



## Victims Assistance Unit

### Guideline 11

#### Granting Financial Assistance for Applicants Living in Remote Communities Under Exceptional Circumstances

---

This guideline is issued pursuant to section 131 of the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009* (the Act) for Government assessors on the exercise of their powers in assessing claims for financial assistance. Nothing in this guideline supersedes or overrides the requirements of the legislation.

---

1. This guideline describes how reasonable expenses required due to an applicant living in a remote location should be determined by an assessor in a grant of financial assistance.
2. Where an applicant lives in a remote location, an assessor may consider reasonable expenses incurred to make an application for financial assistance and/or to access goods and services for recovery purposes.
3. 'Exceptional circumstances' must exist as required by sections 39, 42, 45 and 49 of the Act. An assessor may consider an applicant's special needs in determining a grant of assistance but must be satisfied that the expense will significantly help the applicant recover from the act of violence.
4. Expenses may be approved if the applicant's usual residence is:
  - a. in the Queensland Outback (as per Statistical Area Level 4), or
  - b. on an island in Queensland's territorial waters that is not connected to Queensland's mainland by road.
5. Where an applicant meets the criteria for living in a remote location, an assessor may approve a grant of financial assistance for the following expenses:
  - a. If the funeral is held in a remote location, an assessor may approve funeral expenses that are not invoiced through a traditional funeral provider including; venue hire and travel expenses for officiating persons.

- b. If the applicant lives in a remote location and does not have reliable, private access to internet, an assessor may approve reasonable travel expenses to an appropriate location to:
    - i. Prepare and/or submit a financial assistance application.
    - ii. Purchase and/or collect goods that will significantly help the victim recover where the cost of the goods has also been approved.
    - iii. Access a specialist victim service, whether paid or free, that will significantly help the victim recover that is not covered under medical or counselling categories.
  - c. If the applicant is a child (under 18) who lives in a remote location, an assessor may approve reasonable travel expenses to access education, if:
    - i. the offender, or people associated with the offender, are students or staff of the school the applicant usually attends, and
    - ii. there is no reasonable alternative school in the community the applicant lives in, and
    - iii. travel is not being covered by another government scheme.
6. Travel expenses may include, reimbursement of private vehicle travel at the kilometric rate; bus, train, ferry or airfares, hire of a vehicle (car, truck and or trailer) and up to 1 weeks accommodation if the applicant is unable to reasonably complete the return journey in 1 day.
7. If the applicant is an adult with impaired capacity or a child (under 18) – assistance may also be granted for a support person to travel with the applicant.
8. An assessor will not approve a grant of financial assistance for general living expenses such as food or other incidental expenses incurred while traveling or staying away from a usual residence.

David Mackie  
**Director-General**  
**Department of Justice and Attorney-General**