

# Child Safety POLICY

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**Title:** Professional supervision

**Policy No:** 404-5

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## Policy Statement:

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (Child Safety) is committed to ensuring that all staff who are responsible for decision-making and providing case work services to children and families receive regular planned professional supervision.

The provision of professional supervision to service delivery staff ensures:

- accountable decision-making and safe outcomes for children
- that legislative, policy, procedural and practice standards are met
- that staff are developed, supported and monitored in their child protection role, and
- that staff are given a forum to reflect on the content, process and progress of their case work.

Child Safety is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. The *Human Rights Act 2019*, requires Child Safety to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights.

Professional supervision also provides a forum for monitoring and ensuring that Child Safety demonstrates in practice its commitment to:

- the safe care and connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with family, community, culture and country as a key consideration in decision-making for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- properly considering human rights relevant to intervention with children and families and to acting and making decisions compatibly with human rights
- the Child Placement Principle [*Child Protection Act 1999* (the Act), section 5C] for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

## Principles:

- Ongoing professional supervision is essential to the provision of a transparent, accountable, positive and supportive work environment.
- Professional supervision builds resilient, capable and professionally competent staff who understand and meet their accountabilities.

- Supervision provides the basis for performance management, review, evaluation and continuous improvement in the delivery of high quality services to children and families.
- Supervision is a high priority for Child Safety within the context of existing resources.
- Supervision is a shared responsibility between the supervisor and supervisee
- Staff will receive professional supervision that promotes the principle that the safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child, throughout childhood and for the rest of the child's life, are paramount in decisions and actions made under the Act
- Supervision will be provided in a way that is compatible with human rights and obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.
- Supervision will reflect cultural understanding and respect for staff.

### Objectives:

This policy aims to ensure that all Child Safety staff with responsibility for decision-making and the provision of case work services to children and families receive regular scheduled professional supervision.

### Scope:

This policy refers to the provision of professional supervision to all Child Safety staff with responsibility for decision-making and the provision of case work services to Child Safety clients.

Supervision can be provided in a number of ways:

- **formal scheduled supervision** is planned and occurs on a one-to-one basis with a supervisor and a supervisee
- **unscheduled supervision** is unplanned and occurs when the supervisee consults with the supervisor as questions arise, plans change or urgent decisions need to be made
- **direct supervision** is where the supervisor observes and/or participates in direct service activities with the supervisee and gives feedback about the activity
- **group supervision** is a group work process which provides opportunities for learning and the development of quality practice — group supervision is most productive when it is planned, structured and child-focussed
- **external supervision** is provided by a person external to the department who is a competent supervisor with child protection and/or human services practice experience.

Supervision allows time to reflect on practice and to assess how well the supervisee is managing the work demands. Formal scheduled supervision sessions will be uninterrupted time, where possible, and will include a focus on how the supervisee is managing the work and whether the level of support being provided is adequate.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

Refer to the Child Safety Practice Manual for responsibilities of staff who undertake decision-making under the Act and provide case work to Child Safety clients.

A supervision agreement will be negotiated between the supervisor and supervisee. This will outline the frequency, length, location, content and process of supervision and a time when the agreement will be reviewed. It is recommended that six monthly reviews occur to update the agreement. Ensuring that supervision is beneficial is the shared responsibility of the supervisor and supervisee.

The frequency of supervision will be based on the level of experience, skills and knowledge of the supervisee, and take into account the role and nature of the work the supervisee is undertaking.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to:

- schedule and undertake regular supervision with each supervisee
- create a safe relationship in which supervisees can reflect on and learn from the successes
- develop, monitor and review an Achievement and capability plan (ACP) with each supervisee
- that addresses their professional development needs.
- ensure the ongoing planning and development of workplace competency-based assessment
- tasks and review other learning tasks previously agreed to in supervision
- consider the supervisee's skills, experience and capacity when allocating work
- review progress on case work tasks and responsibilities
- be available, if required, to debrief the supervisee following stressful situations.

It is the responsibility of the supervisee to:

- attend regular supervision sessions
- undertake case work and learning tasks as agreed in supervision
- inform the supervisor when tasks cannot be completed within designated timeframes
- ensure the completion of workplace competency-based assessment tasks
- manage and request support as required for their own self-care
- prepare and actively participate in supervision and in the development of an ACP.

### **Authority:**

*Public Service Act 2008*

*Public Service Regulation 2008*

*Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*

*Human Rights Act 2019*

### **Delegations:**

Refer to the Instruments of delegation for decisions made under the Act.

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**Office:** Office of the Chief Practitioner  
**Help Contact:** Child Protection Practice

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**Links:**

**Procedures**

Child Safety Practice Manual

**Related Policies**

Achievement and Capability Planning  
Equity and diversity  
Induction  
Learning and development  
Performance Management  
Rural and Remote Incentives  
Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS)

**Related Legislation or Standards**

Code of Conduct  
Directive 03/17 Appeals  
*Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Act 1992*  
*Human Rights Act 2019*

**Rescinded Policy**

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Michael Hogan  
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