

# Child Safety

## PROCEDURE

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**Title:** Child Related Costs – Child and Young Person Support

**Procedure No:** 645.4-2

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### Purpose

This procedure guides the use of Child Related Costs (CRC) to fund supports for children and young people in care or who have had a care experience, which includes children and young people subject to statutory intervention with Child Safety or support service cases.

This procedure is to be used in line with the Child Related Costs Policy (CRC Policy) – 645.

### Scope

CRC Child and Young Person Support provides financial support to children and young people in care or who have had a care experience.

The following categories are part of the CRC Child and Young Person Support procedure and show the associated General Ledger (G/L) Account Code:

- Birth Certificates (G/L Account Code: 530417)
- Furniture and Equipment (G/L Account Code: 530408)
- Children and Young People Supports (G/L Account Code: 530438)/ Gift cards (Account code: 530426)
- Recreation (G/L Account Code: 530430)
- Youth Support Payment (G/L Account Code: 530437)
- Transition to adulthood (G/L Account Code: 530441)
- Funeral Arrangements (G/L Account Code: 530425)
- Independent Social Assessment (G/L Account Code: 530435)
- Family connection Support (G/L Account Code: 530423)

### Process

Upon a CRC request being received by the Child Safety Officer (CSO), the CSO is to refer to the CRC Policy – 645 and the corresponding procedure to determine if the request meets the guidelines for CRC.

Once the CSO has determined that the guidelines are met, the CSO can progress the request for approval. To progress approval the CSO will consult with their Business Officer and relevant financial delegate for the request.

Business Officers in each Child Safety Service Centre (CSSC) are authorised to manage and pay requests up to and in accordance with their delegated authority.

The carer, child, young person or parent will be required to provide receipts for all reimbursement requests.

For requests for payment/reimbursement of \$100 or under, a CRC form is not required. Consultation between the Business Officer, CSO and Senior Team Leader is required to determine the outcome of the request. If the request is supported, the Business Officer will approve the request and process the reimbursement.

For requests for payments/reimbursements over \$100 a completed CRC form is required. Consultation between the CSO, Senior Team Leader and the financial delegate is required to determine the outcome of the request. If the request is supported, the financial delegate will approve the request and Business Services will process the reimbursement.

*A link to the financial delegations has been provided under Delegations at the end of this procedure.*

Child Safety Officers will:

- Consider the use of CRC as part of the case planning processes.
- Make sure carers are aware of how to request CRC for unplanned expenses as they arise.
- Make sure CRC support is consistent with the case plan and/or supportive of the care arrangement.

Business Officers will:

- Ensure the correct CRC G/L Account Code is used
- Ensure all transactions are substantiated, and necessary substantiating documentation (for example, invoices and receipts) is filed to ensure an audit trail.

Should the request not be supported, the CSO will inform the person making the request of the outcome including an explanation for the decision.

## **Categories for child related costs carer support**

### **Birth Certificates (G/L Account Code: 530417)**

This category is used for expenses incurred by Data Management Services (DMS) for the purchase of birth certificates on behalf of a CSSC. Each child or young person in care subject to a child protection order, will require at least two original birth certificates. One certificate is to be held on file and the other certificate is provided to the child or young person at their request or as part of their transition to adulthood plan.

Child Safety can provide a certified copy of a child or young person's birth certificate to their carer.

### **Furniture and Equipment (G/L Account Code: 530408)**

This category is for costs relating to the purchase of furniture and/or other items to facilitate the care arrangement of a child or young person; or to provide in-home support to a child or young person residing at home. For example, a carer may require an additional bed to accommodate a sibling of a child or young person they are caring for.

Items purchased under this category may be approved as part of a case plan and/or placement agreement. Ownership of the items must be case noted in the child or young person's relevant ongoing intervention event in ICMS.

The CSO is to inform the carer that the items purchased belong to the child or young person. These items are to go with the child or young person should they change care arrangements.

**Children and Young People Support (G/L Account Code: 530438)**

This category is for any additional in-home support costs for children and young people, independent living support costs for a young person residing at home or a young person living independently not in accordance with a transition to adulthood plan.

Expenditure under this category can include:

- support program expenses such as life skills, not medical or educational in nature
- expenses incurred by CSO's for meals and/or toiletries purchased for a child or young person
- emergency relief or accommodation support provided by Child Safety After Hours Service Centre
- a prepaid essential gift card used where a situation arises requiring the purchase of items by or on behalf of a child or young person. For example, the purchase of food, toiletries and clothing where:
  - children and young people are placed in emergent accommodation; or
  - young people are living independently where they have not yet received a Centrelink allowance

Prior to purchasing a gift card, other methods of purchase must be considered, such as corporate card, purchase order or petty cash. The gift card must prohibit the purchase of alcohol or tobacco. The Woolworths Essential Card is the preferred type of prepaid gift card. Kmart, Coles and Target brand gift cards may also be purchased. Coles-Myer gift cards must not be purchased.

The Gift cards G/L Account Code: 530426 is to be used for the bulk purchase of gift cards. For further details, refer to the finance procedure 'Prepaid gift cards FME026.1' for guidance on the purchase, control and issue of prepaid gift cards.

Additional non-school related clothing for a child or young person can be provided in extraordinary or emergent circumstances under this account code and may include but not limited to:

- a child or young person arriving at, or returning to, a care arrangement with little or no clothing and/or belongings
- maternity clothing for a young woman in care who is pregnant
- a child or young person suffering from a medical condition causing extreme weight gain or weight loss
- loss of clothing i.e. theft
- a period of rapid growth
- a young person living independently who:
  - has insufficient income to adequately outfit themselves
  - is ineligible for the Youth Allowance – *young people living independently aged 15 and above should be accessing the Youth Allowance through Centrelink.*

This payment is based on the needs of the child or young person at the time and may be noted or included in a case plan and/or placement agreement. As a guide, payments should generally not exceed \$250.

**Recreation (G/L Account Code: 530430)**

This category is for recreation costs for a child or young person who demonstrates an interest, talent and/or ability for a particular activity that should be encouraged as part of their development. For example district or state representation, coaching, music lessons or art classes.

This category can also be used for ongoing costs associated with recreational activities where the costs cannot be met by the high support needs allowance or complex support needs allowance.

Expenditure under this category can include:

- registration fees for an identified sport or hobby
- special sporting requirements or equipment
- entry fees to a significant or unique social event reflecting the child or young person's interest (for example, participating in a concert, conference, recreational camp, or a competition)
- advanced coaching or tuition to allow the child to develop higher levels of proficiency in an ongoing activity (for example, district or state representation, or entry in high level events)

**Youth Support Payment (G/L Account Code: 530437)**

This category is for provision of financial support to a young person in order to maintain an independent living arrangement and is the same rate/allowance as the independent rate providing by Youth Allowance.

The Youth Allowance must be applied for by the young person in the first instance. This account is only available for young people who are ineligible for the Youth Allowance.

To be eligible for payments under this category, a young person must be living independently and subject to statutory intervention under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

**Transition to Adulthood (G/L Account Code: 530441)**

This category is for all Transition to Adulthood related expenditure. For expenditure under this category, a young person must be at least 15 years of age.

Transition to Adulthood Financial support is not an 'exit payment' upon leaving care. It allows a young person to receive the support and resources assessed through an approved plan.

The provision of Transition to Adulthood funding does not invalidate other eligible CRC funding options available to the young person or their carer. Transition to Adulthood funding can be accessed for the duration of the transition to adulthood plan (documented in the young person's case plan). A plan for using Transition to Adulthood funds can span several years and can continue for a specified period/defined purpose after a young person has exited care.

Expenditure under this category can include:

- independent living establishment expenses for a young person including white goods or assistance with a bond for a rental property
- life skills development including driving lessons, car maintenance, cooking classes, parenting classes, budgeting
- employment related activities

All expenditure is to be included in the young person's approved case plan.

Prior to purchasing white goods or other high value items such as a computer, quotes should be acquired. All efforts to obtain quotes should be documented. At times suppliers are not willing to provide a quote and, in these circumstances, the CSSC Manager can approve the purchase of goods without quotes.

Transition to Adulthood funding is not intended to provide compensation, or be a support fund, for people who have already left care, but for those who present to Child Safety requesting financial support and/or assistance.

All young people transitioning from their current care arrangement can access financial support provided through the Australian Government's Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) program. Young people transitioning to adulthood are eligible for both Transition to Adulthood funding and TILA funding. Planning must ensure that the goods or services supplied through both these avenues are used to promote optimum outcomes for the young person.

### **Funeral Arrangements (G/L Account Code: 530425)**

This category is used for all costs associated with the funeral of a deceased child or young person, when at the time of death the child or young person was subject to:

- a signed assessment or child protection care agreement or
- an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent or
- a children protection order granting custody or guardianship to the chief executive

Expenditure under this category can include:

- burial clothing
- funeral notices
- plaque
- flowers

Funeral arrangements are to be made in accordance with the wishes of the parent/s and the parent/s wishes take precedence. Where the child or young person has been placed with carer/s for a significant period of time, Child Safety officers should encourage the parent/s to involve the child or young person's carer/s and their family members in the funeral arrangements.

### **Independent Social Assessment (G/L Account Code: 530435)**

This category is used for the payment or reimbursement of fees and service fees incurred by the CSSC associated with an external assessment or review of a child protection matter.

Expenditure under this category can include:

- independent review
- child death review
- family assessment report

### **Family Connection Support (G/L Account Code: 530423)**

Family Connection Support provides financial support for the child or young person's costs associated with family contact or cultural connection.

Expenditure under this category can include:

- cultural activities and events
- life diaries
- gifts (under circumstances where they are not covered in the fortnightly caring allowance)
- accommodation and associated costs
- external agency staff wages and costs
- family group meetings

#### *Gifts*

All birthday and Christmas gifts are covered in the fortnightly caring allowance as a normal everyday expense that any family would incur and carers are expected to budget accordingly.

However, Child Safety can approve expenditure under this category for gifts in the following circumstances:



- a child/young person or sibling group has been placed with a carer just before Christmas or other major holiday or life event and the carer has had no capacity to budget for gifts
- gifts for the child or young person's parents or siblings, who are either not in care or in a different care arrangement, giving consideration to the child or young person's age and age of the intended recipient of a gift.

#### *Accommodation and associated costs*

This category may also be used for support costs to facilitate family contact visits for both a child or young person's family or carer, such as accommodation and associated costs, where overnight stays or other supports are required.

The category must not be used for travel and transport costs. For travel and travel-related costs, refer to procedure "Child Related Costs – Travel".

Meals purchased by a carer for family contact are covered by the fortnightly caring allowance, as the carer would be providing meals for a child or young person in their care regardless of whether they were on a family contact visit or not. However, there may be occasions where additional support is required.

It is expected that a child or young person's family provide for their meals and those of the child or young person's for family contact visits. However, Child Safety can approve the use of child related costs for this purpose in cases of financial hardship.

#### *External agencies*

When family contact is supervised by an external agency, this category can be used to pay for the agency staff wages and associated costs including transport costs.

#### *Family Group Meetings*

This category is for costs relating to a family group meeting, excluding travel costs.

Expenditure under this category can include:

- catering
- resource materials
- venue hire

**Authority:**

*Child Protection Act 1999*

*Financial Accountability Act 2009*

**Delegations:**

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

[Financial Delegations](#)

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**Date to be reviewed:** 24 June 2024

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**Office:** Investment and Commissioning

**Help Contact:** Family Based Care and Support

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**Links**

*Related Policy*

CRC – 645

Case Planning (263)

Early Childhood Education and Care Participation Minimum Gap Payment Policy – CPADC 640-2

*Related Procedures*

CRC – Health and Wellbeing Support 645.1

CRC – Travel Support 645.3

CRC – Education and Child Care Support 645.2

CRC – Carer Support 645.5

Child Safety Practice Manual

## **Related Legislation**

*Financial Accountability Act 2009*

*Child Protection Act 1999*

*Child Protection Regulation 2000*

*Adoptions Act 2009*

*Human Rights Act 2019*

## **Related Guidelines**

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

## **Forms**

CRC Approval Form

## **Rescinded Policies/Procedures**

Child Related **Costs – Client Support and Family Contact – CPD598-7**

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