



## PACT's Guide to completing a Financial Assistance Application (FAA)



This guide has three parts:

Part 1 – What is an FAA and who administers it? (Pages 2-3)

Part 2 – Step by step guide to completing an FAA (P 4-8)

Part 3 – A checklist prior to submission (P 9-10)

## PART 1 - What is an FAA and who administers it?

**F**inancial Assistance Applications are an important step in the healing and recovery for victims, witnesses and family members. This financial assistance scheme is operated by Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ). VAQ is an agency of the Qld Department of Justice and Attorney General. VAQ assists victims of crime by providing financial assistance to aid in their recovery from crime and by referring victims to other services.

**Please note:** PACT does not manage, assess, or have any part in the outcome of your application. Our role is to support victims by helping them understand the process and how to complete the application forms.

### ? Who is eligible for financial assistance?

VAQ has 4 main eligibility criteria to be able to apply for financial assistance:

1. That an act of violence\* has occurred  
\*defined as a crime committed by a person, against a person, causing injury
2. That the act of violence occurred in Queensland
3. That an injury was sustained. The injury can be:
  - Physical
  - Psychological/emotional
  - An adverse effect (a side effect resulting from the act of violence), and/or
  - Aggravation of a pre-existing injury
4. That the act of violence was reported

### ? What crimes are covered by this scheme?

- Child abuse (physical or sexual)
- Domestic and family violence
- Sexual violence (such as rape or sexual assault)
- Physical assault (such as being choked, hit, kicked, cut, burned, poisoned or restrained)
- Being threatened with a weapon or with force
- Stalking, kidnapping or deprivation of liberty
- Dangerous driving causing grievous bodily harm
- Attempted murder
- Murder, manslaughter or dangerous driving causing death

Crimes not listed above (i.e. accidents/driving offences/property crimes) are not covered.



## ? How much financial assistance can I expect to receive?

There are two types of financial payments available:

1. If you are a primary victim, or a related victim, you may receive a **one-off lump sum special assistance recognition payment**.

A primary victim is the person who is directly injured by the act of violence; most usually the direct victim of the crime, the person who has been assaulted or harmed. If the injured person is under the age of 18, the form is completed in their name but signed by a legal guardian. A related victim is a close family member of a person who was killed by an act of violence.

At the end of this guide is a table outlining the maximum amounts you can receive in relation to special assistance payments.

2. If you have incurred an expense to help you recover, VAQ may be able to reimburse you. So the amount you receive **depends on your recovery costs**.

## ? Will the outcome of my application be based on my income, or means tested?

No – VAQ will only assess the application based on the information provided to them on the form.

## ? Do I have to be a permanent resident or Australian citizen to make a claim?

No – the applicant can live anywhere in the world but the crime has to have occurred in Queensland and must meet the other eligibility criteria.

## ? How long does it take to process my application?

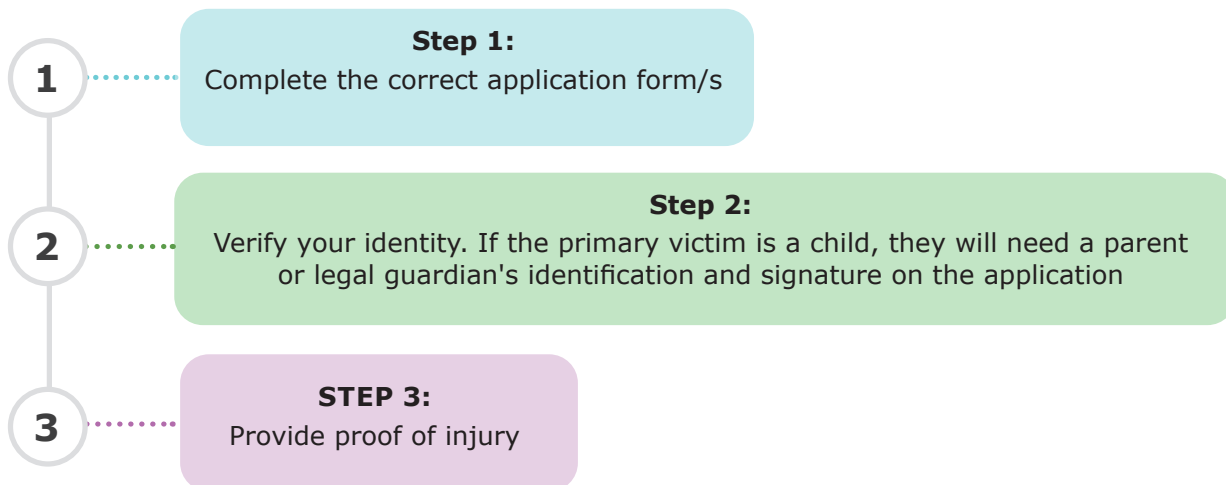
There are often long wait times to assess financial assistance applications. It can take months, to more than a year to receive notice of the outcome. To prevent delays, we encourage you to apply as soon as possible. It is important that you have your application filled out correctly and that you supply all the relevant documents as requested.







## PART 2 - Step by step guide to completing a FAA



### Step 1 – Complete the correct application form/s

There are several different application forms depending on the type of victim you are:

1. **A primary victim** — this is the person who is directly injured by the act of violence. Most usually the direct victim of the crime, the person who has been assaulted or harmed. If the injured person is under the age of 18 the form is completed in their name but signed by a legal guardian.  
<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/applying-for-financial-assistance-victims-of-crime/resource/af12eaa0-a116-4e5f-a073-038706f7632c>
2. **A related victim** — this is a close family member of a person who was killed by an act of violence.  
<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/applying-for-financial-assistance-victims-of-crime/resource/68e8e883-9acb-4507-8583-0ea9a6aed452>
3. **A parent secondary victim** — this is a parent of a child victim (who would be the primary victim). The child must have been under 18 at the time of the act of violence.  
<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/applying-for-financial-assistance-victims-of-crime/resource/d81a4437-08bb-4b3e-b9e3-37078604f81d>
4. **A witness** — a person who directly saw or heard an act of violence being committed against someone else.  
<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/applying-for-financial-assistance-victims-of-crime/resource/2af38100-cb02-4f3b-8a35-c62f9e360b42>

Other forms can be located here: <https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/applying-for-financial-assistance-victims-of-crime>

If you cannot download the form/s please discuss options with your volunteer. It is important that you complete the correct form or there may be delays in your application.



Each form is slightly different but these are the main sections you will need to consider:

### **Victim/parent/related person's details**

These are the **personal details** of the person concerned. Please take note of VAQ's safety warning: Safety Alert – VAQ usually sends information in a Queensland government envelope with a Department of Justice and Attorney-General return address. If this is a problem for you, please advise how you would like to receive information.

### **Application assistance**

This section is where you put in the details of **any person who has helped you complete the form** and if you would like them to be contacted about your application.

### **What happened?**

This is the **information about the crime**. Remember this does not need to be detailed. VAQ will contact the police for information and confirmation of the details. This section can be a short description detailing what happened. It can also include the sentencing result if there is one.

If you don't know exact dates, times and locations, it's OK to have **approximate information**. Remember, VAQ will confirm all information with the police.

### **Reporting the violence**

Has it been **reported** or not? These sections are about who you reported the crime to. The crime needs to be reported to the police or in certain circumstance, a doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, counsellor or domestic and family violence worker, for you to be eligible to apply.

This section will ask for your **QP number**, which is the number you are given when you report a crime to the police. If you don't know it, you can contact the Arresting Officer (AO), the police station where your crime was reported, or your Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) and ask them to provide it to you.

### **Do you know the name of the person who harmed you?**

If you know the name of the person who is responsible for the injury you suffered, you write it here. If not, leave it blank.

### **Payments from other sources**

When completing an application you must outline all other agencies whom you have applied for or received financial assistance from (i.e. Centrelink).

### **Banking details**

Your bank account details will enable VAQ to directly deposit any monies straight into your bank account. You can also nominate for payment to be made via cheque.

### **? Can I claim if I was injured in a car accident during the crime?**

Yes. However, VAQ encourages you to apply to the Motor Accident Insurance Commission QLD (MAIC), which is part of your compulsory Third Party Insurance, first. Once you have received your claim number, VAQ will assess your FAA.



## Out of pocket expenses

You must be able to show the evidence of expenses that have resulted in the injuries you sustained. They must be related to the crime and your recovery from it. The different expenses are listed below with links to more detail about each.

### ? How many details do I need when explaining why I am claiming an expense?

You must provide information that shows the expense is linked to the crime, or if relevant, it is helping in your recovery from the crime.

### ? What do I do if I don't have proof or receipts for the items I have claimed?

You can still include these on your application but you may not be paid for these until you can get proof. Talk to VAQ or your assessor and discuss what they will need from you.

Medical expenses – [Medical expense claims | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

Counselling – [Counselling expense claims | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

Damage to clothing – [Damage to clothing claims | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

Loss of earnings – [Loss of earnings claims | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

Legal expenses are only related to where a lawyer has assisted with completing the form.

### ? Can I claim sick leave that I used?

No. Sick leave, domestic violence leave and super contributions cannot be claimed.

Exceptional circumstances – [Claim other recovery expenses | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

### ? What if my claim is urgent and I have immediate expenses?

You can claim anything on your application as an urgent or immediate expense BUT you must go into detail to explain why it is urgent or the reason you need the claim to be assessed immediately.

**Please note:** VAQ do not provide crisis payments, so urgent and immediate expenses can still take weeks to months to be assessed and paid if successful. If you need financial assistance in a crisis or emergency situation you will need to apply to another agency.

### ? What if I'm not sure I want to make a claim yet?

Save any receipts or quotes you receive that are related to your recovery from the crime. There are timeframes that guide when you have to submit your claim so it can be considered. Please make sure you are aware of these timeframes so you do not miss the opportunity.



### **Parent or legal guardian details**

If the applicant is under 18 or has a legal guardian appointed then this section needs to be completed with their details.

### **Extension of time**

You will need to make your application within 3 years of the violence ceasing. If it has been more than 3 years then you will need to use this section to explain the delay in applying.

### **Submitting the application and Statement**

The forms have instructions on how to submit the application. You will need to read the statement and sign your application before submitting.

## **? Can I sign the form if I am under 18?**

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No, in most cases\*, if you are under the age of 18 a parent or legal guardian must sign the form. The form can be completed in your name, though a parent or guardian's details are required on page 6. (Check on form)

\*If you are 17 and self-placed or independent please call VAQ and discuss your application

## **? When do I get the money?**

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Once your application is assessed you will receive a “Notice of Decision” letter outlining the decision.

If the decision is that you will receive financial assistance, it will be transferred into the account you nominated on your application form. If you nominated to receive the funds in a cheque, this will be sent to you and in some instances VAQ will directly pay a service provider, for example if you are receiving counselling then VAQ may pay the counsellor directly.

If the victim is under the age of 18, the expenses will be paid out to the person responsible for paying the expense immediately but the lump sum recognition payment will be held in trust until they turn 18. Once they turn 18, the Public Trustee of Queensland will reach out to them and make arrangements to release the money. It is important that you keep the contact details updated so when the child is 18 they can be contacted.

For more information visit:

[https://www.qld.gov.au/law/crime-and-police/victims-and-witnesses-of-crime/financial-assistance/applying/child#Payment\\_processes\\_-\\_lump\\_sums](https://www.qld.gov.au/law/crime-and-police/victims-and-witnesses-of-crime/financial-assistance/applying/child#Payment_processes_-_lump_sums)



## Step 2 – Verify your identity

VAQ requires proof of your identity before they will begin processing your application. You will need to provide a copy of an accepted form of identification.

You may submit either one document from list A, or two from list B:

| List A (submit <u>one</u> of the following):   | OR | List B (submit <u>two</u> of the following):  |
|--|----|---|
| Australian Birth Certificate (full) or overseas equivalent   |    | Australian Exam Report (persons under 16 years of age only)   |
| Australian Citizenship Certificate or Naturalisation Certificate   |    | Australian Record of Achievement (persons under 16 years of age only)   |
| Australian Driver's License with Photo ID (current or expired less than 2 years) or overseas equivalent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a copy of the front and back of the license</li> </ul> |    | Australian Secondary School Exam Certificate (persons under 16 years of age only)   |
| Australian firearms license: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a copy of the original (first) license and the current license</li> </ul>  |    | Australian Medicare Card  |
| Australian or foreign passport (current or expired less than two years): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a copy of the page with your photo on it</li> </ul>                                    |    | A marriage certificate issued by a Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages   |
| Commonwealth or state public service ID card with photo and signature (current, not expired)   |    | Bank account card (EFTPOS card) or credit card with signature and embossed name, a bank passbook, or bank statement   |
| <a href="#">Queensland photo identification card</a> (formerly called Proof of Age card) or interstate/overseas equivalent   |    | Centrelink or Department of Veterans Affairs Card   |
| Record of immigration status (certificate of evidence of resident status)  |    | Change of Name Certificate  |
| Travel documents and current Australian Visa   |    | Council rates notices   |
|  |    | Letter from employer (current or within last 2 years) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a reference, payslip, leave advice or a letter that has your name on it</li> </ul> |
|  |    | Security guard/crowd control license (Australian Issued)  |
|  |    | Tertiary ID card (less than one year old and issued by an Australian university only)   |

### Please note:

These documents can be scanned or photocopied. Please do not send VAQ original documents.

If you are the parent of a child victim, you are required to submit **your identification documents** not your child's.

If you do not have the necessary forms of identification please contact VAQ and discuss your situation.





### Step 3 – Provide proof of injury

There must be proof of your injury for VAQ to assess the application. Your treating health practitioner must provide you with a medical certificate, report or letter, confirming your injuries, that the injuries are a result of the crime, and outlining your recovery.

Alternatively, VAQ provides a 'Victim Assist Medical Certificate' that you can take to your treating health practitioner to complete. There are three parts to this form, but only one of these parts need to be completed to highlight your injury and recovery plan. More info:

<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/applying-for-financial-assistance-victims-of-crime/resource/d2582fa1-e155-492c-82b2-4b06c67eaea2>

This can often be a difficult part as you may not be seeing the same doctor or you may not have seen anyone when the injury occurred. You may also be able to include a discharge letter from the hospital. The link below lists your options for providing evidence of injury.

[Providing information about your injuries | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

## PART 3 - A checklist before submitting your FAA

- ☐ Do you meet the criteria to apply for financial assistance through VAQ?
- ☐ Have you included the QP number, or details of who you reported the crime to on your application?
- ☐ Have you completed one financial assistance application form per victim?
- ☐ Have you completed every page? (If a question is unknown or irrelevant then you can leave that section blank. You can write N/A or cross it out).
- ☐ Have you read, signed and dated the final page?
- ☐ If attaching photos of forms or documents, is each page clear and all words readable?
- ☐ Have you attached the required supporting information for expense claims? (This includes copies of your receipts, quotes or other evidence of expenses).
- ☐ Have you attached clear, readable photocopies, scanned copies or photographs of your Identification (no original documents)?
- ☐ Have you attached proof of injury or the VAQ medical certificate?



Once you have completed your application you can submit it to VAQ either by email or post (if posting, make sure you list a return address on the envelope):

**Email:** [VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Post:** Victim Assist Queensland

GPO Box 149

BRISBANE QLD 4001

### ? **Can a single victim have more than one claim?**

Where there are two offenders and a common occasion(s) then a single claim should be made. If there are two offenders and two or more separate occasions of assault/injury then multiple claims are valid to be submitted.

### ? **What happens if I left something off the form?**


The assessor from VAQ will contact you if any more information is required.

### ? **Can I update my application at a later date?**

Yes. If you need to amend or add anything to your application at a later date, you can contact VAQ. Please have your application number ready when you contact them you will be asked to confirm your identity.

If you need to change your bank account details or add further expenses to your claim you will need to contact VAQ directly. Email them on [VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 546 587.

You can go into your application and check the status online. You will need your application number and your date of birth to do this.



**V**ictims in Queensland have certain rights, which include the way a victim should be treated, as far as appropriate, by Queensland Government agencies and non-government organisations. These are outlined in the Charter of Victims' Rights which you can read on the [qld.gov.au](http://qld.gov.au) website.