



Coordinator General for Migrant Services

Dear Grant Recipients

I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment in delivering settlement-related grant programs during these challenging times.

The Department of Home Affairs continues its operations, focusing on work that must get done, protecting our borders and the community and supporting the Australian Government in its response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Paramount at this stage is the wellbeing of yourselves, your staff, your volunteers and your clients.

All grant providers should continue to heed updated Commonwealth and state and territory health advice and ensure that the delivery of your services are in line with government regulations and restrictions. The latest COVID-19 news, updates and advice from government agencies across Australia are available at www.australia.gov.au.

You deliver an 'essential' service and your business continuity plans are important. We are aware that the closures of certain venues (such as sporting facilities, community centres and schools) will have an impact. I encourage you to continue to look at alternative solutions to deliver services to ensure continued support to our vulnerable clients in the settlement sector. If you haven't already, you should consider how your organisation might retain contact with clients if face to face services are no longer able to be delivered, for example by providing alternate support such as phone or web-based and online supports.

The Department continues to work with other Commonwealth agencies to ensure a consistent, fair and equitable approach to grant recipients. We expect that no funding agreements will be terminated or grant funding withdrawn and that existing mechanisms under grant agreements will be implemented to manage issues in service delivery outcomes. I encourage you all to do the best that you can through the funding envelope that we are working within to ensure service delivery to our vulnerable clients remains at the forefront.

The Department is working with other Australian Government agencies to ensure a consistent, fair and equitable approach to supporting grant recipients during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, a decision has been taken that funding agreements are expected to continue as planned and agreed.

Existing mechanisms under grant agreements will be used to manage service delivery changes and emerging issues as a result of health warnings and government directives. I encourage you explore innovative ways to continue to deliver much needed services to vulnerable clients within your existing funding envelope and to prepare to re-establish your usual services when you have been advised that it is safe to do so.

Alison Larkins
Coordinator-General Migrant Services
Department of Home Affairs
31 March 2020