

Child Safety POLICY

Title: Kinship care

Policy No: CPD632-2

Policy Statement:

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (the department) recognises that kinship care is a unique placement type within an integrated system of out-of-home care placement and support options. The department is committed to its legislative responsibility to preserve children's family connections and promote their wellbeing by identifying suitable kinship care options, when out-of-home care is required.

When a child is subject to statutory child protection intervention and requires an out-of-home care placement, the department is required under the *Child Protection Act 1999* (the Act), section 5(f)(iii) to give proper consideration to placing the child, as a first option, with kin. The Act includes specific provisions for placing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with family and community in accordance with the Child Placement Principle (section 83(4)(a)). In addition, the Act requires that if a child is not able to be safely reunified with a parent, the court must not grant long-term guardianship of a child to the chief executive if the court can grant guardianship to another suitable person (section 59(7)(b)).

Principles:

- A child has the right to be placed with their siblings, to the extent that is possible.
- A child has the right to participate in decision-making about their placement, including the most appropriate kinship carer, and be provided with information needed to allow them to participate.
- The views of the child, birth parents and prospective kinship carers should be acknowledged and considered when making placement decisions.
- A child has the right to know their family and culture and to stay connected with their family, community, culture and spirituality.
- Recognised Entities must be given an opportunity to participate in decision-making processes about the placement of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.
- The assessment of kinship carers should be conducted in a manner that engages holistically with the child's family and focuses on enabling and supporting the carer to meet the child's needs, whilst ensuring that the child's wellbeing remains central.
- Approved kinship carers have the right to receive resources, information and ongoing support in order to meet the Statement of Standards.

Definitions:

Schedule 3 of the Act defines kin as 'any of the child's relatives who are persons of significance to the child, and anyone else who is a person of significance to the child'. An approved kinship carer is a person related to the child or a member of a child's community and considered by the child to be family or of significance to them, who is approved by the department to provide an out-of-home care placement for the child.

For an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child, a kinship carer may include another Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander who is a member of, or compatible with, the child's community or language group.

Objectives:

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Proper consideration is given to placing the child, as a first option, with kin, by ensuring all reasonable efforts are made by the department, or a service provider on the department's behalf, to adequately identify potential kinship carers for the child.
- Kinship assessments acknowledge the child's pre-existing relationship with the kinship carer and are collaborative, supportive and partnership based, while being thorough and having the child's safety and wellbeing as the paramount consideration.
- The kinship carer's strengths, potential stressors and support needs are identified to enable the provision of active assistance and encouragement to enhance placement stability.
- Kinship carers are provided information and actively supported to provide a positive, stable care environment for children requiring out-of-home care that meets the Statement of Standards for the standards of care.

Scope:

This policy relates to kinship carers and to children subject to statutory intervention who require an out-of-home placement under a care agreement, or who are subject to an assessment order or an order granting custody or guardianship of the child to the chief executive under the Act, including a temporary custody order or transition order.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The department may place a child in the care of an approved kinship carer subject to section 82(1)(a) of the Act or with a provisionally approved carer under section 82(1)(e) of the Act.

The department is required to ensure that placement decisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are consistent with the Child Placement Principle.

The department is responsible for giving Recognised Entities an opportunity to participate in decision-making processes about the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The Child Safety Service Centre manager is responsible for deciding an application for approval as a kinship carer and for granting provisional approval as a carer when necessary.

The duty executive officer is responsible for decisions in relation to a person's suitability to become a provisionally approved carer outside business hours.

The team leader, Child Safety Service Centre manager, or Child Safety After Hours Service Centre leader or manager is responsible for approving the decision to place the child with an approved kinship carer or provisionally approved carer.

Where a kinship carer is affiliated with a non-government foster and kinship care service, the service is responsible for the assessment, training (if required) and support of the carer in accordance with departmental regulation of care processes and the organisation's service agreement and care service licensing requirements.

The procedures that give effect to this policy are outlined in the Child Safety Practice Manual.

Authority:

Child Protection Act 1999, sections 4, 5B(h), 6, 7, 74, 82(1)(a) and (e), 83, 83A, 122, 133.

Child Protection Regulation 2011, section 23.

Delegations:

Director-General

Deputy Director-General, Strategic Policy and Programs

Regional Executive Director

Regional Director, Child Safety

Manager, Child Safety Service Centre

Manager, Child Safety After Hours Service Centre

Team Leader, Child Safety Service Centre

Team Leader, Child Safety After Hours Service Centre

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Date to be reviewed: 24 July 2016

Office: Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
Help Contact: Child Protection Development

Links:

Links:

Procedures

Child Safety Practice Manual, chapter 5 and 8

Related policies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (609)

Carer debt – procedure (financial procedure)

Carer learning and support (457)

Carer participation (460)

Complex Support Needs Allowance (612)

Current Assets – Accounts Receivable Management – Carer Debtors

Dual payment of carer allowances (289)

Expenses – Fortnightly Caring Allowance and interstate foster payments (365)

Foster care training (383)

High support needs allowance (296)

Participation by children and young people in decision-making (369)

Payment of Accounts (FSE013.2)

Permanency Planning (594)

Placement of children in care as part of an integrated child protection response (578)

Regional/Remote Loading for carers (379)

Responding to concerns about the standards of care (326)

Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities (610)

Related legislation or standard

Child Protection Act 1999

Child Protection Regulation 2011

Statement of Commitment between the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and the, foster and kinship carers of Queensland

Rescinded policy

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Margaret Allison

Director-General