

# RESOURCE BOOKLETS for Kinship Carers



Case planning,  
case management,  
roles &  
responsibilities





GPV/KCV acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of our great land and offers respect to Elders, past and present.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that the Aboriginal culture existed in Australia before European settlement and consisted of many community groups. Further, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land as the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that laws and policies of the past have inflicted grief and suffering on our fellow Australians and regrets the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

GPV/KCV believes that a society that is inclusive of all is crucial to individual and community wellbeing and will behave with respect towards all irrespective of their race, religion, sexuality, gender or socio-economic background.

GPV/KCV acknowledges 13th of February as National Apology Day, the anniversary of then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, delivering the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples in 2008. GPV/KCV will take steps that promote a happier and healthier future for Indigenous Australians, particularly the children and young people.

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Key words which influence GPV/KCV approaches are: Truthfulness, Confidentiality, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Constancy, Gratitude, Commitment, Compassion

The information contained in this resource booklet is based primarily on information from the *Manual for Kinship Carers*, published by the former Department of Human Services (now department of Families, Fairness & Housing) in 2017.

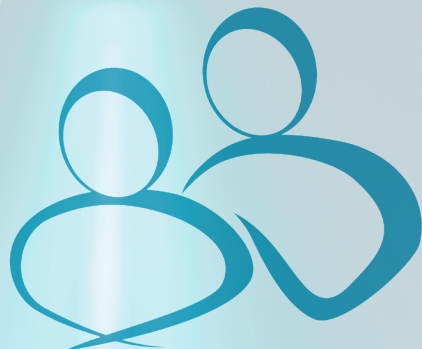
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Families,  
Fairness  
and Housing

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# Case planning, case management, roles and responsibilities



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# Introduction

This resource booklet outlines the elements of the case planning, management and decision-making in relation to children and young people in out-of-home care. It also sets out the roles and responsibilities of child protection, the agency (if involved), the kinship carer, and others involved in their care.

# Best interests case practice model

The Act provides the statutory framework aimed at protecting children and young people from significant harm.

In Victoria, the **Best interests case practice model** provides the foundation for working with children and young people, and their families, to address issues and provide a supportive and cohesive response. Effective practice requires the development of good working relationships between services, including working in partnership with parents, where possible, with the child's best interests being central to this approach. More information about the Best interests case practice model can be found in the *Child Protection Manual* at <https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/our-approach/best-interests-case-practice-model>

## Case plans

**Case plans** and **case plan reviews** are required under the Act. A case plan outlines the significant decisions for the child or young person. A case plan is different to a **care plan**, which supports the day-to-day care of the child or young person.

A case plan occurs:

- within 21 days following the substantiation of child protection concerns, or
- six weeks after the making of a protection order, or
- when there are significant changes to the child or young person's circumstances.

A case plan sets out a permanency objective for the child or young person. Section 167 of the Act states that a case plan must include one of five permanency objectives, which are listed in order of preference, being:

- **family preservation** – the objective of ensuring that a child or young person who is in the care of their parent remains in their care
- **family reunification** – the objective of ensuring that a child or young person who has been removed from the care of a parent is returned to their care
- **adoption** – the objective of placing a child for adoption under the Adoption Act 1984
- **permanent care** – the objective of arranging a permanent care arrangement for a child or young person with a permanent carer or carers
- **long-term out-of-home care** – the objective of placing the child or young person in a stable, long-term care arrangement with a specified carer or carers, or if that arrangement is not possible, another suitable long-term care arrangement.

For the majority of children and young people involved with child protection, the most appropriate permanency objective will be to remain in the care of a parent. For those children or young people who come into out-of-home care, family reunification will almost always be the preferred permanency objective, subject to timelines.

For a very small proportion of children and young people with whom child protection intervenes, a permanent out-of-home care arrangement will be required to ensure their safety and wellbeing. It is important that this decision is made as soon as possible, and within a timeframe that promotes the child or young person's developmental and emotional needs.

# Case management

**Case management** is the coordination and delivery of services that are provided as part of a case plan. Case management responsibility for the child or young person either sits with child protection or is contracted to the agency. For kinship carers, the majority of case management responsibility sits with child protection.

When a child or young person is first placed in out-of-home care, the child protection worker is the case manager. However, this responsibility may be transferred to an agency (called *case contracting*), when the decision has been made for the child or young person to remain in long-term, out-of-home care. The roles and responsibilities of the agency case manager and the child protection worker change when case management is contracted to the agency.

Some of the tasks of the case manager include:

- undertaking ongoing assessment of the risks, needs and development of the child or young person
- ensuring the implementation of the case plan and cultural plan
- having contact with the child or young person, parents and carer
- participating in the care team
- planning and managing contact arrangements for the child or young person
- arranging and making referrals for specialist assessments
- preparing court reports and attending court.

Regardless of who has the case management responsibility for the child or young person, child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency will remain responsible for case planning, case planning decisions, and ensuring the cultural plan is developed for Aboriginal children and young people.

# Care team roles and responsibilities

The table presented in the following six pages provides a list of tasks and who is responsible for them. The 'allocated case manager' will either be the child protection worker or, in some instances, the agency case manager. You will need to know who holds case management responsibility for the child or young person in your care.



## Roles and responsibilities of the carer/authorised Aboriginal agency and case manager (agency or child protection)

Role	Who is responsible		
	Kinship carer	Child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency case planner, or child protection or authorised Aboriginal agency task only	Allocated case manager, either child protection or agency
<b>Care team</b>			
Establish the <b>care team</b> and make recommendations about the day-to-day care of the child or young person			✓
Make sure an initial <b>Care and Placement Plan</b> is developed and documented within two weeks of the child or young person coming into care, and a copy is provided to the care team			✓
All members of the care team, including carers, contribute to the development of the <b>Care and Placement Plan</b>	✓		✓
Be an active member of the child or young person's <b>care team</b>	✓		✓
<b>Make recommendations</b> to the child protection case planner about the specific decisions a carer is authorised to make	✓		✓
Approve <b>authorisation for carers</b> for things such as routine medical/dental treatment, travel, school activities and camps.		✓	
Work together to contribute to the development and implementation of the child or young person's <b>case plan and Looking after Children planning processes</b> , including the Care and Placement Plan	✓		✓
<b>Maintain open communication</b> so that all members of the care team are kept up to date with important information	✓		✓
Make sure that <b>information is only disclosed outside the care team to those who need to know</b>	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that members of the care team are <b>informed of the child or young person's progress</b> , including any relevant issues and concerns. In particular, concerns about ongoing care arrangements must be communicated as soon as possible	✓		✓

Role	Who is responsible		
	Kinship carer	Child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency case planner, or child protection or authorised Aboriginal agency task only	Allocated case manager, either child protection or agency
<b>Case planning</b>			
Communicate the permanency objective in the case plan to the carer and agency (if involved)		✓	
Lead the development and review of the case plan and ensure the care team contributes to the development of the plan		✓	
Lead the implementation of the case plan and ensure the care team contributes to the development of the plan			✓
Ensure that a Care and Transition Plan is prepared and followed to support a young person when they are leaving care	✓		✓

Role	Who is responsible		
	Kinship carer	Child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency case planner, or child protection or authorised Aboriginal agency task only	Allocated case manager, either child protection or agency
<b>Engagement with parents and wider family (where appropriate)</b>			
Work with the child or young person's family to <b>promote family reunification</b>	✓*		✓
Promote and support the <b>relationship of children and young people with their parents and wider family</b> , and their connection with their social networks and community	✓		✓
<b>Engage parents</b> in a manner that is accepting and respectful of their primary role. Promote positive relationships where possible	✓*		✓
<b>Transport child or young person</b> to and from contact as required	✓*		✓
Inform carers of any <b>changes to contact arrangements</b> in a timely manner			✓

\* May not be the core role of the carer, however carers involvement in these activities is important for the child or young person.

Role	Who is responsible		
	Kinship carer	Child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency case planner, or child protection or authorised Aboriginal agency task only	Allocated case manager, either child protection or agency
<b>Care of the child or young person</b>			
<b>Provide carers with the information</b> they need to provide good care for a child or young person, at the time the care arrangement is made		✓	✓
Provide <b>day-to-day care</b> and support for the child or young person	✓		
Provide a <b>safe and nurturing home</b> environment that contributes to all aspects of healthy development for children and young people, including their physical, social, emotional, cognitive, cultural and spiritual needs	✓		
Provide <b>support and advocate for children and young people</b> in out-of-home care	✓		✓
<b>Work with the child or young person</b> to make sure they understand their situation, and that their needs are being met in the care arrangement	✓		✓
Support the child or young person to <b>access and participate in local, day-to-day extra-curricular activities</b>	✓		✓
Respond to the <b>needs of the child or young person</b> and include them in planning and decision making where possible	✓	✓	✓

\* May not be the core role of the carer, however carers involvement in these activities is important for the child or young person.



Role	Who is responsible		
	Kinship carer	Child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency case planner, or child protection or authorised Aboriginal agency task only	Allocated case manager, either child protection or agency
<b>Care of the child or young person</b>			
<b>Update carers as information changes;</b> for example, any changes to appointments			✓
Record and <b>act on information</b> provided by carers, and inform the carer of outcomes where appropriate			✓
Arrange for appropriate <b>care allowance and other supports</b> to be provided to carers, in liaison with the child protection worker, if an agency is involved		✓	✓
Obtain a <b>Health Care Card, Medicare Card, birth certificate</b> and other documents for the child or young person as required		✓	
Arrange for children and young people <b>to attend specialist</b> medical, educational or therapeutic services	✓*		✓
Ascertain the <b>immunisation status</b> of the child or young person, and request authorisation for the carer to take them for necessary catch-ups	✓*		✓
Inform the agency of any <b>emergencies</b> or critical incidents as soon as possible	✓		
Investigate and assess <b>reports of harm</b> to the child or young person		✓	✓

\* May not be the core role of the carer, however carers involvement in these activities is important for the child or young person.

Role	Who is responsible		
	Kinship carer	Child protection or the authorised Aboriginal agency case planner, or child protection or authorised Aboriginal agency task only	Allocated case manager, either child protection or agency
<b>Supporting carers</b>			
Provide <b>support, supervision, information and training</b> to carers, so they can carry out their roles and responsibilities			✓
Review <b>carers</b> annually			✓

# More information

**Department of Families, Fairness and Housing - Case planning advice**

<https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/advice/case-planning>

**Best interests case practice model**

<https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/our-approach/best-interests-case-practice-model>

**Best interests case practice model - Summary guide**

<https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Best%20interests%20case%20practice%20model%20summary%20guide%202012%203002.pdf>

**The Kinship Carer, Kinship Carers Victoria newsletter - #257 Case Plans**

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/The-Kinship-Carer-257-Case-Plans.pdf>



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