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| Small cemetery operations grants program guidelines |
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# Introduction

The small cemetery operations grants program was established to provide funding to cemetery trusts with limited sources of income as a contribution to the cost of cemetery maintenance and cemetery trust operations. Grants of a fixed amount set by the department are available to Class B cemetery trusts that meet the eligibility criteria. **For 2024-25, the grant amount per trust is capped at $500.**

The *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* requires Class A cemetery trusts to pay an annual levy to the Victorian Government. The small cemetery operations grants are funded by this levy.

Cemetery trusts should note that small cemetery operations grants may not be available every year and should **not** be relied on to complete ongoing maintenance or fund ongoing contracts.

# Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to receive a small cemetery operations grant, the cemetery trust must meet the following criteria:

1. **No more than $5,000 in financial assets** (in bank accounts, investment accounts, petty cash and perpetual maintenance accounts) as reported in the abstract of accounts of the previous financial year.
2. **No more than five interments** (bodily and cremated remains) reported in the abstract of accounts of the previous financial year.
3. Possess a current **ABN**.
4. All **previous grants from the department have been expended**.
5. All **abstracts of accounts** submitted.
6. Cemetery trusts managing operational cemeteries **are required to have reviewed their fees in the last two years**.

**Please note:** Trust members cannot be paid to carry out any part of the proposed works. Class B cemetery trust member roles are voluntary and are not eligible for remuneration for their services to the cemetery trust.

# Suitable small cemetery operations grant requests

Examples of suitable small cemetery operations grant requests include:

* purchase of maintenance supplies (for example, petrol, weed-killer, paint, mulch)
* purchase of equipment costing up to the fixed grant amount (for example, gardening tools, filing cabinet)
* repairs to equipment or replacement parts
* routine groundskeeping (for example, engaging a contractor to mow lawns)
* volunteer working bee expenses (for example, refreshments for volunteers)
* ongoing software licencing or subscription fees
* membership fees for industry bodies or publications
* installation and ongoing costs of internet connection and usage.

# Ineligible grant requests

Grant money will **not** be provided for salary and wages of employees or the repair and restoration of memorials. Trust members cannot be paid to provide services, carry out works or receive honorarium payments.

In addition, grant money cannot be provided to reimburse cemetery trusts that have expended funds in anticipation of a grant. Commencement of work or the purchase of items must not take place until the cemetery trust has received the approved amount of funding from the department.

Cemetery trusts seeking funding to establish or repair infrastructure or new burial areas, remove or lop trees, purchase equipment such as a lawnmower, grave cover or computer should apply for a grant through the department’s larger grants program for Class A and Class B cemetery trusts, the [Cemetery grants program](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/cemetery-grants-program) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/cemetery-grants-program>.

# Application process

To apply for a grant, a cemetery trust must submit a completed small cemetery operations grants program application form by **31 October 2024** and before the expenditure or work commences.

The cemetery trust will be contacted if additional information is required, although this is likely to delay the application. To avoid such delays please read the information requirements carefully. Unsuccessful applications can be resubmitted in the next round of grants with updated information.

Grant applications are processed once each financial year. Written notification of the outcome of all applications will be provided in January. Grants received must be spent in accordance with the information provided in the application.

# Payment and funding conditions

Approved grant funds will be deposited into a nominated cemetery trust bank account.

Any grant money transferred to a cemetery trust must appear in the following year’s abstract of accounts against ‘Department of Health grants’. Cemetery trusts must fully account for the grant allocation by advising the department in writing when the grant is spent and provide copies of invoices/receipts.

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