

## Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

**The Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters across Australia in which we share. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to the children who are leaders of tomorrow. We recognise and accept it is the oldest continuous living culture in the world and that their sovereignty has never been ceded.**

We recognise and honour the remarkable strength, resilience and courage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors affected by violent crimes, and the privilege bestowed upon the FAS staff to ensure that considerations will be made that are inclusive and culturally safe to assist towards their recovery and healing. We also recognise those who have lost their lives to violent crime, and the impact on their family and community.

The FAS is committed to delivering an Aboriginal Support Pathway that can lead transformational change and enable cultural safety approaches to be strengthened within its processes and policies. By doing so this will increase the cultural connectedness and responsiveness outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are victims of violent crimes.

We view cultural safety as a continuum of engagement and response with cultural awareness being the first step in the learning process (which involves understanding difference), cultural sensitivity being a next step (where self-exploration occurs), cultural competence, and cultural safety being the final outcome of this process.

We are committed to providing a responsive and respectful service that reflects cultural diversity, the rich and unique history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the impacts of transgenerational trauma on social and emotional wellbeing.

We commit to providing engagement working with community to understand their local context by collaborating and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Taking time to listen and understand experiences, preferences, and perspectives by supporting staff to participate in community engagement and consultation to strengthen the FAS service delivery and support to applicants.

### **Our Principles**

#### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Self Determination**

The FAS upholds the principle of self-determination as essential for improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, facilitating an ongoing process of choice and empowerment to meet their needs effectively.

#### **Social and Restorative Justice**

The FAS will engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and their affected communities by providing solutions that promote repair, reconcile, and rebuild relationships affected by violent crime ensuring individual preferences are respected and cultural safety is promoted.

#### **Equity**

The FAS will be fair and impartial by providing quality service and engagement to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by responding with cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, cultural competence, and cultural safety in all aspects of decision making and engagement.

## **Transparency**

The FAS will ensure honesty, openness and sincerity in the quality of its service delivery ensuring that FAS systems have transparent data practices that support community engagement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## **Accountability**

The FAS accepts responsibility for the actions of staff, completion of work, meeting performance expectations and teams working together productively and efficiently to provide a service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## **Reciprocity**

The FAS believes in mutual exchange of information by creating community partnerships and individual connections to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with victim of crime applications while promoting cultural safety.

## **Cultural Contextuality**

The FAS is committed to embedding cultural safety within the work environment and to ensure that all FAS staff acquire the skills and knowledge essential for the successful and systematic implementation of cultural safety principles and practice. All FAS staff will engage in all relevant cultural safety training to support Culturally Safe Practice.

- **The FAS will have direct influence over its** staff, system, service, and applicant experience. We will strive to ensure external services and systems remove barriers to enable seamless support.
- **The FAS will drive and embed culture of understanding, respect, and recognition** so that applicants who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are not further disadvantaged in their interactions with FAS.
- **The FAS commits to removing systemic barriers** that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants from accessing the range of services that they are entitled to receive.
- **The FAS commits to delivering services** that respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by removing access and service process barriers.
- **The FAS will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants with a positive experience** ensuring rights are upheld, choices are respected and access to other services is seamless.