

# Wheatbelt Child Care Services Resource Manual





The "Wheatbelt Child Care Services Resource Manual" has been produced by the Wheatbelt Organisation for Children's Services [WOCS] in partnership with Child Australia with funding and support from Lotterywest.



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## **DISCLAIMER**

The information contained in this resource manual is not intended to be legal advice or contain comprehensive information regarding any organisations' responsibilities under legislation. The resource manual provides a general overview of some of the potential obligations of organisations, as legislation can change organisations should always refer to current legislation or seek legal advice on matters that relate to the organisation. Organisations should take responsibility for assessing relevance and accuracy of information contained in this resource manual.



## **COLOUR CODING SYSTEM**

State Funded Occasional Care, Long Day Care and Federal Funded Occasional Care are the models of child care in the Wheatbelt specifically covered by this manual.

Under each topic throughout this document, information relating only to a specific model is colour coded enabling easy identification of relevant information.

Colour codes are as follows:

*State Funded Occasional Care*

*Long Day Care*

*Federal Funded Occasional Care*



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## 1. BACKGROUND

### WHEATBELT ORGANISATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES (WOCS)

The Wheatbelt Organisation for Children's Services (WOCS) is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation that began in July 2005, to address concerns over the long term sustainability of childcare in the rural sector of WA.

WOCS membership is made up of a diverse group of individuals throughout the Wheatbelt and beyond including, child care professionals, local government representatives, parents and community members.

#### Achievements to Date:

- Compilation of Wheatbelt Childcare Profile 2005 document (updated 2006).
- Kulin Forum 2005 & Toodyay Conference 2006 – issues raised include: lack of child care services, lack of funding and CCB for some services, childcare regulations and expectations placed on volunteers.
- Development of the proposed new models of child care to meet the needs of rural communities – the flexible rural model and the single operated child care service. A consultative paper was drawn up by DCD regarding these models. WOCS, DCD and FACSIA continue to work on this project.
- Representation on both the Ministerial Child Care Advisory Committee and the Child Care Regulations Consultative Committee.
- WOCS has developed a working partnership with Child Australia resulting in the appointment of a project officer funded by Lotterywest.
- Winner of the Community Service Industry Awards 2007 for Strengthening Rural and Remote Communities.

Whilst WOCS continues to further these achievements the organisation is also working toward:

- Obtaining more supports for volunteers managing child care services.
- Raising issues and looking towards solutions regarding managing non profit services, staffing, licensing and ways to assist services and communities to achieve quality care.
- Ensuring equitable access to training for staff in rural areas.



- Access to either Child Care Rebate for all services or increased annual funding for services that are not eligible for CCB.
- Establishing supports for the accreditation process.
- Developing a reference manual for volunteer management committees.
- Ensuring recognition of the difference between city and rural childcare services.

## CHILD INCLUSIVE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA

Child Inclusive Learning and Development Australia (CHILD Australia) has over 21 years experience in providing programs and services that facilitate access to child care services for all children including those with additional needs. In addition, Child Australia provide innovative professional development programs and support services for industry professionals to facilitate building nurturing and stimulating child care environments. The ongoing commitment to improving access to, and quality of, early childhood education and care services will result in better outcomes for our community's children.

Child Australia programs and services include:

- Professional Support Coordination for Western Australia and Northern Territory;
- Inclusion Support Agencies for;
  - North Metro
  - Great Southern
  - Central
  - Pilbara
  - South West
  - Kimberley
  - Great Southern
- West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service
- East Pilbara Mobile Intensive Supported Playgroup
- Communities for Children 3+ Playgroups – Pilbara
- Rural Playgroup Support Service – Midwest, Murchison and Pilbara
- Pre-Kindy and Occasional Care Inclusion Support
- WOCS Partnership Project
- Resource Centre

CHILD Australia was established in 1987 as the Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs (RUCSN). At that time, the main role was to help children with additional needs to be included in child care services. Since then, Child Australia has steadily expanded services delivery to reflect their commitment to inclusion for all children to high quality early childhood education and care. The expansion and evolution of programs and services was marked officially by the name change to Child Inclusive Learning and Development Australia in November 2008.



## 2. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Wheatbelt Child Care Services Resource Manual is to equip volunteer management committees with an overview of running a child care service. Volunteers are often not experienced in undertaking the administrative requirements of a service or dealing with government departments and employer responsibilities. Isolation is a factor identified by many services as an issue in running a centre. Providing information, contacts and guidelines will reassure services they are “doing it the correct way”.

The manual is a tool provided to assist volunteers to acquire the basic skills to undertake the management of a service and subsequently enable them to utilise these skills in other areas of their community. The manual will ensure the task of managing a child care service is less daunting thereby resulting in more community members potentially being willing to accept roles on the management committees. In this manner the manual will contribute to ensuring the ongoing sustainability of child care services in the Wheatbelt and the sustainability of communities.



### 3. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS AND INITIATIVES IN THE CHILD CARE SECTOR

The child care sector is constantly undergoing changes and improvements. Some changes and initiatives currently being implemented include,

#### CHILD CARE REGULATIONS REVIEW

With the completion of the Child Care Regulations Review the Child Care Services Act 2007 and Child Care Regulations are currently being amended. For further information contact your Children's Services Officer or visit [www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au)

#### COAG EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE QUALITY REFORMS

All Australian Governments have committed to making early childhood an area for national reform. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has initiated an early childhood reform agenda, including action to:

- address early childhood workforce issues
- establish a national Early Years Learning Framework
- create a national approach to quality and regulation of early childhood education and child care
- improve data and performance information in early childhood
- develop a national early childhood development strategy.

For further information on the progress of COAG's Early Years Learning Framework and Early Childhood Education and Care Quality Reforms please refer to

[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)



## 4. MODELS OF CHILD CARE SERVICES IN THE WHEATBELT

The models of child care in the Wheatbelt specifically covered by this manual include;

### STATE FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE

State funded Occasional Care is centre based care, often operating from community buildings. This model is often referred to as “Neighbourhood Model Occasional Care”. The model was established to enable communities to establish a child care service to provide support to families. The state government contracts occasional care services. The aim was initially for flexible sessional based care. In rural communities this is often the only child care available and therefore has evolved to attempt to accommodate the needs of working parents in addition to respite or sessional care.

### LONG DAY CARE

Long Day Care is centre based child care. This model provides full or part time care to children of working parents and the general community under priority of access guidelines. This model is approved by the federal government. Sole providers of long day care in a location may be eligible for Sustainability Assistance Funding and Child Care Benefit approval.

### FEDERAL FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE

Federal Occasional Care is centre based care established to provide flexible care on a sessional basis. Families can access care regularly or irregularly and for short periods of care. This model is funded and approved by the federal government. The program for funding this model is under review and new services are not currently being considered.

### OTHER MODELS OF CHILD CARE IN THE WHEATBELT

It is not within the scope of this manual to cover all forms of child care in the Wheatbelt. The manual specifically focuses on Long Day Care and Occasional Care Services.



Services not covered include;

### Mobile Child Care Services

Mobile Child Care Services visit rural communities and provide child care sessions in community venues. The venues are licensed as child care centres. Funding for new mobile child care services is not available at this time. Information provided in this resource manual regarding Child Care Regulations, Licensing and generic information would be applicable to this model. Support may be available through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (see pages 32 + 33).

### Outside School Hours Care

Outside school hours care services provide care before and /or after school, during vacation and on pupil free days.

### Family Day Care & In Venue Care

Family Day Care is care provided in the carer's home. A Family Day Care Scheme offers support and administers networks of family day care carers. In Venue Care is a form of family day care delivered in a venue that is not the carer's family home.

### In Home Care

In Home Care is care provided by an approved carer in the child's home.

### *Specific Regulations Apply To Family Day Care & Outside School Hours Care*

Child Care Services (Family Day Care) Regulations 2006  
Child Care Services (Outside School Hours Care) Regulations 2006  
Child Care Services (Outside School Hours Family Day Care) Regulations 2006



## 5. GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND FUNDING

Child care services have obligations under various government departments for approval and funding.

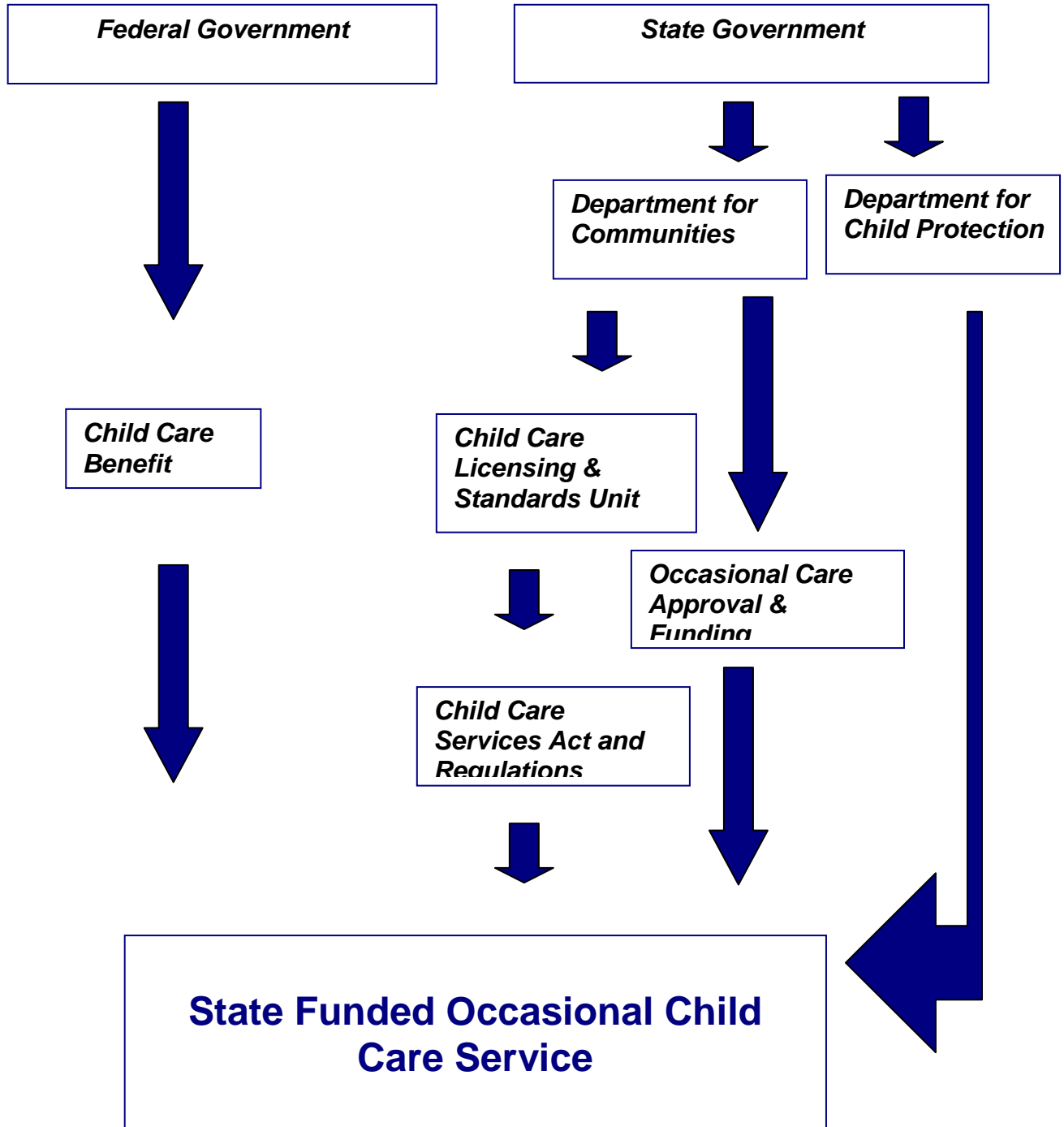
The following flow charts outline the government departments and funding specifically relative to child care.

Services may have other obligations including planning and approvals from local government.

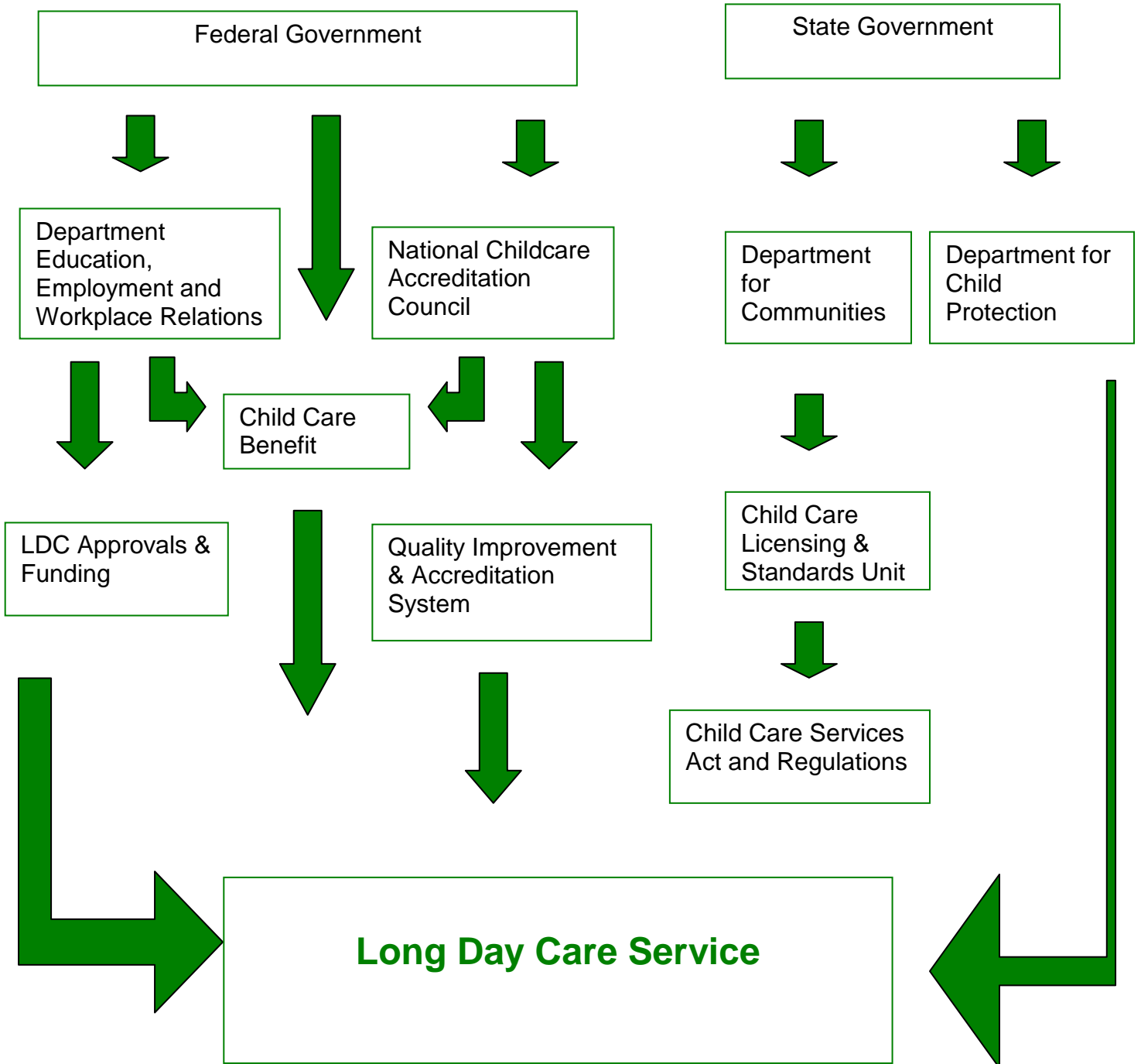
In addition as an incorporated organisation and employer there are a range of compliance requirements under both state and federal legislation that is not specifically related to child care. For example, taxation obligations and obligations under the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984.



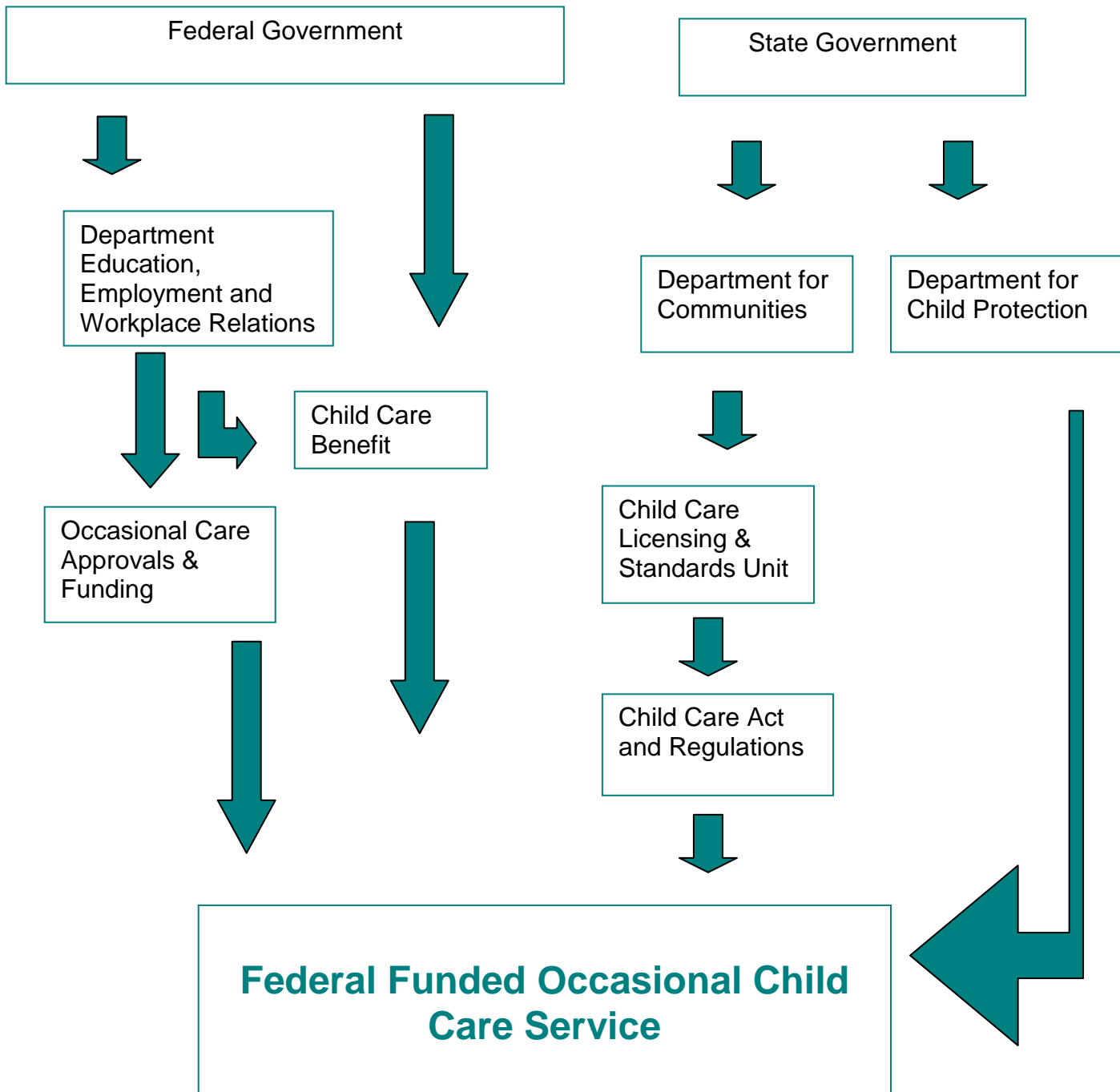
## STATE FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE



## LONG DAY CARE



## FEDERAL FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE



## 6. DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES

### STATE FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE

The Department for Communities [DFC] is responsible for contract management of state funded occasional care services.

Funded services are required to submit progress reports and financial statements to the Department for Communities. Services should check their Service Agreement for further requirements.

### CHILDREN'S' SERVICES OFFICER [CSO]

The Children's' Services Officer [CSO] assists communities to establish child care services. The CSO is responsible for providing advice and support to child care service providers and potential service providers about licensing, childhood development and quality child care strategies. Currently the CSO also conducts Supervising Officer Assessments in the Wheatbelt.

Services must submit all staffing plans (in line with service exemptions) to the CSO. Quarterly progress reports on staffing plans may also be required.

The CSO currently undertakes the contract management of State Funded Occasional Care Services.

### CHILDCARE LICENSING AND STANDARDS UNIT

The Child Care Services Act 2007 and related regulations are administered through the Child Care Licensing and Standards Unit.

Child care licenses are valid for up to three years. License renewals need to be lodged within 60 days of the expiry of the current license to ensure there is no lapse. Note: Working with children checks and criminal records checks need to be supplied with your license renewal. As these may take time to obtain they should be applied for approximately four months before the expiry of the current license. Criminal record checks lodged with an application / renewal must be no older than six months.



A service must:

- Display the current child care license.
- Display any current exemptions.
- Display Grievance procedure.
- Display Name, address and telephone number of the Child Care Licensing and Standards Unit.
- Ensure a first aid kit is kept on the premises (refer regulation 53 Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006 for contents). – Regularly check and replace contents that have been used or are out of date.
- A telephone service must be connected at the centre (some services use a cordless phone to enable them access to the phone during outdoor activities).
- A current copy of the Child Care Services Act and Regulations is available to parents.
- Information regarding the services policies and procedures are available to parents and staff and specific information as outlined in regulation 76 Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006.
- Ensure emergency and evacuation procedures to be followed are written down and available to parents and staff. A rehearsal of these procedures is to be carried out twice per year.
- Procedures to be followed for the care of ill or injured children are written down and available to parents and staff.
- Ensure a person possessing a current first aid qualification is in attendance at all times enrolled children are attending a care session.
- Ensure smoke or fire detector is installed and in working order (ie check batteries regularly).

*Please refer to the Child Care Regulations for comprehensive information regarding obligations, compliance and additional requirements for operating a child care service.*

### Regulations

All child care services must comply with the Child Care Services Act 2007 and Regulations. The current regulations that apply to Long Day Care and both Occasional Care models are,

- *Child Care Services Regulations 2007*
- *Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006*

Copies of Acts and Regulations are available from the State Law Publisher website: [www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)

Services must advise Licensing and Standards Unit in writing:



- If the service is relocating.
- If the services closes permanently.
- If the Supervising Officer is or will be unable for any reason to supervise and control on a day-to-day basis the service for more than 30 days.
- If your Supervising Officer dies, resigns, is dismissed, retires or becomes incapable of being responsible for the day-to-day supervision and control of the service.
- If any of your Managerial Officers (committee members) change.
- If your licensee, Supervising Officer, or any of the Managerial Officers is convicted of a prescribed offence.
- Any change to any of fact or circumstance relating to or affecting the provision of the service for example may include,
  - Closures for repairs or maintenance or holiday periods
  - Changes to operating hours
  - Inability to utilise areas due to Damage as a result of a storm, flood, fire or vandalism.
  - A hazard has been identified (eg asbestos, structural instability, damaged permanently installed outdoor play equipment) which results in temporary closure or inability to utilise areas.
- The death of an enrolled child during a care session ♦
- An injury to an enrolled child during a care session that results in the child being admitted to hospital ♦
- Allegations of abuse, neglect or assault of an enrolled child during a care session. ♦
- Any modifications to the building [ a modification of building form would need to be completed]

♦ **Note:**

*Regulation 20 requires notification of these events to occur within one working day of the day in which the Injury or death occurred or the allegation was made.*

*In addition the Department for Child Protection should be notified of any allegations of abuse, neglect or assault and the outcome of any investigation into the event.*

Services should complete a Notification/Modification Application, and supply any additional information or forms detailed in the application, to notify the Department for Communities of a change of:

- Managerial officer/s;
- Change of name, whether given name(s) and/or surname (Managerial Officers or Supervising Officer);
- Other fact or circumstance that relates to, or affects your licence;
- Update emergency contact details;
- Surrender of child care licence; and
- Apply to modify the place specified on your licence.

Notification/Modification Application is available from the Department for Communities website:



<http://www.community.wa.gov.au/DFC/Resources/ChildCare/ChildCareServices/>

Services should complete an amendment application, and supply any additional information or forms detailed in the application, to amend the current child care licence conditions with respect to:

- Changing or removing any existing condition
- Changing the maximum number of children specified in the licence
- Changing hours of operation.

Licence Amendment Application is available from the Department for Communities website:

<http://www.community.wa.gov.au/DFC/Resources/ChildCare/ChildCareServices/>

In some of the circumstances services may need to apply for an exemption to enable the service to continue operating until the issue is resolved.

*(Source: Children's Services Newsletter May 2007 DCP + Child Care Services Regulation 2006)*

### *Exemptions*

The child care regulations are the minimum standards that have to be met to operate a child care service. Services are able to apply for exemptions from meeting specific regulations but should give careful consideration to how they will manage the operation of the service in regard to the regulation they are requiring an exemption from before applying. An exemption may be granted from any part of the regulations for a specified period of time as long as the special circumstance(s) and/or conditions apply. *(Source: Exemption Application Kit – Department For Communities: www.communities.wa.gov.au)*

Generally an application for an exemption must demonstrate that:

- special circumstances exist, that without the exemption the best interests of the children in care will be unreasonably compromised.
- reasonable alternatives under the circumstances have been exhausted, and the exemption application is the licensee's last available option – this condition primarily relates to staff exemptions and reasonable alternatives may include advertising for staff, relief staff or contract staff.
- the wellbeing of the children attending the service will be upheld even with the exemption in place, that is all reasonable steps have been taken to help minimise the impact of the proposed exemption. As the health, safety and wellbeing of the children in care is the primary purpose of the regulations, services need to demonstrate how they will maintain the intent of the regulation whilst the exemption is in place.



- reasonable steps have been taken to avoid this situation occurring in the future.

There are several forms of exemptions,

**Service Exemption:** This exemption relates to the service as opposed to individual staff and is accompanied by a staffing plan. The service exemption is usually used where more than one staff exemption is in place.

**Staffing Plan:** Where an exemption is requested to operate without the required number of qualified staff, a staffing plan will need to be submitted to show how the children's safety, health and wellbeing will be upheld. A staffing plan is a longer term arrangement, generally over a 12 month period, showing a workable step by step plan for managing staffing levels and developing staff skills, knowledge and experience. The purpose of a staffing plan is to help avoid future situations where the service may need to apply for a staff exemption. The CSO is available to support and assist services with the development of staffing plans.

**Staff Exemption:** This exemption is specific to an individual staff member in regard to regulation 81 – Minimum number of qualified contact staff. The exemption is for an unqualified worker to act as a qualified.

**Building Exemption:** Any exemption granted under Part 3 Division 3 of the Regulations is generally referred to as a 'building exemption'.

Exemptions are able to be renewed, however the service must demonstrate that the licensee has planned ahead and tried to avoid the situation from reoccurring.

Exemption applications must be lodged two weeks prior to the required exemption date, however if possible the exemption should be applied for as soon as practicable (ie after all reasonable alternatives have been exhausted). For example: A building exemption application may require an inspection. This exemption may take up to or even exceed 30 days for approval.

*(Source: Licensing and Regulations Fact Sheet – Dept for Community Development, Exemption Application Kit – DFC: [www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au))*

### Spot Checks

The Standards and Licensing Unit do carry out spot checks to ensure child care services are complying with the regulations. These are usually unannounced visits.

Some tips for ensuring a positive outcome:



- At all times your first priority is the care of the children in your charge. Accordingly you should ensure staff ratios are appropriate before leaving the floor to locate items or meet with the licensing officer. The licensing officer is aware of this and is able to work with the centre accordingly.
- Ensure all staff are familiar with the regulations and the organisation's policies and procedures and know where they are located.
- Review policies and procedures on a regular basis.
- If relief staff are available at short notice it may assist to get a relief staff member to work for the period of the visit.

Providing the service is operating in line with its obligations under the regulations and the act the spot check will just confirm your operations are appropriate.



## 7. DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS [DEEWR]

### LONG DAY CARE / FEDERAL FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE

The Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations [DEEWR];

- Administers the Child Care Benefit [CCB] and Child Care Tax Rebate [CCTR] for approved care services.
- Administers financial support to approved services including operational support payments or sustainability funding.
- Manages the administration of the quality assurance framework through funding the National Child Care Accreditation Council, Accreditation Review Committee and Inclusion and Professional Support Program.

The Child Care Services Handbook 2008-2009 and CCMS Child Care Service Handbook 2007-2008 provides information for approved child care services regarding service obligations and operations. The handbooks are available from DEEWR.

DEEWR will also provide information to services regarding their obligations and conditions of approval.

#### Notifiable Events

Approved services must provide written notification to DEEWR 30 days before:

- Entering into a contract for the sale of the services premises.
- Terminating the lease of the premises.
- Changing the address of the service.
- Ceasing to operate the service.

Approved services must provide written notification to DEEWR within 14 days of any changes to details in a services application for approval. This would include but is not limited to:

- Changes to operating hours / days.
- Change of management.
- Temporary closure of the service for any reason.
- Change of bank account details.

#### Eligibility Rules for Approved Services

- Operator and key personnel must remain suitable persons to operate a child care service.



- Approved services must ensure they have workers' compensation, public liability and other appropriate insurance and must provide a copy of the policy and certificate of currency upon request
- If service ceases to be operated by the person who applied for approval the approval will be cancelled. A new operator must make a new application for approval.
- DEEWR may require information regarding child care services or the operation of the service. Services must provide accurate information. Services are required to report child care usage and child care availability as a part of this condition.
- Service should not disclose personal information regarding families that use the service excepting where required by DEEWR and Family Assistance Office [FAO].

### LONG DAY CARE

A long day care service must:

- Ensure majority of children attending care have not commenced school and attend at least one day per week
- Operates on all normal working days in at least 48 weeks of the year
- Remains available for care for any child for at least eight continuous hours on each normal working day it operates
- A child attending a session is not prevented from attending any part of that session
- Services must ensure they provide child care places according to the Priority of Access guidelines.
- Participate in Quality Assurance in accordance with requirements of the NCAC.
- Maintain quality child care or make satisfactory progress to improve the quality of child care as assessed by the NCAC.

Note: In some circumstances Long Day Care services may apply for an exemption to the requirement to operate on all working days – this is currently under review – please contact DEEWR for further information.

### FEDERALLY FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE

An approved service must ensure:

- Most of the children provided with care will not have commenced school
- The service operates for a maximum of nine hours per day.

*(source: DEEWR, Child Care Services Handbook 2008-2009, FACSIA CCMS Child care Services Handbook 2007-2008 )*



## 8. DEEWR: COMMUNITY SUPPORT PAYMENTS

Community Support includes a range of payments designed to support access to child care for children and families in areas or in circumstances where the market would otherwise fail to provide child care services.

Services in receipt of funding under the community support program must utilise the funding for the operation of the service as soon as practicable and must provide information about their service as required by DEEWR.

### LONG DAY CARE: SUSTAINABILITY ASSISTANCE

Certain Long Day Care services are eligible for sustainability assistance. Eligibility is determined by DEEWR based on areas of need and incorporates factors including:

- Number of occupied or utilised places in the service.
- Remoteness.
- Socio economic status.
- Proportion of baby places (ie under 24 months).
- Whether service is sole provider of the care type in the community.

Funding Agreement will only be offered to services that:

- Are approved to receive CCB on behalf of families;
- Are licensed with the relevant state or territory licensing organisation;
- Are registered with the National Childcare Accreditation Council;
- Are operated by an incorporated body, company, trust, sole proprietor, owner operator or partnership;
- Have Public Liability insurance (for not less than \$10 million);
- Have Workers' Compensation insurance; and
- Have Professional Indemnity insurance (for not less than \$5 million).

In addition, eligibility for Sustainability Assistance is conditional on compliance with the following:

- Family Assistance Law and related disallowable instruments as relevant to the Funding recipient;
- State/Territory and Local Government laws, regulations and licensing requirements;
- Registration and participation in the relevant National Childcare Accreditation (NCAC) Quality Assurance System;
- Participation in and cooperation with compliance visits if requested by DEEWR;
- Long Day Care Program Guidelines.



Services in receipt of sustainability funding should check their funding agreements to confirm their individual service's obligations.

(Sources: *Child Care Services Support Program - Long Day Care Program Guidelines DEEWR June 2008*)

## FEDERAL FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE: FINANCIAL SUPPORT PAYMENTS

Financial Support is a payment to assist Federal Funded Occasional Care services to deliver flexible child care to families.

There are two forms of financial support for Federal Occasional Care;

1. Non-formula funded financial support
2. Operational Support Funding

### *Non-Formula Funded Occasional Care Services*

**Non-formula funded financial support** is a historically based payment and is available to current non CCB approved services. Non-formula Funded financial support is not available to any other occasional care service.

### *Formula Funded Occasional Care Services: Operational Support*

**Operational Support Funding** is only available to CCB approved OCC services

Funding Agreement will only be offered to services that:

- Are approved to receive and administer CCB on behalf of families;
- Are licensed with the relevant state or territory licensing organisation;
- Are operated by an incorporated body;
- Have Public Liability insurance (for not less than \$10 million);
- Have Workers' Compensation insurance;
- Have Professional Indemnity insurance (for not less than \$5 million) ;
- Have Ministerially-approved places allocated by the Department.

### *Operational Support Funding Eligibility & Obligations*

Eligibility for Operational Support Funding is conditional on compliance with the following:

- Family Assistance Law and related disallowable instruments as relevant to the Funding Recipient;



- State/territory and local government laws, regulations and licensing requirements;
- Participation in and cooperation with compliance visits if requested by the Department; and
- The requirements outlined in the OCC – Operational Support Program Guidelines.

Reporting obligations are outlined in the services' individual funding agreements. These include but are not limited to:

- Services are required to submit two Utilisation Reports.
- All funded services are required to acquit the funding in accordance with the requirements set out in their funding agreements.
- Annual Activity Report - outlines the service's progress in meeting the outcomes and outputs against Performance Indicators specified in the Funding Agreement.

Services in receipt of Operational Support Payments should check their funding agreements to confirm their individual service's obligations.

[Source: DEEWR Program Guidelines – Operational Support for OCC services 2008-09]



## 9. CHILD CARE BENEFIT [CCB]

There are two forms of Child Care Benefit [CCB] available

1. Registered Care
2. Approved Care

A service cannot be both a registered care provider and an approved care provider.

### REGISTERED CARE

#### [State Funded Occasional Care / Federal Occasional Care](#)

Registered care is care for work related purposes that is provided by individuals or services who are registered with the Family Assistance Office. Occasional Care Services (both state and federally non-formula funded) may be eligible to provide registered care.

Services need to complete a Registered Child Care Provider Application and lodge it with the Family Assistance Office. Registered Care Services must provide parents (or the person who paid for the child care) a valid receipt. The Family Assistance Office will provide free of charge printed receipt books or services can use their own receipts.

Receipts must include,

- Name address and Carer Reference Number (CRN)
- Full name of person paying for care
- Details of care provided for the person's child/ren
- Receipt must show Monday to Sunday, child's full name, period of care, number of hours of care in the week and total fee for the period
- Each receipt must be signed and dated

The parent or carer is responsible for claiming the CCB from the Family Assistance Office. Parents have to meet a work / study criteria to be eligible for registered care CCB. This does not entitle parents to the Child Care Tax Rebate.

More information is available from the Family Assistance Office  
[www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au)

[source: Family Assistance Office Fact Sheet – Child Care Benefit – 2008]



## APPROVED CARE

### Federal Funded Occasional Care / Long Day Care

An approved care service is a child care service that has been approved to receive CCB on behalf of eligible families. Approval is granted under the “A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999”. Long day services and some federal funded occasional care services are approved care providers.

To remain approved services must comply with the notifiable events and eligibility rules outlined in the child care services handbook 2008-9. These are summarised in this manual in the previous section “Department Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – DEEWR”.

Other key obligations include:

- Obligation to act on notices from Family Assistance Office
- Correctly passing on families’ CCB fee reductions, unless they have decided to claim it as a lump sum and not charging more than the usual fee.
- Providing detailed and accurate receipts or periodic statements showing
  - The name of the service
  - The Australian Business Number if applicable
  - Signature of the person issuing the receipt
  - Name of the person to whom the receipt is issued
  - Name/s of the child/children covered by the receipt
  - Period to which the fee payment relates
  - Date of issue of the receipt
  - Receipt number
  - The total of child’s allowable absence days for the financial year to date
  - Amount of fee reductions deducted for the period covered by the receipt
  - Amount paid (not including the fee reduction).
  - Receipts are to be issued in duplicate, the original for the parent, and a copy to be kept by the service.
- An approved child care service must keep records. Records must be kept for 36 months from the end of the year in which the care was provided. This rule also applies to the former operator of a service.
- Provide Statement of child care use and CCB statement for payment summary for each reporting period.
- Ensure the service complies with the determination of a session of care noting that before and after school care has standard periods.
- Advise the child care hotline of availability of child care places by 8pm Friday of each week and usage data for the previous week.



- Providing assistance to Compliance Officers with the inspection of records.

### Child Care Management System [CCMS]

Many services will have transitioned to the new Child Care Management System (CCMS). The software used by services may automatically generate some of the information required by DEEWR and usage, availability data. Services should verify the information they will still have to supply.

#### *For example*

Under the CCMS, your service will be required to submit the availability of child care places for your service to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The CCMS software your service uses may automatically generate this information.

[source: Child Care Management System (CCMS) Reference Manual]

For further information regarding the Child Care Management System services should consult the CCMS Child Care Service Handbook 2007-2008 available from DEEWR.



## 10. NATIONAL CHILD CARE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL [NCAC]

### LONG DAY CARE SERVICES

The National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) is responsible for the implementation and administration of the Child Care Quality Assurance (CCQA) system for long day care centres in Australia. This is referred to as the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS). The NCAC's role is to develop, implement, monitor and review the accreditation of children's services in Australia.

Long day care services must participate in the QIAS to be approved for child care benefit.

#### Quality Improvement and Accreditation System

Accreditation is a way of ensuring a level of standards is maintained across a particular industry. The accreditation process involves establishing key indicators, based on research and consultation with professionals in the industry. These provide a benchmark or basis for measurement of progress toward accreditation.

The NCAC has established seven quality areas which incorporate thirty three principles of quality care. The seven quality areas are:

- Staff relationships with children and peers;
- Partnerships with families;
- Programming and evaluation;
- Children's experiences and learning;
- Protective care and safety;
- Health, nutrition and wellbeing; and
- Managing to support quality.

QIAS involves services undertaking a process of self-study and improvement against the 33 principles of quality care incorporated into the seven quality areas.

Services need to meet these principles through ensuring the service has a clear philosophy which guides the service's policies, procedures, practices and environment. All of which should reflect quality care.

#### Compliance Requirements

Services have to meet a number of requirements to remain approved for child care benefit including participation in QIAS. In order to meet compliance requirements services must ensure they comply with the following requirements,



- Payment of registration fees
- Submission of self study report
- Participation in Validation Visits
- Participation in Spot Check Visits
- Satisfactory progress

Centres must also comply with child care regulations and child protection regulations. NCAC will report a centre to DEEWR if advised by the Licencing and Standards Unit or Department for Child Protection of

- Serious breach of child care regulations
- Ongoing unresolved breaches of child care regulations
- Child protection concerns

Full details of compliance requirements are outlined in the NCAC Quality Improvement and Accreditation System Handbook which is supplied upon registration with the NCAC or may be purchased.

### The Process

1. Registration with NCAC
2. Self Study and Continuing Improvement
3. Validation
4. Moderation
5. Accreditation Decision

Once a service has achieved accreditation the process from step 2 recommences with accredited services being required to submit a Self-study Report to NCAC every 2.5 years. An Accredited service's next Self-study Report is due by the date specified on its Certificate of Accreditation.

### Self Study and Continuing Improvement

Self study and continuing improvement is an ongoing process involving the service reviewing and assessing the quality of its practices. The process should involve management, staff and families in reviewing policies and goals. Community members are also encouraged to participate in the process.

### Validation

Validation is when a NCAC Validator visits a service to observe quality practices, view documentation and ask questions to determine whether the information gathered during the visit represents typical practice.

Validation Visits are 'unannounced'. That is, the service is not informed of the date of the Validation Visit but is provided with a time frame within which the Validation Visit will take place. The Validation Visit occurs after a service has undertaken the Self-



study and Continuing Improvement process and has submitted a Self-study Report to NCAC.

Currently the NCAC will endeavour to appoint a Validator within 12 weeks of receipt of the service's Self-study Report. However, this time frame is currently under review.

Advise NCAC in writing at the time of submitting the Self-Study Report, if there are any significant events or circumstances within the potential Validation Visit time frame that may impact on the Validation Visit, for example a temporary closure for building maintenance or the Christmas break.

### Spot Checks

Please be aware that NCAC Spot Checks can also take place for any Accredited service – these are unannounced visits of approximately two hours duration. For further information please visit the NCAC website.

### Information & Support

Services should refer to the NCAC's Quality Improvement and Accreditation System "Handbook" and "Quality Practices Guide".

For further or more comprehensive information or support please contact

NCAC                    [www.ncac.gov.au](http://www.ncac.gov.au)  
Phone:                1300 136 554

PSCWA                [www.pscwa.org.au](http://www.pscwa.org.au)  
Phone:                1800 783 768

## TIPS & HINTS TO HELP ENSURE VALIDATION VISITS RESULT IN POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- A Validation Visit is a "peer" review. Validators are individuals experienced in working in child care. They understand the processes and the issues faced in operating a service. A Validator is in attendance to observe your operations and note what they observe as "occurring" or "not occurring". This is only one aspect of the validation process.
- Remember you are the expert in your child care centre. You know the children in your care, their parent's expectations, the staff, your policies and procedures and the day to day routine and functions of the centre.



- In preparation for a Validation Visit the self study should enable the centre to identify and adjust any areas they feel require reviewing. Your centre will receive a Quality Practices Guide – make notes on the guide and refer to these if needed during your Validation Visit. Check your centre meets, at a minimum, the Satisfactory Standards for Accreditation in order to become Accredited.
- If in doubt the NCAC Child Care Advisors are only a phone call and are happy to assist. In addition Professional Support Coordinator WA [PSCWA] is also available for advice and support.
- Ensure Policies and Procedures are regularly reviewed (with review date and appropriate sources noted) which should eliminate any requirement to do a full scale review of policies prior to a Validation Visit.
- Ensure you and the staff are familiar with where policies / procedures are kept and are able to locate specific policies. This will reduce any additional stress during a Validation Visit in trying to locate policies to demonstrate adherence to Quality areas. This also will assist if due to unforeseen circumstances the Coordinator / supervising officer is absent on the day of the Validation Visit.
- On the day of the Validation Visit you should follow your programme. It may assist if major outings that would include all the enrolled children were not scheduled for the time frame given for the visit.
- Upon the arrival of the Validator introduce them to your staff and show them around the centre. Meet with the Validator and establish a time to meet that suits the program established for the day. Provide the Validator with a copy of the day's program if possible.
- At all times your first priority is the care of the children in your charge. Accordingly you should ensure staff ratios are appropriate before leaving the floor to locate items or meet with the Validator. The Validator is aware of this and is able to work with the centre accordingly.
- You are able to provide the Validator with additional information if a “not occurring” is noted. If you are able to demonstrate that a practice is occurring which has not been observed provide the evidence. You will have the opportunity to discuss the Validation Report with the Validator. Use this opportunity to clarify or provide additional evidence if required, especially for Satisfactory indicators marked '*not occurring*'.
- You are also able to make your own comments on the report at this time.



- The Validator will give you a *Validation Evaluation Form* at the end of the Visit. You do not need to complete this immediately. Talk to staff and get their opinion on the Visit first. Complete the *Form* within 7 days and use this opportunity to comment on the Validator and the Validation Visit. You can also add 2 extra pages to write further comments for indicators you may not have had time to address at the time of the Visit.
- A Validation Visit is an opportunity to showcase your centre and the high standards of care provided. Be proactive and highlight any aspects of your service that are unique.
- Refer to NCAC's *Support Documents* on Validation, available on NCAC's website for further information or call a Child Care Adviser.

Sources:

FACSA ([www.facsia.gov.au](http://www.facsia.gov.au));

NCAC (<http://www.ncac.gov.au>)

NCAC Advisor – verbal information, "Putting Children First" available from <http://www.ncac.gov.au>



## 11. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILD CARE

### SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO ALL MODELS OF CHILD CARE

#### Children's Services Officer [CSO]

The CSO provides advice and support to child care services on a range of issues including licensing requirements, quality care and childhood development. (See Chapter 6 for further information regarding CSO's role)

#### Child Australia's Resource Centre

Membership to the Child Australia Resource Centre is available to all services for an annual fee. The resource centre enables services to:

- Download specific fact sheets and information
- Access the resource centre catalogue
- Access and download sample policies and Policy Templates
- Child Australia also currently administers a program to support the inclusion of children with a disability in state funded occasional care services and three year old kindy programs (non school).

### STATE FUNDED OCCASIONAL CARE & PRE KINDY

#### Child Australia Pre-Kindy and Occasional Care Inclusion Project WA

This program supports the inclusion of children with a disability in state funded occasional care services and three year old kindy programs (non school).  
Phone: 9249 4333

### LONG DAY CARE / FEDERAL OCCASIONAL CARE

#### Inclusion and Professional Support Program

Through this program, eligible child care services have access to affordable support, advice, resources and professional development.

#### *Professional Support Coordinator WA [PSCWA]*

- Support provided by Child Australia PSCWA includes:



- Quality and accreditation processes
- Professional development
- Resources
- Helpline: 1800 783 768

### *Inclusion Support Agencies*

There are two Inclusion Support Agencies that provide support to services in the Wheatbelt:

1. Child Australia Great Southern Inclusion Support Agency  
Phone: 08 9842 3163
2. Shire of Mundaring – East Metro & Midlands  
Inclusion Support Agency  
Phone: 08 9274 7128

Inclusion Support Agencies can assist services by

- Providing information and support
- Linking services with community supports
- Guiding the development of flexible and inclusive practices
- Assisting services to identify professional development needs.

### LONG DAY CARE

#### *Child Care Advisors*

The NCAC Child Care Advisors can provide information to services regarding Quality Practices.  
Phone: 1300 136 554



## 12. ADMINISTRATION

### INSURANCE

Appropriate and comprehensive insurance cover is vital for all organisations. Being an incorporated not for profit organisation is not protection against legal action.

#### Protection through Associations Incorporation Act 1987

- Incorporation creates a legal entity (the organisation) that is separate from the individual members.
- The *Associations Incorporation Act* provides a level of protection to an individual member from being sued for the action of the association or of another member of the association.
- *The Act does not protect a member of an association from being sued for their own actions, e.g. negligence or wrongful acts committed by them.*
- *Members and committee or board members of unincorporated bodies can be sued as individuals.*
- Any association is eligible to be incorporated if it has more than five members and is formed for any of the purposes listed in the *Associations Incorporation Act 1987*. These purposes are reflected in clause 3.1 of the *Volunteers (Protection from Liability) Act 2002*.

For more information visit [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/associations](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/associations)

In addition volunteers are not always protected from liability

#### Volunteers (Protection from Liability) Act 2002

- Someone who is volunteering for an incorporated not-for-profit organisation and *operates in good faith when doing community work and within the organisation's guidelines is protected from personal civil liability under this Act, subject to certain exceptions.*
- The intent is that the liability will transfer to the community organisation with which they are involved.
- This means that volunteers cannot be sued for something they did or failed to do, *if they are acting within the scope of the work and directions given to them by the community organisation.*

For more information visit [www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/volunteers/](http://www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/volunteers/)

Insurance is one way in which a not for profit organisation protects itself, its volunteers and paid staff, committee of management, clients and customers



against risk. It is the responsibility of the organisation to be familiar with all the clauses of the policy and provide details to its staff. Organisations should minimise risk to its staff, clients and customers through proper health and safety practices, documented procedures, training and management practices.

Some forms of insurance are compulsory such as workers compensation or for example Childcare Services (Child Care) Regulation 2006 require services to hold public liability insurance 78 (1). In addition services may have obligations under funding or service agreements to hold certain types and levels of insurance coverage,

### Types of Insurance

It is recommended that organisations seek professional advice in determining what cover is available and appropriate for their needs.

Listed below are some of the types of insurance available:

*Personal Accident Insurance or Volunteer Insurance* to cover volunteers for any out-of-pocket expenses following accidental injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the organisation. This form of insurance may cover loss of income,

*Public Liability Insurance* to cover an organisation for its legal liability to third parties for personal injury or property damage caused by an occurrence in connection with the insured organisation's business activities

*Directors' and Officers Liability* to cover committee members and office bearers for legal liability which may arise out of their role in the organisation

*Professional Indemnity Insurance* to compensate the organisation for loss incurred through a claim made against the organisation for breach of professional duty arising from negligence, errors, omissions, defamation, loss of records or documents, dishonest acts etc by volunteer or paid staff.

*Commercial Vehicle Insurance* to cover commercial vehicles for theft ,fire or accident

*Motor Vehicle Comprehensive Insurance* to cover vehicles owned and driven by volunteer or paid staff for loss or damage to the vehicle or third party property.

Note: If staff use their own vehicle for work purposes they may need to check their insurance and vehicle licence to ensure their vehicle and occupants are covered for this use.

*Workers Compensation* to cover injury to employees for accidents associated with work.



*Building Insurance* to cover the building against events such as fire, storm and vandalism

*Contents Insurance* To cover damage caused to contents

*Other types* of Insurance for organisations to consider include fidelity guarantee, portable items and events insurance

Disclaimer: Information provided is a guide only organisations should take professional advice to ensure that they are adequately and appropriately covered by insurance.

(source: [www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org); DOCEP Inc Guide)

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Whilst insurance is one way to protect an organisation as stated minimising risk to staff, clients and customers, and in the case of child care services children, through proper health and safety practices, documented procedures, training and management practices is also essential. This is termed risk management.

The West Australian Government has developed a resource called "Risky Business" This is an introduction to risk management for community organisations. Whilst not covering child care specific issues this book may still be a valuable resource for your organisation. The resource can be downloaded from:

[http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/assets/files/Clubhouse/13\\_Risky\\_Business.pdf](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/assets/files/Clubhouse/13_Risky_Business.pdf)

## FINANCIAL RECORDS & OBLIGATIONS

To comply with the accounting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 incorporated associations must:

- Keep true and accurate accounting records that explain the financial transactions and the financial position of the association in a manner that can be conveniently and properly audited.
- Submit accounts at each AGM, showing the financial position of the association at the end of the immediately preceding financial year.

It is essential organisations have policies and procedures to meet these requirements and the requirements of funding agreements and the New Tax System.

Some recommendations are:

- Preparing an annual budget
- Keeping full details of income received, including source, date and amount. grants, membership, donations, fundraising, sales of goods and interest



- Establishing policies and procedures to authorise, record and pay accounts and produce invoices
- Procedure for petty cash reimbursements transactions
- Record Australian taxation information, such as goods and services tax [GST], superannuation, fringe benefits, income tax records and withholding payments
- Keep time and wages records in accordance with the relevant award or industrial law
- Reconcile bank statements
- Maintaining a register of association assets

Services may need to detail expenditure in relation to specific funding. For example Lotterywest funding for play equipment – invoices from suppliers need to be identified to enable the organisation to acquit the grant.

Services registered for GST will need to submit a Business Activity Statement either annually or quarterly.

PAYG deductions must be forwarded to the Australian Taxation Office quarterly

Superannuation Guarantee Contributions (SGC) must be forwarded quarterly or as required by the relevant superannuation fund.

PAYG Payment Summaries must be provided to employees at the end of the financial year and a return lodged with the Australian Taxation Office

*(source: DOCEP Inc Guide, Australian Taxation Office)*

### Records

Child care services have an obligation to maintain accurate records. As an incorporated association records should be kept as a matter of good policy and sound administration.

There are however legal requirements for the maintaining of records.

The Associations Incorporation Act 1987 requires an association to keep the following records:

- Up to date register of all members, including their residential or postal addresses
- An up to date version of the rules of the association
- List of the names and addresses of people who are office holders under the rules of the association, including committee members, any trustees, and those authorised to use the common seal
- Accounting records that correctly record and explain the financial transactions and position of the association in such a manner that allows true and fair accounts to be prepared



- Every disclosure of interest made by a committee member (to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the disclosure was made).

In addition financial records, payroll and timesheets and information regarding staff, parents and children etc all have to be kept for a period of time.

Services should ensure they adhere to the Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006 in regard to confidentiality, access to records and storage.

The Commonwealth's privacy laws (*Privacy Act (1988) as amended by the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act (2000)*) together form the National Privacy Principles) require that anyone on whom an association gathers and holds information has a right to:

- have their privacy rights respected
- be assured that their information will not be passed onto a third person without their consent
- know what information will be kept and why it needs to be kept
- know how information will be used
- know how they can access this information
- know how to correct an incorrect or misleading record
- be assured that information will only be used for the purpose it was supplied.

### *Retaining Records*

Some records may be destroyed after their legal retention period has expired. An association should not destroy any records unless they are absolutely certain that the records can safely and legally be destroyed. An association should have a policy on storing and destroying records.

DOCEP suggests organisations may consider passing the records of historical value of associations to the Battye Library especially if the organisation is no longer operating. Services should ensure that any records of this nature, such as minutes, do not contain confidential information.

- Records that must be kept permanently are archived and must not be destroyed.
- Records that have permanent value are historical documents, minutes of meetings and legal documents.
- Archived records can be stored on-site or at an off-site storage facility.

There are legal guidelines regarding the retention of records.

The following records should be kept for seven years,

- Insurance



- timesheets and wages records
- Child Care Benefit (funds received)

The following records should be retained for five years

- Accounting
- Taxation
- receipts

Child care service record keeping obligations are governed by sections 219F and 219G of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* and are detailed in the associated statutory rules, *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) (Child Care Benefit—Record Keeping) Rules 2006*.

An approved child care service must keep records for 36 months from the end of the year in which the care was provided. This rule also applies to the former operator of a service.

All service types must retain:

- Statement of child care usage forms (copies)
- Child Care Benefit statement for payment summary forms (copies)
- Attendance records including absences
- Copies of supporting documentation for approved absences for each child
- Documents to support claims for Special Child Care Benefit and 24-hour care
- Copies of receipts issued to people, who have paid child care fees
- Enrolment forms
- Copies of any notices given to the service by the Family Assistance Office for CCB purposes such as the rate of fee reduction and eligible hours for all children
- If applicable, the license to operate a child care service issued by the State and Territory in which the service operates
- Current service insurance records and policies
- Accounting records, including cashbooks and journals
- In-home care agreement (if applicable).

(source: DEEWR, CCB Compliance Instruction Sheets)

The Child care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006 also outline requirements for maintaining and retaining records,

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Injury or accident records and treatment of age | : Until the child reaches 24 years of age |
| Relating to the death of an enrolled child      | : 6 years                                 |
| Record of excursion                             | : 3 months from day of excursion          |
| Written programmes of activities                | : 3 months                                |



The following records must be retained for 3 years,

- Attendance Records
- Record of each emergency rehearsal of emergency procedure
- Parent authorisation to include a child in a higher or lower age group
- Evidence of qualifications of contact staff
- Staff attendance (days and times employed)

*(source: Child care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006)*

Where conflicting periods are noted the service should retain records for the maximum time.



## 13. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

An incorporated body is governed by the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 and the rules of the association which are contained in the organisations constitution.

When establishing or altering the constitution, referred to as the rules of the association, importance should be placed on what is actually occurring as opposed to utilising a generic constitution. In the Wheatbelt some organisations do not meet over the harvest or seeding periods or close over the Christmas / January period. If your constitution states you will hold a meeting each month then failure to call a meeting is a breach of the rules of the association. It may be more reflective of the activities of the organisation to “hold a minimum of six meetings per year”.

An incorporated body is a legal entity and as such is able to enter into contracts, open and operate bank accounts and employ staff etc. As the committee is responsible for the management of the organisation committee members should have an understanding of the requirements of government departments, regulations and obligations the organisation has to meet.

A good understanding of the operations of the organisation is essential to effective management. This should not be interpreted as having to work in the centre rather knowing what staff should be doing in their day to day duties. Committee members should have an understanding of the Child Care Services Regulations, the Acts that govern your organisation, obligations to funding bodies including DEEWR, ATO, Child Protection, Worksafe, Equal Opportunities Commission and employer related obligations.

### INCORPORATED BODY

Some important obligations under the Incorporated Associations Act 1987,

- Must hold AGM within four months of end of financial year.
- Must present financials at AGM.
- Must comply with rules of the Association.
- Must maintain a register of members.
- Committee members must declare any conflict of interest.
- Correct processes must be followed to change the rules of the association. (Constitution)



## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Chairperson – President

- Calls meetings and AGM
- Chairs meetings
- Signs documents on behalf of the association
- Ensures the association is run according to its rules and the organisation's strategic plan
- Represent the association at external meetings and events.

### Vice Chairperson – Vice President

- In the Chairpersons absence the vice-chairperson can,
- Represent the association
- Preside over meetings

### Secretary

- Maintains membership register
- Records minutes of meetings
- Organises meetings
- Assists in preparing the agenda
- Sends out notices for meetings
- Maintains minutes and records
- Attends to correspondence

### Treasurer

- Ensures accurate records of the financial activities of the organisation are kept
- Ensures committee members are informed of the financial position of the association
- Presents accurate financials to the meetings
- Prepares and presents financial statements to the Annual General Meeting
- Makes payments and bank deposits
- Prepares and managing the budget



## COMMITTEE INDUCTIONS

New committee members should receive an induction. The following are some items that may be included in the induction:

- Copy of the Constitution
- Outline of the Roles and Responsibilities of the committee members
- List of committee members and staff and appropriate contact details
- Position description
- Organisational structure
- Overview of the organisation
- Minutes of the last meeting and access to previous minutes of the organisation
- Outline of the funding of the organisation
- Copy of or access to a copy of the policies and procedures
- Copy of the Code of Ethics (signed by the committee member)

### SAMPLE CODE OF ETHICS

#### CODE OF ETHICS

In the course of working on the XXXXXX Child Care Services Inc Management Committee you will become aware of information that must be kept confidential.

This information may relate to clients, staff, committee members, past and present, committee plans or programmes.

To acknowledge that you have read and understood this policy please sign below.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

## NATIONAL POLICE CLEARANCES AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

The National Police Checks for Volunteers Program (NPCVP) is run by the Volunteering Secretariat, Department for Communities and the WA Police. The program provides volunteer organisations with volunteer police checks at a cost of \$10 per check.



## Registering for the National Police Check for Volunteers Project

**NOTE:** Only organisations, not individual volunteers, are able to register for the program.

Organisations wishing to register for the program need to download an Information Package and complete the Registration Form. The Information Package contains all you need to join the program and is available from, <http://www.community.wa.gov.au/DFC/Communities/Volunteers/PoliceChecks/orVolunteers/>

## Working with Children Check (WWC) and National Police Check

Some volunteers who work in a variety of tasks within an organisation may need to have both a Working with Children check **and** a National Police Check (eg for bus driving or managing finances) to comply with the new WWC legislation and their organisation's policy guidelines in relation to volunteer screening.

In order to reduce the financial impact on organisations/volunteers, the National Police Checks will be provided free of charge when evidence of an application for a Working with Children Check is provided.

## The New Checking Process in Summary

This information is designed to be read in conjunction with the National Police Checks Information Package available at [www.volunteers.wa.gov.au](http://www.volunteers.wa.gov.au).

- Volunteers apply for a Working with Children check at Australia Post outlets, pay their \$10 and they will be provided with a receipt with a bar code and application number.
- This receipt should be retained by the volunteer and a photocopy taken by the volunteering organisation at the time they have the volunteer sign the National Police Checks consent form and provide proof of identity.
- The consent form now contains a space where the volunteer's Working with Children application number must be inserted when applicable and a box needs to be ticked indicating the organisation has sighted their WWC application receipt.
- The consent form and photocopied WWC application number should be retained by the organisation and stored in a safe place for up to two years. WAPOL audits consent forms and will audit WWC application documents on a periodic basis.
- The email spreadsheet currently used to provide volunteer names to WAPOL for checking will have an extra field added for the WWC application number to be provided.



- WAPOL will invoice organisations for the number of checks completed as they currently do but there will be no charge for volunteers where evidence of a WWC application number is provided.

It should be noted that a WWC application number is sufficient to request a National Police Check. The volunteer does not need to have received their Criminal History Evaluation Card before requesting a NPCVP check.

The no cost second check applies only to the NPCVP check, not the Working with Children Check. Should a volunteer organisation have applied for and paid for a NPCVP check for a volunteer, that volunteer will be required to pay for the WWC check.



## VOLUNTEERS RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Do not limit your recruitment strategies to parents whose children attend child care or to mothers.

Organisations should check their constitution to establish the limitations on membership as outlined in the constitution. If necessary the constitution may be amended to enable the recruitment of professionals or community members with skills and knowledge that will contribute to the management of the organisation. Also the definition of parent / carer may be expanded to incorporate extended family.

### Seniors

Grandparents and seniors may enjoy volunteering for a child care centre. Their grandchildren may even attend or have attended in the past. If you have a senior citizens centre or regular activities for seniors, attend the sessions or groups and speak to them about your organisation and volunteer opportunities. Seniors have a wealth of experience, retired school teachers, nurses, accountants or bookkeepers, insurance brokers etc still have an overall knowledge – it may not be up with current trends, but the basic principles remain the same in these areas.

### Gender

It is not just mothers who benefit from availability of child care. Attend a farmers meeting or local sporting group and address the group. Target men employed in professions that reflect skills that would be of value or whose children attend the centre. This also provides alternative views at meetings through “gender blending”.

### Employers

Local council and local businesses may be claiming they cannot get staff – if there is child care available parents are able to return to work. Additionally if the employer has a parent employed then ensuring the sustainability of the child care centre is in the employer’s interests.

Local councils have many skilled employees – this may be a potential target for recruitment. Also attend a council meeting and outline the profile of the organisation and need for volunteers. Councillors may not volunteer personally but this will help to get the word out.

### Advertising Volunteer Vacancies

Advertising may assist in the process of finding volunteers.

Advertisements for volunteers should include a profile of your organisation which includes your organisation’s contribution to the community. Clearly outline your requirements and the volunteer role you need to fill – for example;



- A police clearance – working with children check is required – paid by the organisation (if applicable)
  - Willingness to sign confidentiality agreement due to the nature of the industry
  - The number hours per week or month required
  - The time of committee meetings
  - Specific skills can also be requested:
    - a person experienced accounts
    - knowledge of Health and Safety
    - submission writing (good written communication skills)
- Note: It is important to then ensure the opportunity to use the skills is then provided.

Advertising for volunteers can be achieved through:

- School and playgroup newsletters
- Via sporting groups (newsletters or posters)
- School assemblies
- Attending meetings and making presentations – Lions Club, Rotary
- Local radio station – often free advertising for community groups
- Local television – again free community announcements
- Local newspaper

#### Invitations to Potential Volunteers

Identify the individuals in the community who have the skills required or are potential committee members. Forward a written invitation to join the committee. It may be of benefit to highlight the values and skills you feel they would bring to your committee. Alternatively invite the person to a meeting as a guest – if they have specific skills (such as a solicitor) you could ask them as a guest speaker. They could then be approached to join the committee after experiencing and interacting with the existing committee. As a guest speaker the information they impart will be of value even if the guest does not join as a volunteer.

“Bring a Guest” Meeting - Ask all committee members to “bring a guest” and ensure the meeting has a social component. Note When inviting guests to meetings it is important to ensure items discussed at the meeting are not confidential.

FINALLY do not leave recruitment of volunteers until the AGM. No one attends an AGM as they feel they may get a position. Start your recruitment before your AGM then people are comfortable in the meetings and with other committee members and may have developed an understanding that would enable them to confidently take on an office bearers role. Check your constitution to ensure you are able to recruit new committee members throughout the year.



## 14. CONTRACTS

An incorporated body is legal entity and has the ability to negotiate and enter into contracts and agreements.

Accordingly the management committee should ensure they understand the organisations obligations under any contractual agreement.

Contracts or agreements may include:

- Employment contracts
- Service agreements
- Funding agreements
- Lease agreements

Contracts or agreements can offer a form of protection or outline responsibilities between two parties. Another term that may be used is Memorandum of Understanding.

Organisations may wish to initiate formal agreements to ensure their organisation and its property is secure.

For example

Lease: If an organisation is using a local government building they may consider requesting a lease or a memorandum of understanding regarding the use of the building.

Reasons:

- to ensure long term use of the building - CEOs and councillors change therefore the organisation may wish to ensure their terms of using the building are not subject to being amended following a council election or a review by a new CEO.
- to outline responsibilities such as building maintenance, grounds maintenance, insurance, rates etc.
- to outline any payments due in the form of rent or to details any nominal or peppercorn rental applicable.

Collocation: If an organisation is sharing their premises with a separate organisation they may choose to form an agreement outlining conditions and responsibilities of each party. The agreement may include:

- Insurance and overheads (power, phone, water etc).
- Equipment and resources – usage of and repairs or replacement.
- Share arrangement – who has usage on which days / hours.
- Cleaning and maintenance.





- Responsibility for shared equipment.
- Listing of each party's assets.
- Cost of consumables.

Agreements can ensure all parties are aware of their obligations and overcome any disputes or misunderstandings.



## 15. POLICIES

Policies are rules, strategies or courses of action that have been adopted by an organisation. Policies guide the operation of an organisation. Many organisations make decisions on how to do things or even what the organisation does. These decisions are actually policies and procedures.

### WHY HAVE POLICIES

Unfortunately when these decisions are not recorded in an incorporated organisation changes in committee members and staff can result in confusion regarding the details of the outcome that was initially agreed upon. Additionally individuals may have different recall or interpretation of the decisions.

To avoid confusion and ensure consistency it is essential that policies are recorded in a format that is accessible to committee members, staff and parents.

Some policies are required by the Child Care Services Act and additional policies are necessary to meet accreditation requirements.

Policies may also demonstrate an organisations adherence to legislative requirements.

As all child care services are unique and operate in communities with differing needs it may be necessary to develop policies specific to your service, parents, community and organisational needs.

### POLICIES FOR YOUR SERVICE

There are various templates for standard policies available. It is recommended services use sample policies and templates from a range of sources to obtain ideas and guidance in determining what information they need to include in their policy and even the language and style that suits their organisation. If services do choose to use a standard template and insert their organisation details into it should they should ensure the policy reflects both the philosophy and needs of their own organisation. Policy templates are designed to be a one size fits all and therefore does not always meet the specific and unique needs of every organisation. This may simply mean the wording needs to be adjusted slightly or the document modified.

#### Writing or Reviewing Policies

Writing or reviewing policies is a process. Most policies include:



- Why do you need the policy? This is referred to as the “rationale”. In investigating the “rationale” services need to consider the impact of the policy / issue in regard to the service (staff, management and children) and its stakeholders (parents). For example a change in operating hours (opening time) may have an adverse affect on some parents who work. In addition it should be ensured that the policy is consistent with and does not contravene legislative requirements.
- What is the policy for? This is the purpose or goal of the policy.
- How will the policy be implemented? This is referred to as the procedure or actions.
- The policy should be dated
- The policy should also include the source if applicable, being the information that the policy is based on, usually a recognised authority. For example information for a sun protection policy may be sourced from the cancer foundation – a recognised authority on sun protection.
- Finally the policy should include a review date. This assists the organisation to maintain current policies. Reviewing policies enables organisations to verify actual procedures reflect the policy and that the policy is in line with current research findings and current Acts or legislation.

It is essential policies are developed in consultation with all stakeholders – management, staff, parents and community.

Feedback from staff meetings, parents and observation of children should contribute to the review process. In addition staff and parents should be consulted regarding new policies or changes to existing policies.



## 16. HUMAN RESOURCES: RECRUITING AND MANAGING STAFF

As an incorporated body the management committee is responsible for employing staff and meeting employer obligations.

### EMPLOYER OBLIGATIONS

Employer obligations may include:

#### Wages & Salaries

Ensuring staff conditions and wages paid are in accordance with the applicable industrial award or agreement.

#### Australian Taxation Office

- Pay as You Go [PAYG] deductions
- Superannuation Guarantee Contributions [SGC] – employer contributions to superannuation

#### WorkSafe

Employer obligation to meet the requirements under the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 and Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996. The principal objective of the Act is to promote and secure the safety and health of persons in the workplace.

#### Equal Opportunities

The Equal Opportunity Act 1984 promotes equality of opportunity in Western Australia and to provide remedies in respect of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, family responsibility or family status, race, religious or political conviction, impairment, or age, or involving sexual or racial harassment or, in certain cases, on gender history grounds.

#### Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006

Additionally your service must ensure staffing levels and qualifications adhere to the requirements of the Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006.

Some of which are:

- Working with children checks



- Police Clearances (where necessary)
- Professional Development / Training – for example First Aid, Food Handling
- Induction and Evacuation Procedures
- Procedure for dealing with parent concerns

Additional requirements relating to policies may be needed for services participating in QIAS.

Other issues for consideration by the management committee in its role as employer are

- Developing staff employment contracts if applicable to the organisation. In establishing the conditions of employment care should be taken to ensure these are in line with the appropriate award. The award may specify which party is responsible for payment of costs associated with employment, for example medical checks or Working With Children Checks.
- Developing a staff handbook.
- Ensuring regular staff meetings take place and feedback is provided to the committee.
- Uniforms.
- Encouraging staff to undertake further training. This enables succession in the event of staff turnover and thereby the possibility of promotion within the organisation. Additionally having qualified staff ensures the service is able to meet obligations as required under the regulations and reduces reliance on one or two key staff – enabling leave or absences without duress being placed on the management committee or the absent staff member. The employer may consider options such as traineeships.
- Ensuring staff skills are current and providing professional development opportunities.

## STAFF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Performance appraisals provide both staff and management with information. This is a process that enables staff to identify and raise any issues that are impacting on their ability to perform their duties, for example the need for further training, inability to complete tasks in the time allowed, or any issues that are arising in regard to supervision of children or parent actions. The process provides management with feedback and a process to assess staff performance against the requirements of their position.

Performance Appraisals should be conducted annually or earlier if required. Newly appointed staff may be subject to a probationary period and therefore an appraisal would be undertaken at or near the conclusion of the probationary period. If a staff member's performance is found to be unsatisfactory an agreed action plan to address the issues raised can be implemented and an interim performance appraisal conducted within a specified time. For example a three month action plan involving



staff training and implementation of strategies to assist the staff member meet requirements may be developed. An interim performance appraisal could be scheduled on or before the conclusion of the three month period. It may also be helpful to have monthly meetings or reports on progress during the period of the plan.

The format or process used to carry out performance appraisals varies and should meet the needs of both the organisation and staff. The coordinator should be involved with staff appraisals. A copy of the performance appraisal should be provided to the staff member. The performance appraisal should include any action plans developed during the process – this may take the form of a second document.

- The performance appraisal can be based on demonstrated progress in each of the quality areas as required by QIAS. This also enables the committee to monitor progress toward meeting accreditation requirements.
- The duty statement can also provide a basis for the performance appraisal.

### Reports

Reports are another useful tool in evaluating performance. The coordinator may report to the committee on a regular basis or at committee meetings. The report should have a consistent format to enable the committee to follow progress and can include a range of headings – QIAS Quality areas, utilisation, programmes, staff development, staff issues, parent interactions, newsletters and general activities in the centre. A section to highlight unusual or other issues / events could also be included.

## RECRUITING STAFF

A staff recruitment process involves a number of progressive stages

- 1) Establish the need and requirements of the position.
  1. What are the duties and responsibilities?
  2. What knowledge, experience and qualifications are required to fill the requirements of the position – remember to check requirements under the Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006.
  3. Based on the industrial award and the services budget establish a salary and any additional benefits (eg uniform supplied).
  4. What days and hours are required – Is there any flexibility? Is job sharing an option?
  5. From this information a position description and selection criteria can be developed.
- 2) The position description would generally include
  - 1) Position title.
  - 2) Philosophy of the organisation and general description.



- 3) Duties.
  - 4) Responsibility – who is responsible to the position and who is the position responsible to.
  - 5) Skills and qualifications – these can be divided into Essential and Desirable.
- 3) The next step is to advertise.
- 1) Advertise widely (in line with the services budget) and use your networks to distribute information regarding the vacancy.
  - 2) Include:  
Job Title, philosophy and description of organisation, overview of the position, skills and qualifications, salary, Hours, contact details for further details and postal address for written applications.
  - 3) If you require applicants to address the selection criteria then this should be indicated in the advertisement and applicants requested to obtain an application pack. Other requirements may include name and contact details of two referees.
  - 4) Following the receipt of applications committee or a sub committee will need to review applications and decide which applicants most likely meet the selection criteria. In this way applicants can be shortlisted for an interview. An interview panel should be selected. If appropriate including the coordinator on the panel is helpful as they are familiar with the daily operations of the centre and need to be able to work with the appointed staff member.
- 4) Conducting interviews
- 1) If possible provide each interview panel member with a copy of the applications prior to the interview and ensure they have a copy of the position description and selection criteria.
  - 2) Ensure all panel members have a set of standard questions – 1 copy for each applicant being interviewed with space on the question sheet for applicant name and interviewer notes. It can be helpful to have a separate observer simply taking notes of applicant answers for referring to following the interview.
  - 3) Establish a timetable for interview and allow approximately 10 – 15 minutes between interviews for panel discussion.
  - 4) Provide each applicant with a copy of the questions to enable them to make notes before the interview.
- 5) Selecting the applicant
- 1) The panel should consider the applicants interview and application when deciding who to appoint.
  - 2) When a decision has been made referee checks should be conducted.
  - 3) The final decision may need to be referred to the full committee for approval.
  - 4) Advise applicant of their success and forward a letter confirming details of appointment.
  - 5) Following advice to the successful applicant and acceptance of the position unsuccessful applicants should be advised, preferably in writing.



## CHECKLIST

It may be helpful for organisations to develop a checklist of documents and training required to be maintained for inclusion in personnel files. See example below.

| Checklist for new employee commencement and probation | Date Completed |
|---|----------------|
| Letter of appointment                                 |                |
| Employment contract                                   |                |
| Tax file Number Declaration                           |                |
| Superannuation Guarantee Contribution fund details    |                |
| Staff Handbook provided                               |                |
| Staff Induction completed                             |                |
| Conclusion of Probation                               |                |

| Documents / training on commencement and to be maintained | Date Completed | Due date | Date Completed | Due date | Date Completed | Due date |
|---|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Working with Children's Check                             |                |          |                |          |                |          |
| Police Clearance (if required)                            |                |          |                |          |                |          |
| First Aid Certificate                                     |                |          |                |          |                |          |
| Medical   |                |          |                |          |                |          |
| Performance Appraisal                                     |                |          |                |          |                |          |
| Professional Development (list activities)                |                |          |                |          |                |          |

The due dates of items may then be collated into a planner or schedule which includes all staff requirements.



## 17. PROFILES AND ORGANISATION STRUCTURES OF WHEATBELT CHILD CARE SERVICES

Consideration needs to be given to the structure of a child care organisation.

Examples of some options for community run centre based care include,

### Establishing A Not For Profit Incorporated Organisation

This service is usually managed by a volunteer management committee.

### Establishing The Child Care Service Under An Existing Not For Profit [For examples Telecentres]

A sub committee may be established to oversee the child care service. The advantage of this model is that the existing service may already have the infrastructure in place to carry out administrative functions. This model also reduces the burden on community members to commit to an additional volunteer role. This model may offer savings on some overheads for example insurances.

### Establishing the Child Care Service Under Local Government

A committee of council with delegated authority may be appointed to oversee the operations of the child care service.

As with the previous model infrastructure is in place for administration and there is the possibility of savings on some overheads.

### Forming Partnerships

Approach an existing community organisation and offer to work together and become a dual committee, for example a Telecentre or a playgroup. The same or some of the members could be on both committee and the meetings could take place at the same time. This would ensure the sustainability of two organisations and decrease the burden on some volunteers.

Note the organisations would remain separate in this model.

This option can enable a shared treasurer and secretary etc and provide the opportunity for a broader range of skills. It can also allow for a shared administration in some cases.



## 18. FUNDING OPTIONS AND CONTACTS

### FUNDING AND SUPPORT

There are various options for accessing funding and support to run a child care service.

- Grants are one option – please see the contact list included.
- Sponsorship is the provision of funds or product in exchange for something - usually advertising. Businesses can provide sponsorship of a child care centre through discounting or donating supplies or money, some community organisations such as Lions, Narrogin Rev Heads and Quairading B&S Ball donate profits to community organisations.
- Community partnerships can reduce the burden on volunteers “many hands make light work”. Examples include joint fundraisers, exchange of skills such as the football club members doing a busy bee or maintenance for the child care centre in exchange for a pre season clean up of their clubrooms.
- Local Government may be willing to support child care services in their communities, although the provision of child care is not a responsibility of local government. Levels of support differ however can include providing premises at a nominal rental, maintenance of premises, assistance with administration and funding.
- Collocating with an existing organisation can benefit both organisations with shared premises, overheads and some resources. Examples include playgroups, CWA.
- Support services – various organisations and government departments offer support or resources for your service. Whilst some are specifically for child care, other organisations offer general support or resources covering a range issues many of which are applicable to child care services, volunteers or incorporated organisations.

### FUNDING CONTACTS

#### **Lotterywest**

[www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au](http://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au)

#### **Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)**

[www.frrr.org.au](http://www.frrr.org.au)

#### **WA Grants Directory**

[www.grantsdirectory.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/](http://www.grantsdirectory.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/)

#### **Grantslink**

[www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au)





**Myer Foundation**  
[www.myerfoundation.org.au](http://www.myerfoundation.org.au)

**Volunteer Grants Program**  
[www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au)

**Foundation for Children Grants**  
[www.foundationforchildren.com.au](http://www.foundationforchildren.com.au)

**Early Years Funding DFC**  
Contact: **09 9622 0011** or your Children's Services Officer

#### SUPPORTS FOR VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

**Department for Communities**  
[www.community.wa.gov.au/DFC/Communities/volunteers/](http://www.community.wa.gov.au/DFC/Communities/volunteers/)

**VolunteeringWA**  
[www.volunteeringwa.org.au](http://www.volunteeringwa.org.au)

**Department of Commerce**  
Information in regard to incorporation and obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act. Also links to the "Inc Guide".  
[www.commerce.wa.gov.au/associations](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/associations)

**Department for Sport and Recreation**  
Includes link to club guides – "Risky Business" is one of the club guides.  
[www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au)

#### SUPPORT SERVICES

**Wheatbelt Organisation for Children's Services [WOCS]**  
WOCS formed to address concerns over the long term sustainability of childcare in the rural sector of WA. WOCS liaises with child care organisations and government bodies to develop solutions to the issues encountered by Wheatbelt child care services.  
[www.wocs.com.au](http://www.wocs.com.au)

**Child Australia Resource Centre**  
Membership to access the Child Australia Resource Centre is available to all services.  
[www.childaustralia.org.au](http://www.childaustralia.org.au)



### **Child Australia Pre-Kindy and Occasional Care Inclusion Project WA**

A program to support the inclusion of children with a disability in state funded occasional care services and three year old kindy programs (non school) is currently available.

[www.childaustralia.org.au](http://www.childaustralia.org.au)

### **Inclusion and Professional Support**

Through this program, eligible child care services have access to affordable support, advice, resources and training.

#### **PSCWA**

Resources are able to be accessed from this site.

[www.pscwa.org.au](http://www.pscwa.org.au)

#### Inclusion Support Agencies (ISA)

##### **Child Australia - Great Southern Inclusion Support Agency**

Offers inclusion support to services in Great Southern Western Australia.

[www.childaustralia.org.au](http://www.childaustralia.org.au)

##### **Shire of Mundaring - East Metro & Midlands Inclusion Support Agency**

Offers inclusion support to services in the East Metro - Perth/Midlands area.

[www.mundaring.wa.gov.au/community/community\\_childreasureservices.asp](http://www.mundaring.wa.gov.au/community/community_childreasureservices.asp)

#### OTHER CONTACTS

##### **Department Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR]**

[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

##### **Department for communities:**

[www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au)

[www.childcare.wa.gov.au](http://www.childcare.wa.gov.au)

##### **National Child Care Accreditation Council [NCAC]**

[www.ncac.gov.au](http://www.ncac.gov.au)

##### **Australian Taxation Office**

[www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

##### **Equal Opportunities Commission**

[www.eoc.wa.gov.au](http://www.eoc.wa.gov.au)

##### **Worksafe**

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/>





**State Law Publisher**  
[www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)

**Wageline**  
<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/LabourRelations/Content/Services/Wageline>

