What is the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy – Bushfire Response?

The Victorian Government has extended the eligibility criteria for the kindergarten fee subsidy during 2009 to families affected by the Victorian bushfire crisis. The extension of the fee subsidy means fire affected families now have access to 10 hours of kindergarten per week at no cost.

Eligibility

Families who have received a Department of Human Services Emergency Grant or an Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment will now be eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy – bushfire response.

How to claim

To claim the kindergarten fee subsidy – bushfire response, families will inform services that they are eligible. Parent/guardians will be asked by the service to verbally confirm that they have received either a Department of Human Services Emergency Grant or an Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment.

How is the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy – Bushfire Response claimed?

A new form (PF03A) for services to claim for children eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy - bushfire response, is available at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankindergarten/funding/datacollection.htm

Do children need to be living in a fire affected area to be able to claim the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy – Bushfire Response?

Children do not need to be residing in a bushfire affected area, or attending a bushfire affected kindergarten to be able to claim this subsidy. Many families have been displaced from their homes due to the fire, and have relocated to other parts of the state as a result of the bushfire crisis. The kindergarten fee subsidy – bushfire response is available to all eligible children, regardless of location.

What is a Department of Human Services Emergency grant?

Emergency Grants are discretionary payments, and although they are not income tested, they are based on the needs of the applicant which must be demonstrated through an assessment process. They are also intended for incidents of a particular nature.

Needs eligible for Emergency Grants include temporary accommodation, food, clothing, items necessary for health and hygiene, essential personal items, repair to structure or essential items (refrigerator, clothing, bedding etc).

What is an Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment?
The Australian Government is providing immediate, additional assistance to the people who have been adversely affected by the series of bushfires in the state of Victoria, which commenced on 29 January 2009 and may continue into March 2009.


How can I seek confirmation that families have received a Department of Human Services Emergency Grant or an Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment?
Due to the devastation of communities, the emotional toll the bushfire crisis has had on affected families and the subsequent need for provision of immediate relief, the Department of Human Services Emergency Grant and the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment are not necessarily accompanied with documentary evidence.

In most cases, it will be sufficient confirmation for families claiming eligibility to declare to staff that they have received the payment.

If you are unsure if the applicant is eligible for this payment, please contact your regional office.

What is the process if a child or family affected by the Victorian bushfire crisis are eligible under the standard eligibility for the kindergarten fee subsidy?
The fee subsidy can only be claimed once per child, per year.

If a child affected by the bushfires is eligible under the existing criteria, then the application should be made through the normal process (form PF03 - Adjustment to anticipated kindergarten funding application January-March).

If you are unsure which form to use, please contact your regional DEECD office.