

# Child Safety POLICY

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**Title:** Carer learning and support

**Policy No:** 457-5

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## Policy Statement:

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (Child Safety) is committed to providing carers with appropriate opportunities for learning and support to enable them to provide children with a standard of care consistent with the statement of standards as outlined in the *Child Protection Act 1999* (the Act).

The term carer within this document refers to approved foster and kinship carers, including provisionally approved carers.

Foster and kinship carers who are granted the long-term guardianship of a child under the Act are **not** approved carers in relation to that child. However, they may be provided with learning and support opportunities specific to the child subject to long-term guardianship, where the guardian requests support in order to maintain the quality and stability of the care arrangement for the child.

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 relation to carer learning and support in a way that is compatible with human rights, and 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 providing carers with opportunities for learning and support.

## Principles:

- The safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child, both throughout childhood and the rest of the child's life, are paramount.
- The provision of an appropriate level of support for carers will increase their ability to provide care consistent with the principles and legislated standards of the Act and achieve quality outcomes for children.
- 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*.
- Child Safety has a responsibility to provide or ensure the provision of support and effectively manage processes to enable carers to fulfil their legislative responsibilities under the Act.
- Effective partnerships recognise the unique contribution of each participant and their commitment to and respect for each other.
- All carers have the right to feel supported and to receive support in a timely, consistent way.

- The five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (prevention, partnership, placement, participation and connection) outlined in section 5C of the Act, apply to all processes, decisions and actions for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child.
- Foster and kinship carers granted the long-term guardianship of a child under the Act will be supported to the extent appropriate in the circumstance, in accordance with Child Safety policy and procedures, with a view to promoting the ongoing stability of the care arrangement for the child.

### **Objectives:**

This policy aims to ensure that carers are provided with appropriate opportunities for learning and support and where applicable, meet the legislative requirements associated with their approval under the Act.

### **Scope:**

This policy refers to approved foster and kinship carers, including provisionally approved carers and suitable persons granted the long-term guardianship of a child under the Act.

Learning and support may be provided to permanent guardians of children subject to a permanent care order under the Act, but only in exceptional circumstances, such as, if the child has emerging special needs or the guardian requires assistance to establish and maintain a care environment to meet the child's ongoing needs.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Child Safety and foster and kinship care service staff will provide direct support to approved carers.
- Roles and responsibilities in relation to carer learning and support are outlined in the Child Safety Practice Manual, Provide and review care, and associated resources.
- The Child Safety Officer for a child is responsible for responding to requests for support by a long-term or permanent guardian.

### **Authority:**

*Child Protection Act 1999*

*Child Protection Regulation 2023*

*Financial Accountability Act 2009*

### **Delegations:**

Refer to instruments of delegation for delegations relevant to carer learning and support.

Refer to the Financial delegations schedule for relevant financial delegations.

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**Records File No.:** Not applicable

**Date of approval:** 20 April 2022

**Date of operation:** 20 April 2022

**Date to be reviewed:** 20 April 2025

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**Office:** Investment and Commissioning

**Contact:** Tertiary Care and Support

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**Links:**

**Procedures**

Child Safety Practice Manual

**Related Policies**

Child Related Costs (645)

Complex Support Needs Allowance (612)

Dual payment of carer allowances (289)

Expenses - Fortnightly caring allowance and interstate foster payments (365)

Foster care training (383)

Foster care matching: a partnership approach (639)

High Support Needs Allowance (296)

Placement of children in care (578)

**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

**Forms**

Foster Carer Agreement

Placement Agreement

**Rescinded Policies**

457-4 Carer Learning and Support

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Director-General