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1. Introduction

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

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund 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 Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund 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.

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.
2. 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:

- on the first day of Term two, or;
- on the first day of Term three;
  
  a) 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
  
  b) Be a temporary foster parent, and;
  
  c) 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 two or three.

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 from the commencement of term three.

Term three Validation

If the parent/legal guardian’s concession card successfully validates on the first day of term three, the application will be processed and payment will be made to the school during term three.
3. 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, the rate payable is determined by the student’s date of birth. For more information, see: [www.education.vic.gov.au/csef](http://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 two each year. CSEF payments will be remitted directly to schools and are expected to commence from term three each year. 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 the commencement of term three each year.
4. 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 two.

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.

Application forms should be completed and lodged with schools before the end of term two each year as payments are made each year during term three.

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 during term two are entered into the CSEF web system for payment commencing term three.

Schools will be able to accept and process applications into the CSEF web system until the end of term three. Final payments will be made by the end of term three.

Eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian’s concession card successfully validating with Centrelink on the first day of term two or three. The validation will occur automatically through an automated 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.
5. 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.

**Acquittal**

**Government Schools:**
At government schools, the CASES21 system will be modified to allow 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 CSEF 0007 (formerly EMA 003) 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).

Note* - the CASES21 system changes will be implemented prior to the first CSEF payments in July 2015.

**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 CSEF eligibility date 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.
6. CSEF System

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

Access
School Administrators that have held prior administration access to the ceased EMA system will be granted automatic access to the CSEF system.
New school administrators are able to access to the CSEF system by completing a CSEF user access form. More detail is available in the CSEF system user guide.

Support
School Administrators that were familiar with the ceased EMA system will find the design and appearance of the CSEF system deliberately similar. The system was designed to ensure that school administrators would require minimal training to familiarise themselves with the CSEF system.
A CSEF user guide has been developed for school administrators and can be downloaded from [www.education.vic.gov.au/csef](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/csef)
7. 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 in the CSEF system.

Are students who reside in Out of Home Care and Residential Institutions eligible for the CSEF?
Yes. Institutions such as Mackillop Family Services, Gordon Homes 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 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 is the holder of a Youth Allowance type card in their own name which is valid on the CSEF eligibility date, the parent is eligible to apply for the CSEF.
8. 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 will be provided by the DET Service Desk:
Phone: 1800 641 943.