### Child Safety

#### POLICY

**Title:** High Support Needs Allowance  
**Policy No.:** 296-7

#### Policy Statement:

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women will provide the High support needs allowance to assist foster, kinship carers and long-term guardians to meet the direct care costs of caring for children who are subject to statutory intervention, placed in out-of-home care, and assessed as having high support needs that regularly exceed the scope of the fortnightly caring allowance. Permanent guardians, may be eligible to receive the High support needs allowance in exceptional circumstances for a time limited period, not exceeding a six month period. Eligibility for payment of this allowance is are outlined in the associated procedure.

#### Principles:

- The safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child or young person are paramount (*Child Protection Act 1999*, section 5(1)).
- Children and young people placed in care will receive a quality of care that is consistent with the Charter of Rights for a Child in Care (*Child Protection Act 1999*, Schedule 1) and the Statement of Standards (*Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122).
- The continuity of care for a child will be maintained through placements with the same respite carer whenever possible.
- Approved carers and guardians have the right to receive support that will contribute to the provision of a safe and therapeutic care environment in which the needs of children and young people are met (*Child Protection Act 1999*, section 7(h)).
- Approved carers are volunteers who care for children subject to statutory child protection intervention in the carer’s own home without expectation of remuneration.
- Approved carers and guardians are entitled to financial assistance, paid in the form of allowances, as reimbursement towards the direct and additional indirect financial costs of responding to the care needs of children placed in their care.
- The level of financial assistance provided is based on the child’s needs and the associated costs to carers and guardians.
- For a child currently subject to an order granting long-term guardianship to a suitable person, Child Safety Services acknowledges that the full needs of the child may not be evident or anticipated prior to the making of the order.
**Objectives:**

The purpose of the High support needs allowance is to respond to and meet the needs of children assessed as having high support needs, and thereby promote improved outcomes for children both throughout and following the placement.

The High support needs allowance will provide financial stability to carers and guardians so that children's needs are met in a timely and effective manner.

**Scope:**

The high support needs allowance may be provided to approved foster and kinship carers, or provisionally approved carers, of children who:

- have been assessed as having high support needs (determined in accordance with the guidelines for assessing support needs in the Child Safety Practice Manual) that consistently results in costs exceeding the fortnightly caring allowance, and
- are subject to an assessment or child protection care agreement; an assessment order; a temporary custody order; a child protection order granting custody or guardianship to the Chief Executive; a child protection order granting guardianship to a suitable person, a transition order; or an adoption care agreement or adoption consent or dispensation of consent.

Long-term guardians are eligible for high support needs allowance if they were an approved foster or kinship carer and caring for the child when the long-term guardianship order was made and either:

- the child is assessed and approved for high support needs allowance (whether of a short-term or enduring nature) prior to the making of the child protection order granting long-term guardianship under s61(f)(i) and (ii) or
- the child has developed or presents with emerging special needs (whether short-term or enduring in nature) that were unknown or not present at the time the long-term guardianship order was made following the making of a long-term guardianship order.

Permanent guardians of a child may be eligible for High support needs allowance in exceptional circumstances for a time limited period (not exceeding six months) if the child has emerging special needs or the guardian requires assistance to establish a care environment for the child to meet the child’s ongoing needs.

The High support needs allowance is financial assistance for the costs of caring for child, and contains no remuneration and is provided in expectation of the expenditure necessary to meet both the direct and additional indirect costs of the placement, rather than an acquittal of expenditure.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

The procedures which give effect to this policy are contained in procedure High support needs allowance and the Child Safety Practice Manual.

**Authority:**

*Child Protection Act 1999*

*Adoption Act 2009*

*Child Protection Regulation 2011*
Financial Accountability Act 2009

Delegations:

Refer to instruments of delegation for information on delegations for decision-making under the Child Protection Act 1999.
Records File No.: CHS/04139
Date of approval: 6 May 2016
Date of operation: 14 November 2016
Date to be reviewed: 6 May 2019 (Minor update 18 October 2018)

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

Links:

Procedures
Complex support needs allowance (612)

Related Policies
Case planning (263)
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)
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Dual payment of carer allowances (289)
Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and inter-state foster payments (365) High support needs allowance (296)
Supporting children in the care of long-term guardians (607)

Related Legislation or Standard

Child Protection Act 1999
Child Protection Regulation 2011
Financial Accountability Act 2009
Adoption Act 2009
Statement of Commitment between the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and the foster and kinship carers of Queensland

Rescinded Policies

400-1 Complex Support Needs Allowance – Funded Specialist Foster Care Services

Michael Hogan
Director-General