

- another Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander who is compatible with your child’s community or language group
- another Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander.

If a placement with any of the above Indigenous people cannot occur, your child may be placed with an approved non-Indigenous carer or licensed care service near your family, or if that cannot occur, with a carer who lives near your community or language group.

Before placing your child in the care of a family member or other person who is not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the department will make sure the carer will:

- help you keep in contact with your child
- help your child to maintain contact with their community or language group
- help your child maintain a connection with their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture and identity.

### When will the Care Agreement end?

In most cases, the Care Agreement will end on the date agreed to by you and the department and will be stated in the Care Agreement. At any time, you or the department can end the agreement by giving at least two days notice.

If there is a change in your situation at home or if you want to end the Care Agreement, the department will complete a new safety assessment to decide if it is safe for your child to return home. If the department decides that it is not safe for your child to return home, the department will talk to you about an extension of the Care Agreement, or may apply to the Children’s Court for a court order. The department will talk with you before an application

is to be made to the court. The Care Agreement will end if the court grants custody of your child to the department.

### Who can I talk to for further information?

For more information about Care Agreements, call the Department of Child Safety on **1800 811 810** or visit **www.childsafety.qld.gov.au**

You can ask your Child Safety Officer about anything you do not understand about the Care Agreement.

You are also able to seek legal advice or support from other agencies such as Legal Aid Queensland about your contact with the department and to ask for advice from them about signing a Care Agreement.

Legal Aid Queensland can be contacted on **1300 651 188**

### Contact information

The Child Safety Officer’s name is:

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The Child Safety Support Officer’s name is:

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The Team Leader’s name is:

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The Child Safety Service Centre is:

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The contact number is:

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# Care Agreements

# Information for parents

*Child protection... our first priority*



## What is a Care Agreement?

A Care Agreement is an agreement between you and the Department of Child Safety to place your child in out-of-home care with an approved carer for a short period of time.

The department may ask you to consider entering into a Care Agreement when the department is not sure that your child will be safe at home and you are willing to work with the department to resolve concerns about your child's safety.

Placing your child in out-of-home care is a positive step which you can take to ensure the safety of your child because:

- it allows you time and space to sort out any problems you have in the home
- your child can temporarily live safely elsewhere while you work with the department to sort out the concerns for your child.

## What are the types of Care Agreements?

There are two types of care agreements:

- an Assessment Care Agreement
- a Child Protection Care Agreement

### Assessment Care Agreement

This agreement is made when the department is investigating concerns about your child's safety. During the time your child is away from home, the Child Safety Officer will work with you to determine if your child requires ongoing protection.

The department can ask you to sign this type of agreement for up to 30 days.

You will still have legal custody of your child and be responsible for making most decisions about your child's care during the period of the Assessment Care Agreement.

## Child Protection Care Agreement

This agreement is made when the department has assessed that your child is not safe living at home and your family requires ongoing support to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your child.

The department can ask you to sign this type of agreement for an initial period of 30 days. The agreement can be extended, with your consent, for further periods of 30 days for up to six months during any 12-month period.

The department will have legal custody of your child and will make all day-to-day decisions about your child including who the child will have contact with.

You may tell the department which decisions you would like to be involved with and this will be documented in the Care Agreement.

You will retain the right to make significant decisions about your child as you will still be your child's guardian.

## What rights do I have if I sign a Care Agreement?

You have the right to:

- have a copy of the Care Agreement
- have the name, address and phone number of the person who is caring for your child
- have contact with your child as agreed between you and the department
- be consulted about particular decisions as agreed between you and the department
- end the care agreement at any time by giving at least two days notice.

## Who will care for my child?

Your child will be placed with a carer who has been approved by the department. The department always prefers to place children with a family member or person of significance to a child. The department will discuss with you who might be a suitable carer for your child.

If the department decides to place your child with a family member or other significant person, this person must be assessed by the department to make sure your child will be safe while in their care.

If you do not have a family member who is able to care for your child, the department will arrange for your child to be placed with an approved departmental carer.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

If your child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the department will talk with a Recognised Entity about the decision to place your child in out-of-home care. A Recognised Entity is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation or individual, approved and funded by the Department of Child Safety to provide cultural and family advice to assist the department in decision-making.

In accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999* and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle, the department will talk to you about placing your child, in order of priority, with:

- a member of your child's family
- a member of your child's community or language group

