



Flexibility for the Family Support Package

DVA recognises the vulnerable circumstances that may face widowed partners with children, and families of veterans, and this initiative provides more flexible access to funding for childcare costs.

Why is this important?

The Family Support Package (FSP) commenced on 1 May 2018 and is available to:

- veterans under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) with warlike service from 1 July 2004, eligible for and undertaking rehabilitation, and their nominated family members; and
- the widowed partners of MRCA veterans with warlike service from 1 July 2004, where the veteran's death was related to service or suicide related to service.

Widowed partners and families can access a range of services and support through the Family Support Package such as childcare for those under high school age, life skills counselling, and home help (widowed partners only).

Currently, widowed partners can access:

- \$10,000 per financial year for childcare for each child under school age, and \$5,000 per year for each child of primary school age; and
- \$514.12 per week for Home Help services.

This measure addresses feedback from widowed partners on the need for more flexible arrangements for childcare funding under the FSP. This change to the Family Support Package maximises support for widowed partners by providing greater flexibility with how they use the funds available to them through the Family Support Package, by allowing them to use unspent Home Help funds on childcare costs.

This measure is an interim measure to provide some additional flexibility under the existing Family Support Package, pending the passage of legislation to introduce the Enhanced Family Support Package announced at Budget 2021-22 which is due to commence on 1 July 2022, which further improves support and flexibility for widowed partners as well as families.

Who will benefit?

Widowed partners with children and families of veterans who are eligible for the Family Support package will benefit from this additional flexibility.

Date of effect?

1 April 2022.

How much will this cost?

Nil cost.

