

CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND POLICY 2016



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CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND

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Introduction

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom.

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) is provided by the Victorian Government to ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the outdoors; excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works and sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are part of a healthy curriculum.

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) administers the CSEF to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

Although administratively the fund is received through the school, the full amount is intended for the benefit of the eligible student.

From 2016, the CSEF will be changed to a term one application process and payment cycle.

The changed timing of the program reflects a better alignment with school budgeting and administrative processes and will give families certainty at the beginning of the year regarding CSEF eligibility.

EXPENSES FOR WHICH THE CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUNDS SHOULD BE USED

Schools are required to use the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) payment for expenses relating to Camps, Sport and/or Excursions for the benefit of the eligible student.

Some common examples of school-organised programs for which the CSEF payment may be used include:

- School camps/trips
- Swimming and other school-organised sporting programs.
- Outdoor education programs.
- Excursions/incursions

Schools will need to communicate with eligible parents/guardians to advise how the school intends to allocate the CSEF payment for the benefit of the eligible student.

The CSEF payment cannot be used towards voluntary school charges, nor towards books, stationery, school uniforms, before/after school care, music lessons, etc.

Eligibility

This section explains the criteria used to determine a student's eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

CRITERIA 1 - ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the fund, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- a) on the first day of Term one, or;
 - b) on the first day of Term two;
- Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder, OR
 - Be a temporary foster parent, and;
 - Submit an application to the school by the due date.

Parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above

CRITERIA 2 - BE OF SCHOOL AGE AND ATTEND SCHOOL IN VICTORIA

School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and 17 years of age inclusive.

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and 18 years inclusive.

CSEF is not payable to students attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooled, or TAFE.

ELIGIBILITY DATE

CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink on the first day of either term one or two.

Term one Validation

If the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validates on the first day of term one, the application will be processed and payment will be made to the school from March onwards.

Term two Validation

If the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validates on the first day of term two, the application will be processed and payment will be made to the school during term two.

Payment

PAYMENT AMOUNTS

This section details the payment amount under the CSEF.

The amount payable for primary and secondary students is:

- \$125 for Primary school students.
- \$225 for Secondary school students.

For ungraded students attending a specialist school, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth. For more information, see: www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

PAYMENT TIMING

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school of the eligible applicants.

Schools will be able to enter application information into the online CSEF web system from term one each year.

CSEF payments will be remitted directly to schools and are expected to commence from March each year. Payments to schools will continue throughout terms one and two for additional applications added to the system.

CSEF payments are for the application year and cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

HOW THE CSEF WILL BE PAID

Schools will enter the parent/legal guardian's information from the application form into the online CSEF web system.

CSEF payments will be made directly to schools from March onwards each year.

Applications

This section explains the processes for parents or legal guardians and schools to follow when applying and administering the CSEF.

Each year the online CSEF web system will be open to receive applications from the start of term one.

Parents or legal guardians are required to submit a new application each year.

PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS

Parents or legal guardians are required to complete a CSEF application form each year and lodge it with their child's school for processing.

Parents should be encouraged to lodge an application form before the end of term one each year so that payments to schools are able to commence as early as possible, however applications are able to be accepted and processed up until the end of term two.

Application forms are available online at www.education.vic.gov.au/csef or printed copies are available at schools.

Shared custody

The CSEF system only allows one application per student. Parents in shared custody situations are encouraged to make decisions as to who applies for the CSEF. Schools should not be put into the position of arbitrating in decisions such as this.

If the parents cannot decide between themselves who should apply, they should be encouraged to resolve the dispute through the Family Court, or contact the Department's CSEF Helpdesk for more information on Ph: 1800 060 970.

SCHOOLS

Schools should ensure that applications received are entered into the CSEF web system for payment.

Schools will be able to accept and process applications into the CSEF web system until the end of term two.

Eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validating with Centrelink on the first day of term one or two. The validation will occur automatically through an interface between the CSEF system and Centrelink.

Schools should copy or sight the concession card to ensure that the parent's name and Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) matches the Centrelink database.

COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

Schools have primary responsibility for communicating the availability of the CSEF to their school community.

Schools are required to advertise the CSEF at their school and provide application forms to parents and legal guardians.

Communication materials to assist schools with advertising CSEF eligibility are available online at www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

The available information includes:

- CSEF Application form: for parents/guardians.
- CSEF A4 flyer: to assist schools with promoting the CSEF to parents/guardians.

Where appropriate, schools should utilise the translated CSEF resources and translation services to communicate eligibility requirements to non-English speaking parents/guardians.

CSEF Expenditure

Schools are accountable for ensuring the CSEF payment is allocated towards camps, sports or excursion expenses for the eligible child.

Schools will need to communicate with eligible families regarding how the school intends to use the CSEF payment to assist the eligible child.

CSEF applications are subject to audit by the Department to ensure adherence with the policy.

Acquittal

Government Schools:

At government schools, the CASES21 system allows CSEF expenditure to be allocated against eligible students' expenses.*

At government schools, when a CSEF payment is deposited into the school's high yield account, run the process to receipt the CSEF payment against the family account. The family statement has a column indicating CSEF receipts. Schools can then allocate the CSEF payment to the appropriate camps, sports and excursion costs.

For more information, see the [CASES21 Business Process Guide](#) (Section 1).

Catholic Schools:

At Catholic systemic schools the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) will advise those schools as to the appropriate accounting treatment and acquittal process.

Independent Schools:

Independent schools may have different systems in place. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that their systems can allocate CSEF expenditure against eligible students' expenses.

Students changing schools

The school that the student is enrolled and attending on the February census date (29 February 2016) is the school that should process and receive the CSEF payment.

If the student transfers to another Victorian school, the default position is that the value of any unspent portion of the CSEF should follow to the student's new school, so that the student has access to the full value of the payment*.

However, if the unspent portion is of a minimal amount, the schools may agree that the funds are not transferred as long as the new school commits to provide the student with assistance to the value of the unspent amount.

* In the government sector, a funds transfer would typically require the initiating school to create a CASES21 Family Payment and then arrange for the unspent portion to be transferred to the new school via a bank transfer or cheque payment. For more information, see the [CASES21 Business Process Guide](#) (Section 1).

Students leaving the school system

If the student leaves the Victorian school system, the CSEF payment will remain with the school and may be used towards the expenses for other family siblings, or school-incurred costs associated with operating camps, sports or excursion activities for students.

Remaining funds

Any remaining portion of the CSEF not expended by the end of the school year may be carried forward by the school towards the following year's camps, sports and excursions expenses for the eligible child.

CSEF System

The Department has developed an online web system for schools to administer the CSEF program.

ACCESS

School Administrators that held prior administration access to the ceased EMA system have been granted automatic access to the CSEF system.

Users in the CSEF School Approver role can add and delete users in the School Administrator or School Approver role at their school within the CSEF system (Administration > Maintain Role Assignments).

New school administrators are able to obtain access to the CSEF system by completing a CSEF user access form (doc - 68.5kb).

SUPPORT

School Administrators will find the design and appearance of the CSEF system deliberately similar to the ceased EMA system. The system was designed to ensure that school administrators would require minimal training to familiarise themselves with the CSEF system.

Information and CSEF processing help for school administrators can be found at: [processing CSEF applications](#).

Further questions

Are families on a Bridging Visa, Temporary Protection Visa, Community Detention and Asylum Seeker families eligible for the CSEF?

Yes. Special Consideration is given to families on a Bridging Visa, Temporary Protection Visa, Community Detention and Asylum Seeker families; therefore they are eligible for CSEF. A letter from Australian Red Cross or similar welfare institution is required as evidence.

These applications are processed as 'Special Consideration' category applications.

Are students who reside in Out of Home Care and Residential Institutions eligible for the CSEF?

Yes. Institutions such as Mackillop Family Services, Anglicare, Berry Street Victoria and other Community Service Organisations are eligible to make an application for students residing on a short term or long term basis.

Applications are processed as 'Special Consideration' category applications.

Are Kinship Carers eligible for the CSEF?

Kinship carers (providing the arrangements are formalised through DHHS) are eligible to make an application for CSEF. DHHS information and any court order documents are required to assess the application.

Applications are processed as 'Special Consideration' category applications.

Are students holding a Child Disability card eligible for the CSEF?

No. CSEF is an income-tested allowance. Therefore the parent/legal guardian must be the holder of a valid Centrelink concession card to qualify for CSEF.

A Child Disability card which is in the name of a child cannot be used to apply for the CSEF as these card types are not income-tested by Centrelink in accordance with the *State Concessions Act 2004*.

For students 16 years or older, a Youth Allowance Health Care Card or a Disability Pension Card may be issued by Centrelink in the name of the student. Can the parent/legal guardian claim the CSEF with this card?

Yes. If the student that is 16 or older is either the holder of a valid concession card (e.g a Youth Allowance Health Care Card) in their own name or the parent/legal guardian has a valid concession card, then a CSEF payment can be made.

Depending on Centrelink's policies, a student who has turned 16 typically either:

- Remains as a dependent child on the parent/legal guardian's Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card. In this situation, the CSEF application should be entered on the web system under the parent/legal guardian's name and CRN with all students in the family (including the 16 year old) added to the parent/legal guardian's application; or
- In some circumstances a student who has turned 16 may be issued with a Health Care Card/Pensioner Card in their own name (e.g for Youth Allowance). In this situation the application should be entered on the web system as a 'Special Consideration' category application in the name of the parent/legal guardian and attach a scan of the student's card in the document section. The DET Family Payments Unit will approve these applications; however the CSEF payment will only be for the student that holds the card (not for siblings).

What options exist when a family has already paid for camps, sports or excursion costs in 2016?

Given the timing of the CSEF payments to schools in term one, it is recognised that some families may have already paid up-front for camps, sports or excursion expenses in 2016. In this scenario, the following options exist for schools to allocate the payment towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student:

Allocate the payment towards remaining camps, sports and/or excursion expenses that are incurred by the eligible student during the remainder of 2016.

Carryover remaining CSEF funds at the end of the year over to 2017 – to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses incurred by the eligible student in 2017.

The school also has the option to allocate the CSEF money towards camps, sport or excursion expenses already paid by the family, thus creating a family credit*. On agreement with the family, the credit can then be applied to other expenses for the student. The school will need to be able to demonstrate via the family account statement that the CSEF payment was utilised towards camps, sports & excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

* **Government Schools:** to process this type of credit the following CASES21 steps must be completed one after the other to ensure the BAS, family account and various other reports are correct.

Ensure that the parent has actually paid for an excursion/camp/sports activity earlier in the year.

Create a family invoice in DF31006 or DF31001 using the original Fee Code you intend to allocate the CSEF funds to, and for the amount you wish to allocate.

Go to Manually allocate CSEF Receipts and allocate the CSEF funds to the new invoice that you just created.

Create a Family Credit Note – DF31021 for the same amount as in step 1, using the same Fee Code. Apart from the amount do not change any other details.

This credit note will stay on the family account until the family advises the school what they want this to be allocated to.

NOTE: For any additional assistance or variation to this scenario please log a call with the DET Service Desk.

Contact Details

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians should contact their child's school in the first instance. Information for parents is also available on the CSEF website www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

Schools

Schools can email csef@edumail.vic.gov.au or phone the Department's CSEF Helpdesk on Phone: 1800 060 970 for policy advice.

CSEF system support for schools is provided by the DET Service Desk: Ph: 1800 641 943.