

Dear VITA Member,

Conditional Extension to VITA Professional Indemnity Insurance Cut-off Date for L1 and L2 Advocates

VITA has previously advised members that those TIP trained Level 1 and 2 advocates who have not transitioned to ATDP cannot be provided with Professional Indemnity (PI) insurance cover beyond 30 June this year (2019). This is because VITA cannot be certain that these advocates have kept up with legislative and/or operational changes because, with TIP's cessation, refresher training has not been available. Refresher training (or Continuing Professional Development) is an obligation on all VITA insured TIP-trained (or ATDP accredited) advocates and an expectation of our insurer.

However, there are some TIP trained Level 1 and 2 advocates who are going to transition to ATDP and who are enrolled but have still to complete their Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process; or who have agreed to be nominated by their ESO to do so. VITA has arranged for these advocates to continue to be insured because their RPL assessments will ensure they demonstrate current knowledge of legislative and operational changes since their last refresher training under TIP and the relevant level of competency.

To ensure that only those genuinely seeking ATDP accreditation and who are undertaking the requisite RPL processes, VITA will only continue to insure L1 and L2 advocates who have been nominated by their ESO by 30 June 2019 to undertake RPL training. Those so nominated will have until 30 June 2020 to achieve their qualification, beyond which VITA cannot offer insurance cover without an ATDP qualification.

To access the extension of PI cover for TIP Trained Level 1 & 2 advocates yet to transition to the ATDP, ESOs must nominate the individual advocate and that advocate must fully enrol in the ATDP On-Line Management System such that they are ready to accept an RPL offer. Please be aware that should an advocate be subject to litigation, the advocate will need to authorise the ATDP to release details of their enrolment date to VITA before we can provide cover.

If a TIP trained Level 1 or 2 advocate fails to enrol for RPL before 30 June 2019 they will NOT have VITA cover until such time as they are issued with a Statement of Attainment.

To meet the requirements for continuation of VITA's professional indemnity insurance, the authorising ESO will need to nominate each TIP-trained Level 1 or 2 advocate seeking accreditation by RPL through ATDP's on-line nomination tool (not by email or phone), and the trainee advocate must correctly complete their enrolment form before 30 June 2019. The on-line nomination tool for the ESO to use can be accessed at www.atdp.org.au/enrolments/nomination/nomination.php If assistance is required by ESOs or advocates they can contact an ATDP Program Support Officer whose contact details can be found at www.atdp.org.au/contact/contactForm.php.

In summary:

1. VITA cannot provide insurance cover beyond 30 June 2019 for Level 1 and 2 TIP trained advocates who are not transitioning to ATDP.
2. VITA will provide insurance cover for Level 1 and 2 TIP trained advocates who are either:
 - a. currently in the process of obtaining their ATDP accreditation through the RPL process, or
 - b. nominated by their ESO to transition to an ATDP qualification and be fully enrolled in the On-Line Management System, both before 30 June 2019.
3. Advocates in either a. or b. categories of item 2. above will not be insured beyond 30 June 2020 unless they have completed their RPL process and have been awarded their 10620NAT Certificate of Competency.

VITA believes that this extension of cover for those genuinely wishing to convert to the ATDP meets the needs of our constituency (clients, advocates, their ESOs and ATDP) without compromising our insurable risk profile. We encourage all eligible advocates to take advantage of this cover continuation, to the benefit of advocacy clients everywhere.

For all VITA member ESOs, this extra time also allows them to consider what future arrangements they may wish to put in place regarding transitioning TIP trained volunteers, that do not RPL, into advocacy support roles (which do not require professional indemnity insurance) and to develop strategies to attract suitable candidates to fill advocacy roles that they expect to need in the future.

Yours aye,

Dennis Mitchell

President

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