

Cardinia Shire Council

**Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program Guidelines**

Prepared by:

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# Purpose

To develop and provide consistent, fair and equitable financial assistance through an annual Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program which will contribute to enabling Aboriginal and CALD individuals to join and participate at Cardinia sporting clubs.

# Definitions

**Aboriginal -** A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he [or she] lives.

Reference – Australian Government, Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)** - CALD is the current term used to describe the many cultures and languages that are part of Australian life. The terms ‘Culturally and Linguistically Diverse’ (CALD) and ‘Non-English Speaking Background’ (NESB) are both commonly used in the research, practice, and policy discourse to refer to all of Australia’s non-Aboriginal ethnic groups other than the English-speaking Anglo-Saxon majority. Aboriginal Australians are generally excluded from CALD and NESB because their experiences and needs as first-nation people are seen as significantly different from other groups.

*Reference – Cardinia Shire Council Cultural Diversity Plan 2015-19*

**Sporting Clubs –** Not for profit incorporated sporting bodies which provide sports competition and participation programs in alignment with local or state associations. For the purpose of this program, these sporting clubs must exist within the Cardinia Shire Council.

**Sports Assistance** – A contribution of monetary value towards membership.

**Membership –** A formal agreement between an individual and sporting club to enable participation. Membership fees (financial) within a sporting club are set by the committee. Membership fees cover the cost to join the club and relevant insurances required.

**Application** – Formal process by the individual to receive financial assistance to join a Cardinia sporting club, administered by Cardinia Shire Council.

# Objectives

The goal of these guidelines is to provide standards in the administration of the Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program to ensure it is fair and equitable. The guidelines aim to:

* Provide a financial contribution and determine eligibility of Aboriginal / CALD community members to join Cardinia sporting clubs;
* Provide a consistent approach to the administration of the program;
* Assist in supporting Cardinia sporting clubs to be inclusive; and
* Utilise financial contributions to enable community engagement and participation in sport.

# Background

Sport plays an important role in our communities by promoting social inclusion and community wellbeing. We are aware, through evidence based research, that financial affordability is one of the key barriers to participation for Aboriginal / CALD individuals wishing to join sporting clubs. This has also been identified by sporting clubs in attracting diverse communities to join their club.

Enabling participation through financial assistance aligns with Council’s Liveability Plan in assisting in improved individual mental health and wellbeing, improved social cohesion and assisting in reducing obesity through physical activity participation. Individuals who are currently not accessing sport or have barriers in continuing to participate in sport will have the opportunity to apply through this program.

To date there are no such specific CALD sports assistance programs within Cardinia or other Local Governments, however most states, excluding Victoria, provide a sporting voucher programs to all primary and secondary aged youth regardless of socioeconomic, gender or ethnicity factors.

These guidelines have been developed by benchmarking existing similar programs as well as consultation with Council’s Cultural Diversity Facilitator and Centre for Multicultural Youth.

# Guidelines

## Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program

To develop and provide consistent, fair and equitable financial assistance through an annual Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program which will contribute to enabling Aboriginal and CALD individuals to join and participate at Cardinia sporting clubs.

Sports Assistance

Sporting clubs charge varying membership fees and this is determined by the individual club itself. These membership fees also include the relevant insurances and affiliation fees required by the state body of the sport.

The sports assistance through this program is to assist affordability and provide a contribution and not to cover the entire cost of the individual participant’s membership fees. A contribution of 50% of the sporting club membership fee up to a maximum of $250 annually per individual participant will be applied to the cost of membership at a Cardinia sporting club. Applicants will be able to apply for the amount of assistance they require.

It is a requirement of the individual participant to financially cover the remainder of the membership fees required by the sporting club.

The individual participant will not directly receive any money. It will be a requirement for the sporting club to invoice Council’s Active Communities department once receiving the individual participant’s approval form from Council.

## Application

In order to receive the sports assistance, an individual participant application form is required to be submitted to Cardinia Shire Council’s Active Communities department. This application form is available both electronically and in hard copy format. Assistance can be provided where required to complete the application form.

### Eligible Sporting Clubs and Responsibilities

Cardinia sporting clubs are required to be approved by Council’s Active Communities department to be a participation club of choice as part of the Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program. This is to ensure that the clubs involved have welcoming and inclusive practices. These clubs are advertised to prospective participants.

Eligible sporting clubs will;

* Be based in Cardinia Shire Council
* Be incorporated as not for profit as per the Incorporations Act
* Be affiliated with the local or State Sporting Association of their sport
* Sign an agreement with Cardinia Shire Council to be a part of the program
* Submit documented membership fees to Cardinia Shire Council annually
* Attend sports club inclusion training prior to involvement in the program

Whereby an individual participant wishes to join a club which is not a participation club of choice under the program, Council Officers will contact the club and seek to involve them in the program. The club must meet the eligibility requirements above prior to the individual participant joining the club.

Sporting clubs who are part of the program receive inclusion training free of charge and promotion through the program as being a club of choice.

It is the sporting clubs responsibility to invoice Council for the individual participant’s membership assistance (50% of membership fee up to $250 per participant) once in receipt of the individual participants approval form from Council. Sporting clubs must not charge the individual the full membership amount and then reimburse the individual.

### Individual participant eligibility

Individual’s eligible to apply for the Sports Assistance Program must;

* Be between the ages of 5 – 18 years
* Be from an Aboriginal or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background
* Primary place of residence in Cardinia Shire Council
* Are not currently participating in a sporting club or have financial barriers to ongoing participation in sport
* Identify an eligible sporting club for participation within the Cardinia Shire Council
* Fill out and submit an application form provided by Cardinia Shire Council within the allocated application open periods
* Have a secondary signature from a teacher, community leader or social worker supporting the individual applicant’s need for financial assistance through the program
* Applications are required to have a parent or carer signature

All applications are assessed for eligibility through an administration and assessment process and therefore it does not automatically mean the sports assistance is applied.

### Assessment

Once an individual participant application is received by the Active Communities department, each application is date stamped.

Applications are assessed in a timely manner and based on the individual participant eligibility until funding allocation is exhausted.

Application forms are accessible all year round with open application periods to coincide with both summer and winter season sports participation.

Those participation sports that operate 12 months of the year, the individual participant will determine which application period is suitable.

Individual participants will receive notification of the outcome of their application within 2 weeks of the closing period and will be provided with an approval form.

The approval form is to be submitted by the individual to the eligible sporting club upon joining and pay any difference in membership fees. (Minus the approved Sports Assistance contribution from Cardinia Shire Council)

Administration

The Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program is administered by the Council’s Active Communities Department including;

* Promotion of the Aboriginal and CALD Sports Assistance Program
* Application eligibility and processing
* Sporting club eligibility and communication
* Financial controls including invoices and budgeting
* Delivery of inclusion training to Cardinia sporting clubs