



Preparing your application

Step one

If your out-of-home care service meets the criteria for licensing you will need to collect an application form from your community resource officer and complete a *Self-Assessment Workbook* (it is anticipated that the online self-assessment workbook will be available on the Department of Child Safety website by the end of May 2006).

Note: If you do not already have an allocated community resource officer contact the community support team within your local Department of Child Safety zonal office and a community resource officer will be allocated as the department's contact point for your service.

Step two

The *Self-Assessment Workbook* requires you or other representatives of your organisation to document evidence that demonstrates that your service is able to comply with 11 minimum service standards. Carefully read Part 2 of this manual. This part of the manual will provide you with information regarding the 11 minimum service standards, criteria for meeting the standards and details that must be considered. Also read Appendix 2 which provides an evidence guide presenting examples of evidence that you may use to demonstrate compliance and the instructions section contained in the *Self-Assessment Workbook*.

Note: Remember that the evidence guide is a resource to assist you to identify suitable evidence. It contains both mandatory evidence and suggestions of other documents or physical items that may assist you to demonstrate compliance with the service standards.

Step three

Complete the *Self-Assessment Workbook* (see Part 2) by documenting evidence that your service believes demonstrates compliance with the 11 service standards for each of the four evidence categories:

- process documentation
- staff/management awareness
- output documentation
- stakeholder feedback.

Note: It is acknowledged that new out-of-home care services may not currently have children placed with them and therefore may not be able to provide evidence in the form of output documentation or stakeholder feedback at this stage. If your service is unable to provide output documentation or stakeholder feedback for this reason, please mark this section of the workbook as 'data not yet available'. There will be opportunity to collect and document this evidence at a later stage in the licence application and monitoring process.



Step four

When you are confident that you have documented sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with the standards, your workbook needs to be submitted to the community resource officer for reviewing. The community resource officer will check that your self-assessment has been properly conducted and will sign the mandatory evidence required. Once the self-assessment workbook has been reviewed by the community resource officer you will need to submit a care service licence application and copies of your self-assessment and other relevant documents to the community resource officer.

Note: Your service is unable to proceed through the licensing process until the self assessment workbook has been reviewed and checked by the community resource officer. If the community resource officer has any queries he/she will discuss the matter directly with you.

If you disagree with any decision regarding your application, you should contact the manager of the relevant community support team to discuss the matter. If it is unable to be resolved the matter will be referred to the zonal director for consideration. The Department of Child Safety *Complaints Management Policy and Procedures* (Policy 295-3) outlines the process and options available to organisations wishing to make complaints regarding decisions.

To submit a licence application, you must complete an Application for a Care Service Licence form (LCS Form 1) available on the department's website and attach:

- a copy of your completed *Self-Assessment Workbook*
- a copy of your matters of concern policy
- a copy of your behaviour management policy
- a copy of your complaints policy
- a copy of your organisation's mission statement or constitution that is consistent with the principles of the *Child Protection Act 1999*
- a copy of your certificate of registration/incorporation
- a copy of your public liability insurance receipt and nominated amount of insurance cover, the carrier and date of expiry
- a copy of audited financial statements for the last three financial years (if available)
- a list of any current carers and commencement and expiry dates of their certificates of approval (fostering and specialist foster care services only)
- a copy of the certificate of classification from the relevant local authority (residential services only)
- a list of all people required to undertake suitability and Blue Card checks and completed application/consent forms (LCS form 2) for:
 - the nominee for the service
 - the director (if the applicant is a company, the director is the person appointed as the director of the applicant or licensee. If the applicant is not a company, a person who is the member of an executive or management entity of an applicant will be considered a director)
 - any managers who have commenced or are known to be likely to commence in the service
 - staff members and all others engaged in providing care in the out-of-home care service, but excluding approved carers in foster care services



- copies of any other process documentation and completed survey forms for stakeholder feedback and staff management awareness used to demonstrate compliance with service standards. This will allow the independent external assessor to assess these documents prior to visiting your service.

Note: Client files and other output documentation and evidence will be assessed by the independent external assessor during their visit to your service.

Processing your application

Step one

The community resource officer will:

- check that your self-assessment has been properly conducted and that any samples used to gather feedback or output documentation reflect the true size or client numbers of the service
- assess that your application is complete
- check that all mandatory evidence is present
- arrange for suitability and Blue Card checks to be conducted on all relevant persons.

The community resource officer will then notify you that your application has been properly made. The department will then have 90 days to notify you of the outcome of your application.

Note: If your service did not previously provide evidence of output documentation or stakeholder feedback to demonstrate compliance with the standards, your community resource officer will negotiate with you regarding completing this section of the *Self-Assessment Workbook* once children and young people have been placed with your service.

Step two

The community resource officer will now forward your application and *Self-Assessment Workbook* to an independent external assessor as required under Section 2 of the *Child Protection Regulation 2000*. The independent external assessor will contact you directly to arrange an appropriate time to start the assessment. The assessment will include:

- a desktop assessment of policies and procedures (process documentation)
- sighting that stakeholder feedback has been sought, collected and where appropriate used to improve service delivery
- a site visit organisation to:
 - assess staff and management awareness of the process documentation
 - evaluate output documentation.



Note: The assessor will document his/her findings in a report and provide copies to the zonal director who then forwards you a copy. You will be invited to respond to the findings of the report within 14 days. You may use this opportunity to respond to any parts of the report that you believe are inaccurate or to highlight any strategies planned or in place to address the concerns raised.

It is not mandatory for you to provide a written response to the report. However it may be in your best interest to do so if you disagree with the findings of the assessment. The department will consider any written responses when determining your licence application.

Step three

After the 14-day period for responding to the report, the community resource officer will finish processing your application and provide a copy of all relevant information to a departmental state-wide licensing panel. The panel will consider all the information and make a recommendation regarding the outcome of your application to the relevant zonal director.

Step four

The zonal director will then either:

- grant the licence with standard conditions
- grant the licence with additional conditions
- refuse the licence.

Note: The Executive Director, Child Safety Services Division is also delegated to determine the outcome of an application for a Care Service Licence. The executive director will exercise this delegation when warranted such as when a conflict of interest exists between the zonal director and service nominee.

Step five

If the licence is **approved**, the department will send you the licence (signed by the zonal director or executive director) within 10 days of the decision to approve. A copy of the licence will also be kept on file at the community support team office.

If your application is **refused**, a letter will be sent to you within 10 days of the decision to refuse, together with a statement outlining reasons for the decision. You have 28 days in which to apply to the Children Services Tribunal to have the decision reviewed.

Term of your licence

A licence to provide a child protection out-of-home care service is valid for three years.



Licence conditions

A licence to provide a child protection out-of-home care service has three standard conditions shown on the face of the licence. These conditions enable the chief executive to be satisfied that your service meets the criteria of Section 126 of the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

The standard conditions are:

- **criminal, domestic violence, traffic and child protection history**
The nominee must advise the department if he or she becomes aware or reasonably suspects a change in the domestic violence, traffic, child protection or criminal history of the nominee or director or any person employed to work in the service, whether the employment is voluntary or paid.
- **data collection**
The organisation must collect and provide the department with data of the type and format requested by the department from time to time.
- **general changes**
The nominee must notify the department of any change in circumstances that may affect the licence, including a potential change of nominee or directors or a change of address for the licensed premises.

A fourth condition is included for organisations responsible for recruiting, assessing, training and supporting carers.

- **functions licensed**
The licence is issued with respect to the functions of the organisation in recruiting, assessing, training and supporting carers (foster and kinship care services only).

The department may attach additional conditions to the licence to ensure that your service provides a standard of care that meets the legislated standards.



Renewals

A Child Protection Care Service License is valid for three years.

Section 125 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* requires a licence-holder to lodge an application to renew a care service licence to the Department of Child Safety at least 30 days before the licence expires.

Once you have received written notification that the community support team has accepted your application for renewal, your current license remains valid until a decision is made about the renewal application (s.143, *Child Protection Act 1999*).

Application for renewal of your care service licence

Your *Self-Assessment Workbook* will need to be submitted to the community resource officer at the end of the second quarter of the third year of your licence term. This will enable sufficient time for you to submit a licence renewal application prior to expiry of your current licence.

The application should consist of the *Application for Renewal of a Care Service Licence* form (LCS Form 1) available on the department's website and:

- a copy of your completed *Self-Assessment Workbook*
- a copy of your matters of concern policy
- a copy of your behaviour management policy
- a copy of your complaints policy
- a copy of your organisation's mission statement or constitution that is consistent with the principles of the *Child Protection Act 1999*
- a copy of your Certificate of Registration/Incorporation
- a copy of your public liability insurance receipt and nominated amount of insurance cover, the carrier and date of expiry
- a copy of audited financial statements for the last three financial years (if available)
- a list of any current carers and commencement and expiry dates of their certificates of approval (fostering and specialist foster care services only)
- a copy of the certificate of classification from the relevant local authority (residential services only)
- a list of all people required to undertake suitability and Blue Card checks and completed application/consent forms for:
 - the nominee for the service
 - the director (If the applicant is a company, the director is the person appointed as the director of the applicant or licensee. If the applicant is not a company, a person who is the member of an executive or management entity of an applicant will be considered a director)
 - any managers who have commenced or are known to be likely to commence in the service
 - staff members and all others engaged in providing care in the out-of-home care service, but excluding approved carers in foster care services
- copies of any other process documentation and completed survey forms for stakeholder feedback and staff management awareness used to demonstrate





compliance with service standards. This will allow the independent external assessor to assess these documents prior to visiting your service.

Your application and attached documents will need to be forwarded to the community resource officer. Once you have received written notification that the community support team has accepted your application for renewal, your current licence remains valid until a decision is made about the renewal application (*s.143, Child Protection Act 1999*).