

Child Safety POLICY

Title: Carer participation

Policy No: 460-4

Policy Statement:

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (Child Safety) is committed to promoting a partnership with approved foster and kinship carers (carers) that recognises the integral part carers play in the child protection system.

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 relevant to the approval of carers in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights.

The safe care and connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with family, community, culture and country will be a key consideration when working with carers.

Principles:

- Carers, Child Safety and foster and kinship care services work in partnership to provide care that is child-centred and family focused.
- Each participant provides a unique contribution.
- Communication is open and respectful.
- Strong partnerships between Child Safety and carers occur when both parties invest time in building positive rapport and carers have meaningful opportunities for participation.
- Carers' participation will be supported by the provision of current information about relevant policies and practice, research and identified trends and needs.
- 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (prevention, partnership, placement, participation and connection) outlined in the *Child Protection Act 1999* section 5C, apply to all processes, decisions and actions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait children.

Objectives:

This policy aims to ensure that Child Safety staff collaborate with carers in the development of policies, programs and practice at a systems level.

Scope:

This policy and associated procedure refers to the actions Child Safety staff are to take to systems level participation by carers.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Procedural details to give effect to carer participation in developing and implementing aspects of the case plan for individual children are outlined in the Child Safety Practice Manual.
- Regional Directors are responsible for the arrangements to give effect to carer participation in developing responsive policies, programs and practice that uphold children's safety, rights and well-being (systems level participation). This includes administration of funds to support these arrangements. Funds to support systems level participation can be used to meet the costs of:
 - Venues
 - Catering
 - Facilitation
 - Transport (for example public transport and parking costs)
 - Accommodation and meals (invoice or reimbursed on presentation of receipt) and
 - Babysitting or casual child care for carer participants.
- Child Safety Service Centre Managers are responsible for promoting carer participation in cooperation with their Regional Director.
- The Regional Executive Director is responsible for identifying funds in regional budgets (annually), in consultation with Regional Directors to support carer participation processes.
- The Executive Director, Investment and Commissioning is responsible for identifying funds (annually) to support Foster Care Queensland's activities and roles that impact on carer participation and ensure policies and procedures support appropriate carer participation in developing and implementing aspects of the case plan for individual children and for regular review of the 'Statement of Commitment'.
- As chair of the Foster and Kinship Carer Oversight Group, the Executive Director, Investment and Commissioning is responsible for ensuring the 'voice' of carers is heard in the discussions and decisions of the oversight group.

Authority:

Child Protection Act 1999

Child Protection Regulation 2023

Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977

Financial Management Standard 1997

Delegations:

Refer to instruments of delegation for delegations relevant to the participation of carers.

Records File No.: Not applicable

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Office: Investment and Commissioning

Contact: Tertiary Care and Support

Links:

Procedures

Child Safety Practice Manual

Carer participation (460)

Related Policies

Carer learning and support (457)

Foster care matching: a partnership approach (639)

Related Legislation or Standards

Human Rights Act 2019

Statement of Commitment between the Department of [Child Safety], foster care services and the carers of Queensland

Rescinded Policies

460-3 Carer participation

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