

Child Safety PROCEDURE

Title: Regional and remote loading for carers and guardians

Policy No: 379-6

Purpose

This procedure guides the payment of Regional and remote loading (RRL) to carers and guardians.

Process

The Regional and remote loading provides additional financial support to carers, long-term guardians and permanent guardians (guardians) whose geographical location impacts on their day to day costs of out-of-home care. The provision of RRL is therefore determined by the residential location of the carer or guardian.

1. Provide the Regional and remote loading to carers or guardians in specified geographical locations

The carer or guardian will be automatically eligible for the RRL if they are in receipt of the fortnightly caring allowance *and* reside within the boundaries of specified Child Safety Service Centres (CSSC) or Aboriginal Councils.

Applicable Child Safety Service Centres include:

- Cape York South (includes Cooktown CSSC)
- Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands (includes Weipa CSSC and Thursday Island hub)
- Emerald
- Gladstone
- Mackay
- Mt Isa
- Roma (including the Charleville area but excluding Dalby and surrounds that were formerly part of the Toowoomba North CSSC boundary).

Applicable Aboriginal Councils and Indigenous communities with their corresponding Child Safety Service Centres (CSSC), include:

- Aurukun – Weipa (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Bamaga – Torres Strait Island (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Cherbourg – South Burnett CSSC
- Doomadgee – Gulf CSSC
- Hopevale – Cooktown (Cape York South CSSC)

- Injinoo – Torres Strait Island (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Kowanyama – (Cape York South CSSC)
- Mornington Island – Gulf CSSC
- Napranum – Weipa (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- New Mapoon – Torres Strait Island (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Palm Island – (Townsville CSSC)
- Pormpuraaw – (Cape York South CSSC)
- Seisia – Torres Strait Island (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Torres Strait – Torres Strait Island (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Umagico – Torres Strait Island (Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands CSSC)
- Woorabinda – Rockhampton South
- Wujal Wujal – Cooktown (Cape York South CSSC)
- Yarrabah – Edmonton CSSC.

Where a region makes CSSC boundary changes that impact on RRL eligibility for the carer or guardian, the following applies:

- Where a carer or guardian is residing in a location that was RRL eligible prior to the boundary change, payment of RRL will continue.
- Where a carer or guardian is residing in a location that was not RRL eligible prior to the boundary change, payment of RRL will not be made (for example, boundary changes in the South West region meant that Dalby moved from being within the Toowoomba North CSSC boundary to the Roma CSSC boundary. Carers who live in Dalby were not automatically eligible for RRL simply due to the boundary change).

CSSC boundary changes will trigger a review of the Regional and remote loading for carers and guardians procedure so carers and guardians and CSSCs are not adversely affected.

2. Respond to requests by carers and guardians outside of the regional and remote loading areas

Carers and guardians bordering the designated areas listed above may be considered for the receipt of RRL in exceptional circumstances.

Where a carer and guardian resides on the border of a designated area and makes a request for the RRL, the Child Safety Service Centre Manager will:

- assess the circumstances of the request
- decide whether to endorse the carer's or guardian's request for the allowance
- if endorsed, submit the request to the Regional Director, Child Safety, for their consideration and an approval decision.

A Child Safety officer will communicate the approval decision and where applicable, the rationale for the decision, to the carer or guardian.

3. Facilitate the payment of the Regional and remote loading

The RRL is processed through the Carepay system. To commence RRL payments for the carer or guardian:

- in Carepay, add Regional/Remote loading to the Manual Regional/Remote loading payment grid in the Details screen of the carer profile
- submit the task for approval.

Once regional and remote loading has been added to a carer's or guardian's profile in Carepay and the task is approved, the system will apply the allowance to all placements that fall within the allowance period start and end dates.

For further information, refer to the Policy statement, Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and inter-state foster payments.

Note: The provision of the RRL does not preclude the reimbursement of Child related costs in accordance with a child's approved case plan.

The Regional and remote loading is not subject to tax and is not to be cited by carers or guardian's as income for any purpose, including yearly tax returns, applications for Commonwealth benefits, or when applying for loans from financial institutions.

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Date to be reviewed: 28 August 2018 (minor update 18 October 2018)

Office: Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
Help Contact: Operational Support

Links

Policy:

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Related Procedures:

Child Related Costs – Carer support (597)
Child Related Costs – Client support and family contact (598)
Child Related Costs – Education support (599)
Child Related Costs – Long-term guardian support (608)
Child Related Costs – Medical (596)
Child Related Costs – Outfitting (600)
Child related costs – placement funding (628)
Child related costs – placement support funding (629)
Child Related Costs – Travel (595)
Complex Support Needs Allowance (612)
Dual payment of care allowances (289)
Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and inter-state foster payments (365)
Expenses - General (FSE001)
High Support Needs Allowance (296)

Special Payments (including Ex-gratia) (FSE009)

Supporting children in the care of long-term guardians (607)

Related Legislation or Standard:

Adoption Act 2009

Child Protection Act 1999

Child Protection Regulation 2011

Financial Accountability Act 2009

Related Government Guidelines or Policy:

Child Safety Practice Manual

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

Forms, Standard Letters or Memorandum:

Approved carer payment form – Care Agreement

Approved Carer Placement – Addition and Deletion Advice

Rescinded Policies/Procedures:

379-5 Regional/remote loading for carers

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