and/or affected member, or respondent
* Appearance type (FVIO mentions, directions hearing etc)

The CLSP Plan must include reference to the activities planned with this funding, and activities covered by this grant are to be reported on in Progress Reports as well as through the Budget and Funds reporting. Additional information on fund requirements can be found in the funding advice letter relevant to this funding.

#### Definitions related to SFVC Funding

Definitions remain consistent with the Federation of Community Legal Centres Data Entry Guide unless otherwise specified below. Where there is a conflict between the two definitions, the definition outlined below overrides that in the Data Entry Guide.

* Legal Information: consistent with the definition of “Information” in the Data Entry Guide.
* Duty Lawyer Legal Information: Provision of general application information to a Service User about the law, legal systems and processes or legal and other support services to assist in the resolution of legal and related problems when provided by a duty lawyer to a Service User at a court or tribunal.
* Duty Lawyer Legal Advice: Provision of fact-specific legal advice to a service user in response to a request for assistance to resolve specific legal problems when provided by a duty lawyer to a service user at a court or tribunal.
* Duty Lawyer In-Court Advocacy: Provision of legal representation to a service user by a duty lawyer before a court or tribunal.
* Family Violence Matter: Family violence matters from multiple jurisdictions, including, but not limited to; family violence intervention orders, summary offences proceedings, family law proceedings, Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal applications
* Legal Practice Model: 30 initiatives that support legal assistance delivery at Specialist Family Violence Courts in Victoria.
* Practice Partners: Legal and non-legal organisations responsible for service delivery provided to Service Users at the Specialist Family Violence Courts
* Pre-court: The time prior to a service user’s initial hearing date at a Specialist Family Violence Court
* Post-court: The time between and after a service user’s hearings at a Specialist Family Violence Court, including following the finalisation of their family violence or related legal matter
* Policies and Processes: Any applicable documents and guidelines created through the implementation of the Legal Practice Model that may apply to your organisation
* SFVC Listings Policy: The policy that establishes general principles that should guide the listing of family violence matters within the Specialist Family Violence Court site
* SFVC Operating Model: The document that details the operating model for the Specialist Family Violence Court which informs the rollout to each of the Specialist Family Violence Court sites.
* Warm Referral: consistent with the definition of “Referral (Facilitated)” in the Data Entry Guide.

## State: Pre-Court Engagement (formerly Early Resolution Service) funding

**Funding Source**: State

**Decision maker on CLC allocations**: DJCS with VLA making recommendations on allocations

Where Pre-Court Engagement (PCE) service funding is provided, this funding must be used to provide family violence-related legal services including:

* pre-court information and advice to family violence applicants, affected family members in police-initiated family violence intervention order matters and respondents before the day of a court hearing
* pre-court negotiation services to family violence applicants, affected family members in police-initiated family violence intervention orders matters and respondents
* where possible, work towards resolving family violence intervention order matters before the court day for applicants, affected family members in police-initiated family violence intervention order matters and respondents
* when a referral is received, at least two attempts to contact the client are made
* proactively liaise, communicate and negotiate with practice partners (Victoria Police, VLA, other CLCs, MCV) to work towards resolving matters, prior to their listed court date, wherever possible and appropriate
* where appropriate, and with client consent, refer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to VALS or Djirra
* participation in the PCE Direct Service Providers Working Group
* Report on Activities in your CLSP Plan and Progress Report

#### Activity Outcomes and Measures

As set out in the above Activity Details. Additional outcomes and targets required by DJCS under the Early Intervention Investment Framework (EIIF) funding to be confirmed.

#### Reporting requirements

Submission of relevant data into MCV’s FV Court Coordination Pre-Court Engagement Tool (FV Court Coordination tool), including, PCE referral and service outcomes Data about clients, service delivery, and other activities must be recorded in CLASS or other system VLA has already approved under Funding Category “ERS”. This data needs to be recorded in line with the Data Standards Manual.

Additional requirements required by DJCS under the EIIF funding to be confirmed.

## State: Courts Legal Service funding

**Funding source:** State

**Decision maker on CLC allocations:** DJCS with VLA making recommendations on allocations.

Where Courts Legal Service Funding is provided, this funding must be used to support the increasing family violence duty lawyer service demand and strengthen family violence servicing provided under CLSP funding by recruiting a family violence lawyer.

The Organisation’s existing structure may mean the funding is better spent on non-legal support and, in this instance, we encourage you to contact the Associate Director, Family Violence at VLA to seek approval.

#### Court Location

The court location is the SFVC outlined in the funding advice letter provided by VLA, referred to in this document as “local SFVC”.

In addition to family violence servicing provided under CLSP funding, the CLS funding aims to:

* Provide quality duty lawyer legal services for family violence applicants, affected family members in police-initiated family violence intervention order matters and respondents at the local Specialist Family Violence Court (SFVC) sitting days through information, advice and/or in-court advocacy
* Provide quality duty lawyer legal services for family violence matters on all local SFVC sitting days through information, advice and/or in-court advocacy.

Activities will be reported in the Organisation’s CLSP Plan and Progress Report.

Funding Advice Letters may also specify additional priorities for the Organisation’s service delivery.

#### Reporting requirements

Data about clients and service delivery can be recorded in CLASS under State Funding Code: CLS, alternatively the Organisation can apply an apportion split to your Family Violence Duty Lawyer services. This Funding Category can only be used for services and clients serviced under this Activity.

The minimum data collection requirements are set out in the National Data Standards Manual. Additionally, you will need to collect whether the client is an applicant and/or affected member, or respondent.

Some Organisations receiving the Courts Legal Service funding are subject to additional reporting requirements as set out in their Funding Advice Letters.

Reporting on the requirement will be included as part of the Organisation’s regular CLSP Reporting.

## VLA: Child protection funding

**Funding source:** VLA (State base funding allocation to VLA from DJCS)

**Decision maker on CLC allocations:** VLA

Organisations which receive child protection funding must use this funding primarily for the provision of duty lawyer and casework services to clients involved in child protection legal proceedings. The funding may also be directed to associated advice and information services, referrals and community legal education, community engagement and law reform work.

#### Clients

As indicated in VLA’s [Child Protection grants guidelines](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/6-state-family-guidelines) where funding is used for direct client service delivery these clients will be from one or more of the following priority client groups:

* people living on a low income
* people in custody, detention or involuntary psychiatric settings
* children
* children, young people and women experiencing, or at risk of, family violence
* indigenous Australians
* people who experience language or cultural barriers
* people who are experiencing homelessness
* people with a disability (physical, intellectual, or cognitive) or who experience mental illness.

**Court locations**

Where services are to be provided at court, the relevant court(s) are agreed in writing with VLA.

#### Service types and levels

#### Duty lawyer services

Duty lawyer services are to be provided to parties responding to child protection applications at the Children’s Court, Family Division at agreed court locations, or remotely if required. The duty lawyer service involves providing assistance to parties responding to child protection applications, who require information, advice and/or legal representation.

Duty lawyer services include advice regarding matters before the court on the same day, negotiation and appearances in court, which may include mentions and running submissions-based contests to determine issues of placement.

Duty lawyer services are to be provided in accordance with VLA’s [Child Protection Duty Lawyer Guidelines](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/duty-lawyers-family-division-childrens-court-child-protection-matters#guidelines) and Practice Standards.

The Organisation is expected to conduct a conflict check prior to accepting a duty lawyer referral from VLA.

Referrals from VLA to the Organisation for child protection legal assistance will be made in line with the process set out in the [Child Protection Duty Lawyer Services Manual](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/duty-lawyers-family-division-childrens-court-child-protection-matters#child-protection-duty-lawyer-services-manual). First Nations clients will be given as a first choice the option of referral to an Aboriginal Legal Service, where one is available.

#### Advice services

Advice services are discrete legal advice provided away from court – for example at the Organisation, at an outreach or other location, or by telephone.

Legal advice must only be provided by legal practitioners qualified under the *Legal Profession Act 2004*.

Legal advice includes, but is not limited to, providing an opinion on individual legal rights and obligations regarding investigation by Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), the use of voluntary agreements, case planning, rights to appeal, and on cross-jurisdictional issues such as family law matters and family violence intervention orders.

#### Representation Services (Casework)

Representation services involve acting on the record as a client’s solicitor and may include court and conciliation conference appearances, preparation for court events, negotiation with other parties, additional tasks and follow up as required, and assistance with associated issues such as family violence, family law, and VOCAT matters where appropriate. Casework does not include duty lawyer services or legal advice as described in the sections above.

The organisation may undertake casework other than under a grant of legal assistance, however, it is expected that the majority of casework will be undertaken in accordance with VLA’s [Child Protection grants guidelines](https://www.handbook.vla.vic.gov.au/6-state-family-guidelines), even where a grant is not applied for, and services targets set recognise this.

Conduct of any casework matter must be supervised by a practitioner who is a member of the section 29A child protection panel.

#### Community Legal Education (CLE), Law Reform and Working with Others

The Organisation is expected to undertake CLE activities with a focus on child protection and related issues.  A specific focus of the CLE should be to increase and improve clients’ knowledge of and engagement with the child protection jurisdiction.

The Organisation should also work collaboratively with other service providers and agencies to provide effective and high-quality legal services and participate in opportunities for law reform and child protection system improvement. The Organisation is expected to provide referrals for clients to local services that can provide assistance to clients on legal and non-legal issues.

#### Service Targets

Child Protection service delivery targets agreed between the Organisation and VLA are outlined in the relevant funding advice letter or otherwise in writing by agreement with VLA.

#### Data collection and reporting requirements

All data must be collected in a CMS as per the CLSP Agreement. All client service data must be collected in line with *Client and service delivery data collection requirements* section of the *Funding Guidance* under the funding category “Child Protection.”

Reports against service delivery, including achievement against targets must be recorded and reported as part of CLSP Progress Reports.

#### Auditing

Child protection files must be made available upon request from VLA Grants and Quality Assurance.

# Section 5: Financial Reporting Guide

## Purpose

This Guide will assist centres to complete the following reports:

* **Annual Budget** - a line-item budget of expected income and expenditure in the relevant financial year for each of the organisation’s Funding Streams received as part of the CLSP.
* **Funds Report 1 (for 6 Month Report)** – a detailed income and expenditure report for the organisation for the first 6 months of the financial year using CLSP funds.
* **Funds Report 2 (for 12 Month Report)** – a detailed income and expenditure report for the organisation for a complete financial year using CLSP funds.

These reports together are called the ‘CLSP Financial Reports.’ Refer to the section on Explanation of Financial Items for further information on what to include against each item in the Budget and Funds Report template.

## How to use the template

The CLSP Financial Reports can be completed in a single Excel template (Figure 1), with separate tabs for the six-month and 12-months funds reports.

Report all funding your centre receives under the CLSP – this is detailed in Schedule 2 of the CLSP Agreement or subsequent Funding Advice Letters.

As shown in the Payment Schedule, funding is split into two Funding Types: Base Funding and Specific-purpose Funding. Base Funding includes Generalist and Family Violence Funding Streams from both Commonwealth and State Funding Categories. Specific-purpose funding includes all other Funding Streams. For the purposes of Financial Reporting, all streams of Base Funding can be reported as a consolidated funding pool. All Funding Streams within the Specific-purpose funding types must be reported separately. The Base Funding report column is pre-labelled. For each of the Specific-purpose Funding Streams, there are reporting columns which can be labelled as needed.

Only fill in information in the white cells in the template. Green or grey cells indicate cells where formulae exist, and data is automatically calculated.

Figure 1. The CLSP Financial Reporting Template



## Completing the Annual Budget (due 31 July)

Tabs to use in the template:

* Report Details
* Budget (CLSP + Projects)
* Workforce Summary
* Consolidated Reports – to see a consolidated summary of total Budget and Funds Reports 1 and 2, when these are completed.

Before starting to complete the Budget, read the **Report Details tab** first as it has important information about using the template. Please enter your centre name where indicated (cell C4) and the financial year for this report (cell C5). This information will pre-fill in other sections of the report.

There are two tabs which are used to complete the Annual Budget.

In the **Budget (CLSP + Projects)tab**, enter in the income and expenditure against each line item. There is a separate column for each Funding Stream that the centre receives under CLSP (as from Schedule 2 of the CLSP Agreement or subsequent Funding Advice Letters), and these must be completed separately. Funding sub-streams do not need separate financial reports.

At the right of this sheet the total income and expenditure for the full CLSP program will be calculated. For definitions of each line item, please see the Financial Data Items and Definitions at the end of this document.

For Specific Purpose funds, where the cost of delivering the activities funded is expected to exceed the amount of CLSP funding or in-kind support is to be provided, this could be shown in the Budget. (Item N, Cell C65). Other than the transfer of Generalist funding across to other Funding Stream budgets, or the limited transfer of existing FTE to manage operational delivery fluctuations, any projected transfers of funds to other Funding Streams must be approved by VLA in writing.

## Completing Funds Report 1 (due 31 January)

Tabs to use in the template:

* FR1 CLSP+P
* FR1+2
* Workforce Summary
* Consolidated Reports – to see a consolidated summary of total Budget and Funds Reports 1 and 2, when these are completed

Funds Report 1 can be completed in the **FR1 CLSP+P tab**. Funds Reports have tabs coloured blue. For each Funding Stream the centre received, there is a separate Funds Report found in this sheet. As with the Budget, the total for the CLSP Program can be found to the right of the sheet.

Enter the actual amount spent for each Funding Stream in Quarter 1 and 2 by line item in the *Actual* column. The *Pro-Rata Budget* columnshows half of the Annual Budget entered by the centre (or equivalent pro-rata amount). The V*ariance to date* column shows the difference between the actual spend and pro-rata budget. The *% over or under budget* column shows this variance as a percentage of the pro-rata budget.

Items which vary by more than 20% of the line-item budget or $5,000 or more must be explained in the Notes. Red icons will be displayed in the template for these line items.

## Completing Funds Report 2 (due 31 July)

Tabs to use in the template:

* FR2 CLSP+P
* FR1+2
* Workforce Summary
* Consolidated Reports – to see a consolidated summary of total Budget and Funds Reports 1 and 2, when these are completed

Funds Report 2 is completed in the same way as Funds Report 1, except as a report for the complete Financial Year, in the **FR2 CLSP+P tab**. When completing Funds Report 2, you will also need to check if there is an Excess Surplus flagged in the **Consolidated Reportstab** (cell P60). If a centre has an excess surplus indicated, brief notes which explain reasons that an Excess Surplus has accrued and proposed use for the Excess Surplus must be included.

## Common issues for clarification

#### Assets

Assets as listed in CLSP Expenses refers to minor equipment or assets purchased with CLSP Funding. It is any asset expenditure that has not been capitalised according to the individual organisation’s Asset and Capital Expenditure policy. In general, this is usually assets costing $2,000 or less.

#### Capital Expenditure

Capital Expenditure refers to any assets, equipment or other expenses that have been capitalised according to the individual organisation’s Asset and Capital Expenditure policy. In general, this is usually for expenditure of greater than $2000 per item. For Capital Expenditure on assets valued above $20,000 or 20% of total CLSP Funding in any financial year (whichever is the lesser), this needs to be approved by VLA prior to being spent. To request approval of any future Capital Expenditure spending send an email detailing purpose of spending, and total cost to clcfdp@vla.vic.gov.au in a timely manner.

#### Depreciation

Depreciation on Assets purchased with CLSP Funding is reported through this template. This allows reconciliation with approved Capital Expenditure and Accumulated Depreciation values which are also only for Assets purchased with CLSP Funding. This is consistent with organisational requirements under the CLSP Agreement.

#### Opening Balance

The Opening Balance or ‘Surplus/Deficit from previous year’ needs to match the audited *12 Month CLSP funds report* which your organisation provided to VLA.

#### Other Expenses

The purpose of any ‘Other Expenses’ expenditure needs to be explained as described in Explanation of Financial Items.

Explanation of Financial Items**.** This can be reported in the notes section at the bottom of Funds Report 1 or 2.

#### Reporting Variances

Centres should explain variances between budget and spending where these are +/- 20% (and if greater than a ‘material amount’ which is set at $5000) in their Funds Reports 2 for 12 months. The reports will automatically highlight which variances need to be reported according to this rule.

#### Service Generated Income

According to the CLSP Agreement, Service Generated Income needs to be reported. Service Generated Income is defined below in the Financial Item Definitions.

## Explanation of Financial Items

Definitions and explanations of each Financial Item in the Budget and Funds Report template are provided below; in the order they appear in the template.

##### CLSP Income

CLSP Income. All funding received through your CLSP Agreement; specified in Schedule 2 of the Agreement and in subsequent Funding Advice Letters. Also includes all Service Generated Income to be used in the provision of CLSP services.

**Surplus/Deficit from previous year.** In the Annual Budget, the amount for the surplus or deficit from the previous year’s 12 Months Funds Report for each Funding Stream is to be entered in the respective Funding Stream Budget as a positive or negative figure respectively. In the Funds Report, this represents the opening balance of all prior year surplus / deficits that have cumulatively rolled forward. As an opening balance this figure will not change during the year and will match the final position on the CLSP report from the previous year. In the Funds Report this will be automatically generated from the figure reported in the Annual Budget. **Note:** This amount must match the figure in the closing balance of the accepted 12 Months CLSP Funds Report from the previous year.

##### CLSP Funding

**Commonwealth.** All funding provided by the Commonwealth for CLSP activities is recorded here. Refer to Schedule 2 of CLSP Agreement and Funding Advice Letters.

**State.** All funding provided by the State for CLSP activities is recorded here. Refer to Schedule 2 of CLSP Agreement and Funding Advice Letters.

**VLA Commonwealth**. All funding provided by VLA for CLSP activities (from VLA’s Commonwealth funding) is recorded here. Refer to Schedule 2 of CLSP Agreement or Funding Advice letters.

**VLA State.** All funding provided by VLA for CLSP activities (from VLA’s State funding) is recorded here. Refer to Schedule 2 of CLSP Agreement and Funding Advice Letters.

**Service Generated Income.** Any income generated by the Organisation's investment of funding provided under this Agreement or by the provision of Services funded under this Agreement, including but not limited to bank Interest, Client Contributions, fees for Community Legal Education activities, Costs Recovered and Retained, and Proceeds from Sale of Assets.

**Total CLSP Income** will be automatically generated by adding the following: Commonwealth plus State plus VLA Commonwealth plus VLA State plus Service Generated Income.

**CLSP General Purpose Income**. This total is automatically generated in the Budget and Funds Report. This represents the total funds expected to be available under the CLSP for service provision for the financial year by adding the Net Surplus/Deficit from Previous Year and the Total CLSP Income.

##### CLSP Expenses

**Salaries.** Salaries and wages (S&W) for staff (permanent, casual, part time, agency temp staff), S&W fringe benefit tax (on benefits), S&W Salary sacrifice (includes salary sacrifice superannuation), S&W Termination Payments, S&W Other (for example, provision for childcare).

**Superannuation**. S&W Superannuation. **Note:** salary sacrifice superannuation is included in Salaries.

**On Costs.** S&W annual leave (including leave loading if applicable), S&W sick leave expense (including personal leave such as parental leave), S&W long service leave, S&W workers compensation.

**Total Salaries Expenses.** Salaries, Superannuation plus On Costs - calculated automatically in Budget & Funds Report.

**Rent (amortised).** Rent (on all premises), or where the Centre is paying a mortgage, this field will represent the mortgage interest component. Service providers should inform VLA if they are paying mortgage and not renting. This amount should be amortised in accordance with AASB 16. **Note:** Approval is required from VLA to use CLSP Funding to purchase premises.

**Repairs and Maintenance.** Repairs and maintenance of assets (including building structural maintenance and gardening). Routine maintenance and repairs that restore assets to original condition are included but any improvements must be capitalised and depreciated – not recorded as repairs and maintenance.

**Other Premises Costs.** Cleaning and pest control, rates and taxes, security expenses, tenancy and property supplies and services (including relocation costs) and utilities.

**Staff Training**. Training and development (staff) (includes conference and training workshop fees but not travel).

**Staff Recruitment.** S&W Recruitment expense (including staff advertising).

**Communications.** Telephone, mobile and fax charges and internet.

**Office Overheads.** Computer expenses, consulting fees (for administrative purposes) employment support and supervision costs (other than salaries), health and safety, meeting fees (including venue hire and catering), postage, freight and couriers (including DX costs), printing & stationary (for administration purposes including photocopying and annual reports, but not other promotional printing), sundry expenses.

**Insurance.** All Insurance accounts including CLCA levy, unfair dismissal insurance, etc. **Note:** Workers’ compensation is included in On-costs.

**Finance, Audit, and Accounting Fees.** Accounting fees (includes bookkeeping fees), audit fees, bank fees, credit card fees, interest paid.

**Library, Resources and Subscriptions.** Expenses for publications and information resources, (including subscriptions, resources, kits), fees and permits (including practicing certificates), membership fees paid (including affiliations and levies).

**Travel.** All motor vehicle expenses (except for motor vehicle depreciation and leasing), travel and accommodation (includes for training purposes but not client, volunteer or board travel which is covered in programming and planning).

**Programming and Planning** . Advertising and promotion (associated with marketing, advertising and promotion of events and services including printing of materials), board/governance expenses (management committee costs including training and travel), business planning, reporting and evaluation costs, client support services and client support consumables (including costs associated with programs, community legal education, community development, client transport assistance), consultancy fees (associated with programs or service delivery), fundraising expenses, volunteer costs (including training and travel costs). **Note**: insurance costs to cover board and volunteers are included in Insurance expenses.

**Client Disbursements.** Fees or other payments made on behalf of clients. **Note:** Any fees reimbursed by clients should be recorded as Service Generated Income as Client Contributions or Costs Recovered and Retained. recovered.

**Leases.** Any leases, other than Rent. This amount should be amortised in accordance with AASB 16.

**Assets (Minor Equipment)**. Assets (minor equipment) purchased with CLSP Funds. It is any asset expenditure that has not been capitalised according to the individual organisation’s Asset and Capital Expenditure policy. In general, this is usually assets costing $2000 or less. **Note:** if assets are leased, leasing costs should be included in Leases.

**Depreciation on Capex.** Current year decline in value of capitalised assets (capex) purchased using CLSP funds (apportionment of cost over time – current period apportionment only).

**Auspicing or Management Fee**. Costs associated with the auspicing/management arrangement that are not included in other line items. Report auspicing or management fees as a separate line item (not included in ‘Other’ expenses). A fee of over 10% of Annual Funds can be approved but will need to be supported with additional documentation.

**Other**. Any other expenses incurred by the Centre that are not included under any of the other financial items; including legal fees and write off costs (not including asset write-offs). **Note:** Any amounts recorded at this item are to be explained in Notes when submitting the Financial Reports.

**Total Operating Expenses.** Total CLSP Expenses excluding Total Salary and Related Costs, calculated automatically in the Budget and Funds Report.

**Total CLSP Expenses.** Total Salary and Related Expenses plus Total Operating Costs calculated automatically in the Budget and Funds Report.

**Capital Expenditure (Capex).** Capital expenditure on assets that have been capitalised according to the individual organisation’s Asset and Capital Expenditure policy. In general, this is usually for expenditure of greater than $2,000. For Capital Expenditure on assets valued above $20,000 or 20% of total Funds (whichever is the lesser), this needs to be approved by VLA prior to being spent. To request approval of any future Capital Expenditure spending send an email detailing purpose of spending, and total cost to clcfdp@vla.vic.gov.au in a timely manner.

**Opening Accumulated Depreciation**. Opening accumulated decline in value of asset to date (apportionment of cost over time – expired apportionment to date).

##### Total

**Adjusted Surplus/Deficit.** Surplus / Deficit following deduction of Capital expenditure less accumulated depreciation.

**Surplus/Deficit for Next Year**. This is the Carried forward Surplus or Deficit. This is the total of Adjusted Surplus/Deficit for this year and the Surplus/Deficit from previous year

**Total adjusted Income - Total CLSP Expenses.** The General Purpose Income (CLSP Income adjusted for previous year’s Surplus/Deficit minus Total CLSP Expenses).

**Allowable Surplus.** The amount of Allowable Surplus that an organisation can carry forward for the purposes of CLSP service delivery each year, calculated at 15% of per annum total for each Funding Stream.

**Projected Excess Surplus/Excess Surplus**. The amount of Surplus above the allowable surplus amount, if any, for each CLSP Funding Stream. In the Annual Budget, this shows the Excess Surplus projected according to the Income and Expenditure entered in the Budget. In the Consolidated Report, this shows the actual Excess Surplus as calculated using CLSP Income and Funds Report 2.

# Attachment 1: Standard assessment rubric

This rubric is based on the CLSP Funding Principles and is designed to ensure the principles are used when making funding decisions under the CLSP. Each grant will have specific requirements which mean the Assessment Rubric may be varied from this standard. Where variations have occurred, this will be clear in the application pack.

Weighting may be adjusted if necessary – total must add up to 100%, all except the additional criteria must be above 5%.

#### Evidence-based decision making (20%)

Score:

0 - Lacked evidence that proposal will meet a legal need or legal need not identified with evidence.

1 - Reasonable evidence that proposal will meet a legal need.

2 - Presented thorough evidence of legal need and proposal links to meeting the need

3 - Clear and thorough evidence that proposal will yield results in meeting the legal need identified e.g. previous use of service model. Clear evidence of legal need presented.

#### Effective management and good governance (20%)

Score:

0 - Has not demonstrated that the team/organisation has the capacity to manage the grant. No mitigation plan for risks.

1 - Described basic capabilities to manage grant. Minimal mitigation strategies for risks identified or risks not sufficiently identified.

2 - Described competence to manage grant, with appropriate resourcing proposed. Risks are identified and mitigation strategies planned.

3 - Team has high competence and evidence of previous successful grant management. Comprehensive risk identification and management demonstrated.

#### Coordinated and integrated legal assistance (20%)

Score:

0 - Organisation has not demonstrated successful partnerships. Lacked evidence that proposal has considered existing services or relevant organisations.

1 - Organisation demonstrates partnerships with a range of organisations. Proposal has considered services and organisations in proposed service area but does not clearly show coordination or consultation to ensure complementary service provision.

2 - The organisation has effective partnerships that can/will be leveraged towards activity success. The organisation has ensured it has coordinated the proposal with any other related services/organisations operating in the proposed service area.

3 - The organisation has effective partnerships with a range of legal assistance and allied services and sectors. These partnerships can/will be leveraged towards activity success. The organisation has ensured it has coordinated the proposal with reference to any other related services/organisations operating in the proposed service area. Demonstrates coordination or consultation to ensure complementary service provision.

#### Efficient service provision (20%)

Score:

0 - Budget presented does not adequately reflect the activity proposed. Priority groups not considered. Value for money is not clear. No consideration of how activity will continue/wind down once funding ends.

1 - Realistic budget presented. Priority groups are considered but not targeted in a clear way. Value for money is not clear. No clear consideration of how activity will continue/wind down once funding ends.

2 - Realistic budget presented. Budget demonstrates value for money, e.g. by showing that collaboration with other organisations or leveraging other resources (e.g. funding, infrastructure, skills) or building off existing models for successful activity delivery. Priority groups are considered and targeted. Some consideration of how activity will continue/wind down once funding ends.

3 - As previous. Proposal includes vision for future once grant funding ceases such as plan to look to other funding sources to support activity or transition to alternative model of delivery if model cannot be funded to same level. Priority groups are considered and targeted

#### Effective service provision including a focus on outcomes (20%)

Score:

0 - Outcomes are not clearly identified. Not clear what measures will be used and/or what data will be collected. No monitoring and evaluation plan.

1 - Outputs are identified. Outcomes are identified. No clear link between outputs and outcomes. Indicators/measures are not feasible to measure.

2 - Outputs, activities and outcomes are clearly linked together and match purpose of grant. Measures and indicators for each are identified. Provision of culturally safe services is evidenced e.g. via NAS

3 - Outputs, activities and outcomes are clearly linked together and match purpose of grant. Measures and indicators for each are identified and there is a clear plan for how data is/will be collected for these and the organisation will adapt/respond depending on success measures. Provision of culturally safe services is evidenced.

#### Additional criteria

Add if required.

#### Overall score and comments

Calculate overall score and provide comments on the assessment of the proposal.

# Attachment 2: Plan and Progress Report template

Use the Word document provided: CLSP Plan and Progress Report template 1 July 2025.

# Attachment 3: Budget and Funds Report template

Use the Excel spreadsheet provided: Budget and Funds Report template 1 July 2025.

# Attachment 4: Excess Surplus Proposal template

**Centre:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Financial Year:** Click or tap here to enter text.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Funding Stream/s** | **Allowable Surplus Amount** | **Excess Surplus Amount** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Circumstances that have led to the excess surplus**

Briefly outline the circumstances that have led to the excess surplus.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Proposed use of excess surplus**

Briefly outline how the excess surplus will be used.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Costing details**

Provide a brief table with costing of the proposed use of the excess surplus.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Implications if proposal is not accepted**

Briefly explain what the implications will be if this proposal is not accepted.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Other comments**

Add other comments or information if relevant.

Click or tap here to enter text.

# Attachment 5: Auditor certification template

**AUDITOR’S CERTIFICATION**

**Name of Organisation** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Financial Year Period** Click or tap here to enter text.

I hereby certify that:

a. I am not a principal, member, shareholder, officer, employee or accountant of the Organisation or of a related body corporate as defined in section 9 of the Corporations Act 2001

b. In my opinion, the attached financial statements which comprise a Statement of Financial Position, a Statement of Comprehensive Income (previously known as a Statement of Financial Performance) and Notes to the Financial Statements of the above-mentioned Organisation (‘the Organisation’), and, if general purpose reports are provided, a Statement of Cash Flows, for the stated Financial Year Period are:

1. based on proper accounts and present a true and fair view of the Organisation’s financial position and financial performance in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and
2. in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement **[Insert Names of Parties and Date of Agreement],** a copy of which has been made available to me, in relation to the provision of community legal services.

c. The final, full year, Funds Report, containing details of the Organisations transactions for the financial year, including audit adjustments, and the Organisation’s grant position at the beginning and end of the financial year is provided in respect of funds provided in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement referred to in b.ii. above for all Funding Categories.

This is a qualified/unqualified audit report **[Delete whichever is not applicable. If the report is a qualified report, the qualified audit report must be attached.]**

Unless written under separate cover, I hereby further certify that, in my opinion, there is no conflict of interest between myself and the Organisation or its Management Committee.

**AUDITOR DETAILS**

**Full Name**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Name of Company (if applicable)**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**ABN or ACN**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Registered Auditor?** [ ] **Yes. If Yes, Registration Number:** Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ] **No**

**Signature** Click or tap here to enter text. **Date** Click or tap here to enter text.