



NSW Department of  
Community Services

# **Costing Manual for Child and Family Services in New South Wales**

**2008/09**

## **SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Service System Development Division

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## 1 Introduction

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) services assist people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless through a range of support and supported accommodation services. The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services in order to help people to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence<sup>1</sup>. SAAP services provide support to a range of client groups including homeless families, singles, young people, and women and children experiencing domestic violence.

The diverse nature of client need is reflected in the range of services SAAP agencies provide for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Support may involve the provision of supported accommodation and/or a range of support services such as case management, referral, brokerage, counseling and advocacy.

This chapter sets out direct worker unit costs and unit costs per client for the following:

- SAAP casework for non-accommodated clients
  - early intervention services
  - post crisis support services
- SAAP accommodation including casework
  - intensive intervention crisis accommodation services
  - standard intervention accommodation services

The sample of services included in the costing analysis comprised a range of women's domestic violence services, youth services, and men's services of varying size, and from both metropolitan and regional areas. The indicative unit costs presented are based on average input parameters such as salary levels, operating costs and caseloads.

Costs for a direct worker have been calculated by 'loading' indirect and other associated costs onto the direct worker cost. The unit costs for service delivery vary depending on each client's service and support needs. For the purposes of unit costing various placement and service types, the average support needs for each client category determine service unit costs. An annualised cost per placement or per client has been used in the calculation.

The unit costs are based on the total cost to deliver a service, irrespective of funding sources. A service may receive funding from many different sources such as free accommodation from Housing NSW. For this reason DoCS generally funds only part of the total cost. Variations in input cost levels, workforce profile and service intensity will impact on indicative unit costs.

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<sup>1</sup> *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*

## 2 Indicative SAAP direct worker costs

Indicative SAAP direct worker costs consist of labour and non-labour costs associated with casework activity. Unit costs have been calculated by loading labour and non-labour costs to direct worker costs based on associated usage. These costs include loadings for labour costs of indirect support staff (eg. supervisors, senior management, administrative staff, etc) and all non-labour costs (e.g. agency overheads and client costs, including brokerage) associated with the defined workforce profile.

This manual has identified a range of indicative levels of SAAP direct worker unit costs based on acceptable cost variations within the sector. All cost estimates and parameter values are based on the data collected from SAAP agencies. Table 1 provides 2008/09 estimates of the indicative loaded SAAP direct worker unit costs.

**Table 1 Indicative SAAP direct worker unit costs**

<b>Caseworker/Direct Worker - Unit Cost per FTE</b>	<b>Low Range</b>	<b>High Range</b>	<b>Indicative Cost</b>
<b>Labour Costs (per FTE)</b>			
Caseworker Base Salary	\$42,080	\$51,440	\$46,760
On-call Allowances & Shift Loadings	\$6,420	\$7,840	\$7,130
Direct Supervisor Allocation	\$5,120	\$6,260	\$5,690
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$6,680	\$8,160	\$7,420
Salary Oncosts (inc casuals)	\$14,590	\$17,830	\$16,211
<b>A. Total Labour costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$74,890</b>	<b>\$91,530</b>	<b>\$83,210</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$13,100</b>	<b>\$16,020</b>	<b>\$15,270</b>
<b>Total Loaded Cost per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$87,990</b>	<b>\$107,550</b>	<b>\$98,480</b>
Labour Cost Factor			<b>84%</b>
Non-Labour Cost Factor			<b>16%</b>
Total Available Hours			<b>1,626</b>
% of time - non client related			<b>20%</b>
Service Hours Available			<b>1,301</b>
<b>Cost Per Direct Client Hour</b>	<b>\$68</b>	<b>\$83</b>	<b>\$76</b>

### 2.1 Key assumptions for calculating indicative SAAP direct worker unit costs

The total cost per direct worker is calculated for a year, and is the “loaded cost” of the direct worker, comprising worker, supervisor and administrative support labour costs, other operating costs such as telecommunications and training, and overheads. The cost per service hour is estimated by dividing the total loaded cost per worker by the number of service hours available for working with clients. Tables 2 and 3 present the main parameters used to derive the SAAP direct worker indicative unit cost.

**Table 2 Key Labour Parameters**

Labour Parameters	Low range	High range	Indicative level
Direct Worker Base Salary (per FTE)	\$42,080	\$51,440	\$46,760
Supervisor Base Salary (per FTE)	\$53,910	\$65,890	\$59,900
Admin Support Base Salary (per FTE)	\$51,070	\$62,410	\$56,740
Direct Worker Hours per Week	35		
Annual Training Days	5		
Supervisor to Direct Worker Ratio	1:11		
Admin to Direct Work Ratio	1:8		

**Table 3 Salary On-costs**

Salary Oncosts	% of Base Salary
Superannuation	9.00%
Workers Compensation	3.77%
Long Service Leave	1.70%
Leave Loading	1.35%
FBT	0.04%
Casual Staff Loading	8.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.2%</b>

### **3 Support Services**

#### **3.1 Homelessness Prevention and Community Awareness**

(a) Service description - Provide support and counselling to SAAP clients.

##### Basic support

- Recreation
- Meals
- Laundry / shower facilities
- Transport

##### Personal support

- Incest / sexual assault support
- Domestic / family violence support
- Family / relationship support
- Emotional support
- Assistance with problem gambling

##### Financial / employment

- Assistance to obtain / maintain government allowance
- Employment and training assistance
- Financial assistance / material aid
- Financial counselling and support

##### General support / advocacy

- Living skills / personal development
- Assistance with legal issues / court support
- Advice / information
- Advocacy / liaison on behalf of client

(b) Parameters:

- Average staff time per client: 20 minutes

(c) Indicative Unit Costs: Table 4 provides the 2008/09 estimates of the indicative costs per client for homeless prevention and community awareness.

**Table 4 Unit costs per client: Homeless prevention and community awareness**

<b>Homelessness Prevention and Community Awareness</b>	<b>Indicative Cost</b>
Caseworker Base Salary	\$46,760
On-call Allowances & Shift Loadings	\$0
Direct Supervisor Allocation	\$5,690
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$7,420
Salary Oncosts (inc casuals)	\$16,211
<b>A. Total Labour Costs</b>	<b>\$76,081</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$15,270</b>
<b>Direct Worker Unit Cost per FTE</b>	<b>\$91,351</b>
Service Hours per Direct FTE	1,301
Direct Worker Cost per Hour	\$70
Average Staff Time per Client (Minutes)	20
<b>Unit Cost per Client</b>	<b>\$23</b>

### 3.2 Case Management

(a) Service description - Case management is provided to SAAP clients receiving support to encourage them to become more independent and self-reliant. Service components include screening, assessment, case planning, direct service monitoring and review, exit planning and case closure. Other casework activities include:

- client case review meetings and client group activities
- providing support work and living skills
- referring and transporting clients to specialist services
- court support, tenancy support and other outreach
- attending joint case management meetings with other agencies
- advocating for the client e.g. housing or legal matters

For the purposes of costing casework activity to non-accommodated clients, clients are defined as either:

- Early Intervention – clients at risk of needing to use SAAP accommodation.
- Post Crisis – clients receive support when required to sustain independent living.

(b) Parameters:

- standard Staff: Client Ratio for Early Intervention and Post Crisis clients: 1:20
- average length of service per client: 8 weeks for early intervention and 6 weeks for post crisis.

(c) Indicative Unit Costs: Tables 5 and 6 provides the 2008/09 estimates of the indicative costs per client per annum for early intervention and post crisis services.

**Table 5 Case management for early intervention: Unit costs per client per annum**

<b>Case Management - Early Intervention</b>	<b>Indicative Cost</b>
Direct Staff Salary	\$46,760
On-call Allowances and Shift Loading	\$0
Supervisory Allocation	\$4,080
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$6,479
Salary Oncost Allocation	\$13,649
<b>A. Total Labour costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$70,967</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE (inc Client Related Costs)</b>	<b>\$19,732</b>
<b>Total Loaded Cost per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$90,700</b>
Average Caseload per FTE	20
Annualised Unit Cost per Client	\$4,535
Average Length of Service per Client	8 weeks
<b>Unit Cost per Client</b>	<b>\$698</b>

**Table 6 Case management for post crisis: Unit costs per client per annum**

<b>Case Management - Post Crisis</b>	<b>Indicative Cost</b>
Direct Staff Salary	\$46,760
On-call Allowances and Shift Loading	\$0
Supervisory Allocation	\$7,323
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$7,344
Salary Oncost Allocation	\$14,684
<b>A. Total Labour costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$76,111</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE (inc Client Related Costs)</b>	<b>\$23,891</b>
<b>Total Loaded Cost per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$100,002</b>
Average Caseload per FTE	20
Annualised Unit Cost per Client	\$5,000
Average Length of Service per Client	6 weeks
<b>Unit Cost per Client</b>	<b>\$577</b>

## 4 Supported Accommodation Services

### 4.1 Supported Semi-Independent Accommodation

(a) Service description: SAAP provides

- Includes services that provide non 24/7 supported accommodation (including private and leaseholds rented by the SAAP services and accommodation purchased through brokerage).
- Clients live independently within the SAAP accommodation and the SAAP office is located off-site (i.e in a different location to the accommodation).

(b) Average caseloads:

- Youth: 1:15
- Single adult: 1:15
- Family unit: 1:10

(c) Indicative cost per client - Table 7 provides 2008/09 estimates of the indicative cost per client for semi-independent accommodation and includes all costs associated with both casework and accommodation.

**Table 7 Indicative Unit Costs: Semi Independent Accommodation**

Supported Semi-Independent Accommodation	Youth	Single Adult	Family Unit
Direct Staff Salary	\$51,875	\$51,875	\$45,349
On-call Allowances and Shift Loading	\$2,366	\$2,366	\$947
Supervisory Allocation	\$12,641	\$12,641	\$3,789
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$8,085	\$8,085	\$11,195
Salary Oncost Allocation	\$18,139	\$18,139	\$14,827
<b>A. Total Labour costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$93,106</b>	<b>\$93,106</b>	<b>\$76,107</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE (inc Client Related Costs)</b>	<b>\$144,006</b>	<b>\$144,006</b>	<b>\$159,470</b>
<b>Total Loaded Cost per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$237,112</b>	<b>\$237,112</b>	<b>\$235,577</b>
Average Caseload per FTE	15	15	10
Annualised Unit Cost per Bed/Family Unit	\$15,807	\$15,807	\$23,558
<b>Unit Cost per Bed/Family Unit Night</b>	<b>\$43</b>	<b>\$43</b>	<b>\$65</b>

### 4.2 Supported Crisis On-Call / Transitional Accommodation

(a) Service description:

- Supported Transitional: Includes services that provide non 24/7 supported accommodation (including private and leaseholds rented by the SAAP services and accommodation purchased through brokerage). Clients live independently within the SAAP accommodation and the SAAP office is located on-site (i.e in the accommodation) to increase the support.
- Supported Crisis 24-7 on-call: Includes services that provide 24/7 on-call support and accommodation. Clients live independently within the SAAP accommodation.

(b) Average caseloads:

- Youth: 1:2
- Single adult: 1: 5
- Family unit: 1:2

(c) Indicative cost per client - Table 8 provides 2008/09 estimates of the indicative cost per client for crisis on-call / transitional accommodation and includes all costs associated with both casework and accommodation.

**Table 8 Indicative Unit Costs: Supported Crisis On-Call / Transitional Accommodation**

<b>Supported Crisis (24hr, on-call) &amp; Supported Transitional Accommodation</b>	<b>Youth</b>	<b>Single Adult</b>	<b>Family Unit</b>
Direct Staff Salary	\$49,318	\$44,320	\$48,940
On-call Allowances and Shift Loading	\$16,617	\$12,381	\$12,381
Supervisory Allocation	\$636	\$4,579	\$4,579
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$0	\$7,997	\$7,997
Salary Oncost Allocation	\$16,108	\$16,762	\$17,880
<b>A. Total Labour costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$82,679</b>	<b>\$86,039</b>	<b>\$91,777</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE (inc Client Related Costs)</b>	<b>\$36,549</b>	<b>\$85,042</b>	<b>\$53,348</b>
<b>Total Loaded Cost per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$119,228</b>	<b>\$171,081</b>	<b>\$145,125</b>
Average Caseload per FTE	2	5	2
Annualised Unit Cost per Bed/Family Unit	\$59,614	\$34,216	\$72,562
<b>Unit Cost per Bed/Family Unit Night</b>	<b>\$163</b>	<b>\$94</b>	<b>\$199</b>

#### 4.3 Supported Crisis On-Site Accommodation

(a) Service description:

- Includes services that provide 24/7 on-site support and accommodation. SAAP support workers are based at the residence where clients live.

(b) Average caseloads:

- Youth: 1:1.6
- Single adult: 1: 4
- Family unit: 1:1.3

(c) Indicative cost per client - Table 9 provides 2008/09 estimates of the indicative cost per client for crisis on-site accommodation and includes all costs associated with both casework and accommodation.

**Table 9 Indicative Unit Costs: Supported Crisis On-Site**

<b>Supported Crisis (24hr, on-site) Accommodation</b>	<b>Youth</b>	<b>Single Adult</b>	<b>Family Unit</b>
Direct Staff Salary	\$44,410	\$45,694	\$46,545
On-call Allowances and Shift Loading	\$9,584	\$9,584	\$9,584
Supervisory Allocation	\$7,083	\$7,083	\$7,852
Admin and Other Indirect Support Allocation	\$8,863	\$8,863	\$6,931
Salary Oncost Allocation	\$16,923	\$17,233	\$17,158
<b>A. Total Labour costs per FTE</b>	<b>\$86,863</b>	<b>\$88,457</b>	<b>\$88,070</b>
<b>B. Total Non-Labour Costs per FTE (inc Client Related Costs)</b>	<b>\$31,754</b>	<b>\$73,886</b>	<b>\$43,235</b>
<b>Total Loaded Cost per FTE (A+B)</b>	<b>\$118,617</b>	<b>\$162,342</b>	<b>\$131,305</b>
Average Caseload per FTE	1.6	4.0	1.3
Annualised Unit Cost per Bed/Family Unit	\$75,124	\$40,586	\$99,250
<b>Unit Cost per Bed/Family Unit Night</b>	<b>\$206</b>	<b>\$111</b>	<b>\$272</b>

## 5 SAAP Costing Tools

This section provides links to the Excel based SAAP costing model tools and job aids developed as a part of the Costing Manual Project and includes details on the type of data needed and potential data sources. The job aids outline a detailed set of instructions on using costing model tools including illustrative examples on the type of data required, information sources, cost elements, model assumptions, and handy tips to help populate the Excel costing templates.

While the indicative costings provided above reflect the data obtained from a range of organisations, it will be important for individual services to develop their own cost estimates using the tools and job aids provided to gain a better understanding of costs and cost drivers. This would also enable cost comparisons with the range of costs provided in the manual and provide opportunities for benchmarking.

The basic user requirements for the Excel data input templates for NGO and DoCS staff include:

- a basic understanding of Excel
- a basic understanding of costs and costing principles
- a good understanding of the organisation's structure and cost centres

Data can be acquired from various sources within the finance, management and service delivery areas of organisations to define indicative unit costs for key service types. Finance staff can assist in providing data related to general ledgers and the actual costs associated with operations. Additionally, management and service delivery staff can help provide information related to workforce profiles, service time availability and service intensity (e.g. caseload).

**Table 10 Data requirements for the SAAP costing model**

Data requirements	Cost inputs
1. General ledgers and chart of accounts based on indicative annual data including transaction history reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ labour costs e.g. salaries and salary on-costs of direct and indirect client support staff</li> <li>▪ direct operating costs including non-labour costs e.g. motor vehicle, IT/computer, telecommunications, stationery / postage / printing, staff training, depreciation and equipment maintenance and other related organisation specific operating costs</li> </ul>
2. NGO workforce utilisation & client profile related data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ staff mix, staffing levels, average salary per levels, salary on-costs, caseload support levels, service time availability, training allocations</li> <li>▪ caseload volume per direct worker</li> <li>▪ volumes of clients managed per year by service type</li> <li>▪ intensity of service/cost usage (e.g. motor vehicle usage)</li> </ul>
3. Accommodation assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ average client occupancy per night</li> <li>▪ accommodation facility operating costs</li> </ul>

**Table 11 Other data sources for the SAAP costing model**

Other data sources	Cost inputs
1. NGO organisation profile	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. organisation design &amp; organisational charts</li> <li>2. annual reports</li> </ol>
2. Other miscellaneous reports related to client needs and service delivery requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. indicative direct client costs (by placement type and/or client needs)</li> </ol>