

Child Safety POLICY

Title: Child Related Costs

Policy No: 645-1

Policy Statement:

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (Child Safety) is committed to supporting children and young people achieve outcomes that support their safety, belonging and wellbeing. Child Related Costs (CRC) will be used to pay for goods and services that support desired outcomes for children and young people subject to statutory intervention.

CRC are paid in addition to other carer payments. Where possible, Child Safety staff will ensure other types of financial supports have been explored in a timely manner, and the most appropriate supports are in place, before using CRC.

The safe care and connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with family, community, culture and country will be a key consideration when undertaking intervention with parental agreement with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Child Safety is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. Under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, Child Safety has an obligation to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights.

Principles:

- The safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child or young person, both through childhood and for the rest of the child or young person's life, are paramount.
- Child Safety staff will act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.
- The five elements of the child placement principle (prevention, partnership, placement, participation and connection) under the *Child Protection Act 1999* (the Act), section 5C, apply to all processes, decisions and actions taken for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person.
- CRC will assist staff and carers meet the needs of children and young people in a way that is compatible with the Charter of Rights for Children in Care and the Statement of Standards as set out in the Act.
- Children and young people have the right to be placed in a care environment that best meets their needs.
- Carers have the right to receive support that will contribute to a safe and caring environment in which the needs of children and young people will be met.

Objectives:

This policy aims to ensure consistency in the administration of CRC across the state when discussing, requesting and deciding when to use CRC.

CRC can be used to purchase a range of goods or services that children, young people and their carers need. Procedures are in place to support particular considerations and use of the correct CRC Account Codes. This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant CRC procedures:

- CRC procedure – Health and Wellbeing Support (645.1)
- CRC procedure – Education and Child Care Support (645.2)
- CRC procedure – Travel Support (645.3)
- CRC procedure – Child and Young Person Support (645.4)
- CRC procedure – Carer Support (645.5).

Scope:

This policy refers to the level of financial assistance available to support children, young people and carers.

Eligible financial support

There is no set amount of CRC for each child or young person. Every child or young person's care arrangement and needs will be different and change over time.

Before using CRC, Child Safety will ensure all other types of financial supports have been explored, for example other government allowances and benefits that may be available within the community. By ensuring the most appropriate financial support is used we will ensure funding that is put aside for children and young people subject to intervention with Child Safety reaches those who need it.

A guide to what financial support is available to carers and children and young people in care is located on the [Connecting with Carers Webpage](#).

When considering other types of financial support that may be used:

- CRC funding is in addition to the fortnightly caring allowance that is intended to meet day-to-day caring expenses for children and young people in care. It is also in addition to agreed costs under the High Support Needs Allowance (HSNA) and Complex Support Needs Allowance (CSNA).
- CRC are in addition to financial support provided by other payments and schemes, for example, costs paid by Medicare or the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Residential care services are funded to meet all direct care costs for the young people to a level consistent with that detailed in the Child Safety policy Complex support needs allowance.

In general, residential care services are not expected to access additional contingency-based funds held by Child Safety outside the funding arrangement. Where there is an emergent and acute level of need or essential activity required by the case plan for a young person that is not funded under the arrangement, additional funds may be provided at the discretion of Child Safety on a negotiated basis.

Some types of financial support that may be available to children and young people should not be used instead of CRC. These are typically lump sum payments or allowances paid to children and young people because of their care experience. They include:

- Victims of Crime Assistance or redress payments received by a child or young person
- Australian Government lump sum payments for young people with a care experience (such as, the Transition to Independence Living Allowance (TILA)).

CRC are normally used for one-off purchases to meet the needs of children and young people and support a child or young person's care arrangement. Where the child or young person resides in family based care and:

- CRC are regular and ongoing, consideration is to be given to utilising the HSNA or CSNA to support the carer to meet the costs quickly and efficiently
- is already supported by the CSNA and additional unplanned CRC are regular or significant, consideration is to be given to utilising *Placement Support Funding* (IPS).

Eligible intervention

CRC can be accessed for all children and young people subject to statutory intervention including all Child Protection Orders and the interventions listed below.

Investigation and Assessment

CRC may be used to fund support when a child or young person is subject to an investigation and assessment. The purpose of this support will be to address a child or young person's assessed need.

Support service cases for children aged 0 to 18 years

CRC may be used to fund support when a child or young person, or pregnant women is subject to a support service case, where the additional support is required to reduce the likelihood of future harm to the child or young person, including the unborn child. The purpose of this support will be to address a critical need identified in the support plan.

Adoption care agreement under the Adoption Act 2009

CRC may be used to fund support for a child or young person subject to an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent.

Support Service cases for young people over 18 years

CRC may be used to fund support for a young person after their eighteenth birthday, if the young person has previously been subject to either:

- a child protection order granting custody or guardianship to the chief executive
- a child protection order, where an approved carer was subsequently granted the long-term guardianship of the child.

Intervention with parental agreement or supervision order

CRC may be used to fund support when a child or young person is subject to intervention with parental agreement or a supervision order and additional support is required for the child or young person to remain safely at home, or to return home following a child protection care agreement. The purpose of the support will be to address:

- a need identified in the Child Strengths and Needs Assessment
- a need identified in the Parental Strengths and Needs Assessment
- the identified goals and outcomes of the child or young person's case plan.

Support a care arrangement under the Child Protection Act 1999

CRC may be used to fund support when a child or young person is placed into a care arrangement under the Act (regardless of guardianship status or care arrangement) to meet the needs of the child or young person.

Support may be provided to help the child or young person's safe return to the care of the parents, support the stability of the care arrangement or meet the needs of the child or young person while in care. Financial support can be utilised to address a need identified in the:

- Child Strengths and Needs Assessment
- Parental Strengths and Needs Assessment
- Case Plan
- Care Agreement
- Placement Agreement
- Transition to Adulthood Plan
- Child Health Passport
- Cultural Support Plan
- Support Service Plan
- Education Support Plan.

For children and young people residing at home, including the home of their long term guardian or permanent carer, CRC will always enhance their safety and wellbeing and minimise the need for more intrusive child protection intervention.

For children and young people residing with permanent guardians under the Act, CRC are provided only in exceptional circumstances if the child has emerging special needs or the guardian requires assistance to establish and maintain a care environment for the child or young person to meet the child or young person's ongoing needs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Anyone involved in the care planning process can request CRC to meet the needs of a child or young person subject to intervention with Child Safety.

That request should be made to the child or young person's Child Safety Officer.

Depending upon the request and cost involved the Child Safety Officer and/or Business Officers may need to request the Manager or Regional Director approval before providing a response. The level of approval required is in line with Child Safety's financial delegations.

Authority:

Adoptions Act 2009

Child Protection Act 1999

Financial Accountability Act 2009

Delegations:

The use of CRC will be in accordance with departmental financial delegations and standards.

Records File No.:

Date of approval: 4 February 2020

Date of operation: 4 February 2020

Date to be reviewed: 4 February 2023

Office: Child and Family Operations

Help Contact: Operational Support

Links:

Procedures

Child Related Costs – Health and Wellbeing Support (645.1)

Child Related Costs – Education and Child Care Support (645.2)

Child Related Costs – Travel Support (645.3)

Child Related Costs – Child and Young Person Support (645.4)

Child Related Costs – Carer Support (645.5)

Child Safety Practice Manual

Related Policies and Procedures

Complex support needs allowance (612) (policy)

Complex support needs allowance (612) (procedure)

Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and interstate foster payments (365) (policy)

Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and interstate foster payments (365) (procedure)

High support needs allowance (296) (policy)

High support needs allowance (296) (procedure)

Related Legislation

Child Protection Regulation 2000

Human Rights Act 2019

Related Guidelines

Financial Support for Foster and Kinship Carers: Quick reference guide – Who Pays?

Connecting with Carers Webpage - <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/information-for-carers>

Forms

CRC Approval Form

Michael Hogan

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