

Flexible Fund NEW Advocacy Support Fund

About the Advocacy Support Fund.

What is the fund?

Women's Aid Federation of England has been awarded an Advocacy Support fund by the Home Office, designed to help services deliver support to survivors of domestic abuse. The funding is intended to provide services with the financial means to provide additional advocacy to survivors during September and October 2024.

The Ministry of Justice and the Home Office are providing 310k each to answer to the sector's calls for advocacy support demand, and to enable victims to access such services, which emphasises the government's wider commitment to protecting victims from violence and domestic abuse.

From the 16th September 2024, services who are providing advocacy to survivor/s can apply for funding to enable the service to provide this support.

Why is the fund needed?

This funding provided by the Home Office and Ministry of Justice is in recognition of the increased need for advocacy support from specialist domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) services, due to recent pressures on services.

What do you mean by 'advocacy'?

By advocacy, we mean delivering support which involves the provision of advice, information and support to survivors living in the community, based on an assessment of risk and its management.

Is the fund means-tested?

No, the fund is based on individual survivor need.

Who is eligible for the Advocacy Fund?

Any participating service providing support to a survivor is eligible. The service cannot make use of other funding sources to cover this support.

We recognise that services are the experts in survivor need and no further evidence – other than agreement of the eligibility criteria being met – is required to demonstrate that the work is not funded through existing delivery grants. However, Women's Aid may choose to carry out occasional due diligence conversations on the use of the Fund by services to ensure appropriate due diligence on the spending of public funds.

Who is an eligible survivor?

All survivors of Domestic Abuse who have experienced who require advocacy support are eligible for this funding, including men and children over 16 years old providing that without this funding they would not receive this support. Victims affected by stalking and other forms of post-separation abuse are also eligible.

How long does this funding run for?

The Advocacy Fund of £620,000 will be allocated over September and October 2024.

About applications

Can applications be made for children?

In order to be eligible for the fund, a survivor must be aged 16 or over. However, families can access the service, with parent or guardian applying on behalf of the child.

Can survivors with No Recourse Public Funds access the fund?

Yes, however, the fund cannot be used for legal fees. Please be aware if it is used for legal fees, it may impact the survivor's status and other government arrangements.

How much can a service apply for?

Funds contribute to costs for advocacy support:

- £100 claim for advice/advocacy for up to 3 hours to assist in quick problem-solving support.
- £300 claim for 3 weeks of 2 hours per week or 6 weeks of 1 hour per week.
- £500 claim for 3 weeks of 2 hours per week or 6 weeks of 1 hour per week where the service is a 'by and for' service.
- £650 claim for 6 weeks of 2 hours per week or 12 weeks of 1 hour per week.
- £850 claim for 6 weeks of 2 hours per week or 12 weeks of 1 hour per week where the service is a 'by and for' service.
- £1,000 claim for 6 weeks of 4 hours per week or 12 weeks of 2 hours per week where the survivor has particular needs or vulnerabilities, including specialist 'by and for' support
- £1,200 claim for 6 weeks of 4 hours per week or 12 weeks of 2 hours per week, where the survivor has particular needs or vulnerabilities and where the service is a 'by and for' service. "Particular needs and vulnerabilities" include but are not limited to disability, individual access requirements, interpreters, specialist support needs, survivors with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and migrant survivors
- It has been recognised in the allocations for funding that survivors accessing support from led by and for Black and minoritised organisations have multiple intersecting needs which require additional support from services. As a result, led by and for Black and minoritised organisations are able to access a higher rate of reimbursement.

In line with other Flexible Fund streams, it is noted that services are the experts in survivor need and no further evidence – other than agreement of the eligibility criteria being met – is required to demonstrate that the work is not funded through existing delivery grants. However, Women’s Aid may choose to carry out occasional due diligence conversations on the use of the Fund by services.

When can applications be submitted?

The Advocacy Support Fund will be open for applications 10am-3pm Mondays only.

What will the application process be?

The service will complete the online application per survivor and submit this to Women’s Aid. The application form should take approximately five minutes to complete and will collect some data to enable the monitoring of this new fund.

Can I make an application to the Advocacy Support Fund on behalf of a survivor who is already receiving either the Flee or Future Fund?

Yes. The only condition of this fund is that advocacy support for this survivor would not be possible if it were not for this funding.

Who can apply for Advocacy Funding?

Member organisations of Women’s Aid /Imkaan / Welsh Women’s Aid and organisations listed on Routes to Support directory and named delivery partners can all apply. A full list is available on our website. All eligible organisations will receive the application form links prior to 16th September.

How long does it take to approve an application?

We aim to approve applications within two working days although there may be occasions where we need to contact you for further information.

What is the cap for each organisation and does it apply to the whole organisation or different services within it?

The cap will vary depending on the organisation and will recognise the following:

- That the size/income of service is not always an indicator of number of survivors supported by a service.
- The reach of our specialist delivery partners in the communities/demographics they cover
- The size and geographical spread of the organisation

- That smaller and by and for Black and Minoritised services may be small in income size but have higher numbers of survivors/survivors with multiple barriers to support

Please contact our Flexible Fund Management Team by emailing emergencyfund@womensaid.org.uk if you have not received your cap by 12th September.

Will all services be guaranteed their application for the Advocacy Fund?

There is no guaranteed allocation for any organisation as funding is limited. It will be at each service's discretion to decide whether to provide additional advocacy support before new funding has been allocated via this scheme.

About payments and invoicing

Do services have to provide the advocacy service before claiming the money back or after?

No, the service should identify the amount of advocacy support needed by an individual survivor and make the claim based on this assessment at the start of the application process.

When will we receive the money?

Payments to be paid to services in arrears following approval of an application. Payments will be made fortnightly in line with other FF stream payments.