

# Child Safety PROCEDURE

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**Title:** Child related costs – placement funding

**Policy No:** CPD628-1

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## Purpose

This procedure guides the use of child related costs to fund placements for children who require out-of-home care to meet their protection and care needs, and for whom no appropriate placement option is available through departmentally supported or grant-funded placement services

## Process

The *Child Safety Practice Manual* sets out the procedures for determining the appropriate placement type for children, and placing and supporting children in out-of-home care. Where a placement is funded through child related costs, the following procedures also apply.

### 1. Request placement

Where a child requires placement in out-of-home care, determine the appropriate placement type, in accordance with the *Child Safety Practice Manual*, and contact the Placement Services Unit (PSU) to request a placement.

In circumstances where all options for making an appropriate placement through departmental or grant-funded placement services have been exhausted, including the use of placement support funded through child related costs, contact the PSU to request a placement funded through child related costs. The PSU will:

- locate a care service that is able to provide the requested placement type
- negotiate a budget for the placement for the period of time required.

Where a placement is required for a child with a suspected disability, a diagnosis must be confirmed by a qualified practitioner, in accordance with the *Disability Services Act 2006*.

Wherever possible and appropriate, a child with a diagnosed disability as defined by the *Disability Services Act 2006* will be placed with a Disability Services approved service provider. For a child with a disability, who is aged 15 years or older, and where the transition from care plan is to transition the young person to an adult disability service, consideration should be given to placing the young person with a care service that can continue to care for or support the young person following the transition.

## 2. Apply for approval for placement funding and secure interim approval

Once the PSU has located a placement for the child, interim approval for funding must be granted by the financial delegate before the placement may commence. The financial delegate will be the Regional Director, the Regional Executive Director or the Director-General, depending on the total cost of the proposed placement. The total cost includes all costs of the proposed placement and all year to date costs (for the current financial year) of placements funded through child related costs for an individual child. Where multiple children are placed together, with costs recorded on a single budget, delegation to approve is calculated on a per child basis. For information about the financial amounts officers are delegated to approve, refer to the department's [Financial Delegations Manual](#).

To apply for approval for a placement funded through child related costs, complete a *CRC funding application* form, which must be accompanied by:

- a proposed budget for the placement
- any further documentation required to demonstrate the need for a placement funded through child related costs (including the child's case plan, the Child Information Form, child health passport and education support plan).

Once the application is completed, to obtain interim approval by the financial delegate:

- submit the *CRC funding application* form and all accompanying documents to the Regional Director for interim approval
- where the cost of the placement exceeds the Regional Director's delegated financial limit, the Regional Director will forward the application to the Regional Executive Director for interim approval
- where the cost of the placement exceeds the Regional Executive Director's delegated financial limit, the Regional Executive Director will forward the application to the Director-General for interim approval.
- the delegated officer may grant interim approval by return e-mail
- the Regional Director will immediately notify the CSSC Manager and the Director, Placement and Support Services of the decision.

If the placement is required after hours, the Duty Executive Officer may grant interim approval for the funding until the following business day.

Once interim approval has been granted, the PSU will forward the *CRC funding application* form, individual client service agreement and the budget by e-mail to the Child Safety NGO Programs Mailbox (CS\_PlacementSubmissions).

For children with a confirmed diagnosis of a disability as defined by the *Disability Services Act 2006*, the Disability Services client number must be provided on the application. Where a child is thought to have a disability but no diagnosis has been confirmed at the time of applying for funding, all efforts must be made to confirm a diagnosis following the application, and the Disability Services client number must be provided to Child Safety NGO Programs as soon as possible.

## 3. Commence placement

The decision to approve a placement is separate from the decision to approve child related costs placement funding. The child may be placed with the approval of the CSSC Manager or a Team Leader (in accordance with delegations for each placement type), only once interim approval for the funding has been granted by the financial delegate.

All placements must be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Child Safety Practice Manual*, chapter 5, *Children in out-of-home care* and other relevant policies and procedures. For example, the decision to place a child with a residential care service must comply with the requirements of the *Residential care* policy and relevant sections of the *Child Safety Practice Manual*. Approval for placements using emergent accommodation must be in accordance with the *Emergent accommodation* policy.

#### **4. Place a child in emergent accommodation after hours**

Where a child requires placement in emergent accommodation after hours, in accordance with the *Emergent accommodation* policy, the child may be placed prior to receiving interim approval of funding. In this circumstance, seek approval from the financial delegate on the next business day, as per 2. Apply for approval for funding the placement through child related costs and secure interim approval.

#### **5. Finalise agreements**

The department will enter into an agreement with the placement service provider comprising of:

- an *Individual client service agreement - placement*
- an authority to care for the child
- a placement agreement.

The individual client service agreement is a legal agreement between the service provider and the department, which sets out the activities for which the service provider is funded. The individual client service agreement will be signed by the care service delegate first, then the CSSC Manager. Once signed, the CSSC Manager is responsible for providing a copy to the care service and PSU.

The authority to care form provides authorisation to carers, licensed care services and other entities to care for a child subject to statutory intervention under the *Child Protection Act 1999*. Where the child is to be placed with an approved carer, the authority to care will be provided to the carer. Otherwise, the authority to care is provided to the care service.

The completion of a placement agreement is a requirement under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 84. The placement agreement will establish the roles and responsibilities of each of the parties in achieving the case plan goal and outcomes of the placement for the child.

Procedures for the completion of authority to care forms and placement agreements are in the *Child Safety Practice Manual*.

## 6. Finalise approval for funding

At the end of each month, Child Safety NGO Programs will provide the PSU with a *Child related costs placement funding approval schedule* to be completed and returned within three working days of receiving the Monthly Reports.

All placements funded through child related costs that have commenced in the month are to be included in the next *Child related costs placement funding approval schedule*, unless they were placed within seven days of the schedule being received.

The schedule must include all costs for the proposed duration of the placement and all year to date costs (in the current financial year) incurred for each child placed through child related costs. Once completed the schedule must be:

- verified and endorsed by the Director, Placement and Support Services
- signed by the Regional Director
- signed Regional Executive Director if it includes any placements with a total cost in excess of the Regional Director's delegated financial limit.

Once the schedule has been signed by the officer with delegated authority to approve the funding, the PSU will e-mail the signed schedule to the Child Safety NGO Programs Mailbox (CS\_PlacementSubmissions).

For placements with a total cost in excess of the Regional Executive Director's delegated financial limit, Child Safety NGO Programs will:

- prepare a memorandum for the Director-General's approval
- notify the CSSC Manager and the Director, Placement and Support Services when final approval is granted or refused by the Director-General.

Where approval for funding the placement through child related costs is refused by the delegated officer, an alternative placement must immediately be found for the child. Costs incurred up to the date of refusal may be covered by child related costs, however no further expenditure may be met through child related costs for the placement.

## 7. Administer funds for the placement

All expenditure under child related costs – placement funding will be processed regionally. This includes all verification, raising/goods receipting of purchase orders, accruals, reconciliations and authorisations to process payments.

Expenditure for placements funded through child related costs are covered by the CSSC's **child related costs – placement funding** cost centre. The cost centres for each CSSC are listed on the department's Infonet page under [Finance.net](#).

Account categories that may be used for costs associated with funding a placement through child related costs include the full range of account categories from the following cost categories:

- child related costs – carer support
- child related costs – client support and family contact
- child related costs – education support
- child related costs – medical
- child related costs – outfitting

- child related costs – travel.

Individual account codes will be used to track expenditure in each of the cost centres. Refer to the relevant child related costs policies for details on the types of costs covered by each category, and the account code for each.

In addition to these account categories, the account code **child related costs – service provider operational and organisational costs** may be used specifically for placements funded through child related costs. This account code will be used to provide funding to a service provider for operating and organisational costs, including labour costs. This account category may also be used for costs of leasing a residential property, where no other options are available and the non-government service is the lessee. The department will not enter into lease arrangements as a lessee, unless there are no other options available (including the non-government organisation leasing a property).

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**Office:** Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services  
**Help Contact:** Child Protection Development

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## Links

### Legislation

*Child Protection Act 1999*

*Family Services Act 1987*

*Financial Accountability Act 2009*

### Policy and procedure

Case planning (263)

Child related costs – carer support (597)

Child related costs – client support and family contact (598)

Child related costs – education (599)

Child related costs – in-home support (630 and procedure)

Child related costs – medical (596)

Child related costs – outfitting (600)

Child related costs – placement funding (628 and procedure)

Child related costs – placement support funding (628 and procedure)

Child related costs – travel (595)

Complex Support Needs Allowance (612)

Expenses – fortnightly caring allowance and interstate foster payments (365)

High support needs allowance (296)

Placement of children in care as part of an integrated child protection response (578)

Residential care (606)

Specific response care (603)

Therapeutic residential care (577)

Child Safety Practice Manual

### **Forms**

CRC funding application

CRC funding budget submission

CRC funding approval schedule

### **Rescinded policies**

Transitional placements (including emergent accommodation) and flexible funding (602)

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