



# Interstate Child Protection Liaison Framework

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Department for Child Protection (DCP) Interstate Child Protection Liaison Framework (the Framework) is to define the scope of functions that involve child protection matters where there is an interstate component requiring liaison between the States and Territories of Australia and New Zealand. The majority of these functions are undertaken by staff within the DCP Interstate Liaison Unit (ILU).

The Framework aligns with National and State principles and best practice guidelines to ensure responses across jurisdictions are timely and lead to the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

## 2. Scope

The Framework outlines liaison functions associated to supporting the provision of care and protection services for children and young people who are subject to child protection intervention or involvement in Australia and New Zealand as defined within the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#) (Australia and New Zealand) October 2021 (the Protocol).

The Framework does not contain practice guidance or operational instruction regarding these functions.

## 3. Authority

### 3.1 National requirements

The Framework and the operations of the ILU align to the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#).

The Protocol is an agreement between the States and Territories of Australia and New Zealand and provides a framework within which the child protection departments in the States and Territories of Australia and New Zealand will work together in order to support the quality provision of care and protection services to children and young people.

### 3.2 Legislative context

The [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#) is enabled by the relevant provisions in each State or Territory's child welfare legislation.

The effect of the Protocol does not supersede or limit the application of State legislation, even if this conflicts with the Protocol.

Within South Australia (SA), the following legislation applies:

- [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#), (CYPS Act), Chapter 10 (Sections 127-134)
- [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act Regulations 2017](#)
- [Service and Execution of Process Act 1992](#)



### 3.3 DCP requirements

<b>DCP Practice Approach</b>	The DCP Practice Approach supports DCP staff and other stakeholders to work together to ensure safety and best outcomes for children and young people. The approach promotes building strong relationships with children and young people, families, carers and service providers. Skilful assessment, timely intervention and collaborative practice are emphasised by the approach.
<b>Manual of Practice</b>	<p>The Manual of Practice provides guidance about key processes and best practice considerations for DCP practitioners. The following chapters contain guidance about working with child protection matters where there is an interstate component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ongoing intervention</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Information sharing and gathering</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Intake, investigation and assessment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Place a child or young person in care</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Supporting children and young people in care</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DCP Call Centre.</a></li> </ul>
<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle</b>	The <a href="#">Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle</a> (ATSICPP) aims to keep children connected to their families, communities, cultures and country, and to ensure the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decisions about their children’s care and protection. It centres on five elements: prevention, partnership, participation, placement and connection, and the precursor identification.
<b>Culturally and linguistically diverse child placement Policy</b>	Culturally and linguistically diverse child placement Policy aims to maintain connections to their cultural and ethnic identity, religion and language to promote their sense of belonging and identity as this will promote a range of positive outcomes across all life domains.
<b>DCP Strategic Plan</b>	The <a href="#">DCP Strategic Plan</a> is the overarching strategic document that guides the work DCP prioritises to improve the future operations and broader child protection system in SA.
<b>DCP Disability Access and Inclusion Plan</b>	The <a href="#">Disability Access and Inclusion Plan</a> outlines the steps DCP will take over four years to improve outcomes for children and young people, carers and the workforce with disability, as well as improving accessibility of the services DCP funds and delivers.

### 3.4 Guiding Principles

Guiding principles have been established in accordance with the guiding principles outlined within the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#), the CYPS Act and the DCP Practice Approach. They include the following:

- The safety of children and young people is paramount.
- The ATSICPP must be applied.



- Information is gathered and shared appropriately and responsibly to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, families and carers.
- A collaborative approach to information sharing should be adopted.
- Statutory authority is used responsibly and in the least intrusive way to ensure the safety of children and young people.
- Assessments, decisions and actions are undertaken in a timely manner.
- All children and young people in SA who are subject to child protection intervention, continue to receive quality case management from DCP regardless of where they reside.
- Orders relating to the protection of a child or young person are to have effect and be enforced in the State or Territory in which the child or young person resides.

## 4. Interstate Liaison Unit

The DCP ILU is a statewide service located within the Far North Far West (FNFW) Directorate. The ILU is responsible for working collaboratively with DCP staff and interstate child protection departments across Australia and New Zealand in line with the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#). The ILU must be consulted in all matters where DCP is considering placing or relocating a child or young person interstate.

DCP Interstate Liaison Officers (ILOs) within the ILU promote compliance with the Protocol and provide guidance to assist with cross-border child protection matters to support DCP staff in ensuring children and young people are safe and protected regardless of where they reside. They also provide guidance and consultation regarding matters with an interstate component however do not have delegated authority to determine case direction or make case management decisions.

The ILU is an internal DCP service. Other South Australian agencies and individuals or organisations external to DCP should not be referred to the ILU.

The ILU is responsible for processing the below requests:

- child protection reports (interstate alerts and notifications)
- assessments
- casework assistance
- locating interstate placements
- transfer of child protection orders
- transfer of child protection proceedings
- assisting with warrants.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



## 4.2 Assessments

An interstate child protection department can submit a request for another jurisdiction to undertake a range of assessments on their behalf including carer assessments of prospective or current carers, holiday and contact assessments and household safety assessments.

For further guidance about assessment refer to Section 5 of the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#).

## 4.3 Casework assistance

A State or Territory can submit a request for another jurisdiction to undertake specific casework on their behalf when the child or young person who is subject to child protection intervention is residing in a different State or Territory from where child protection intervention is being provided or where their order is registered.

All case management and financial responsibility remains with the sending State or Territory until the order is transferred or the child or young person returns to the sending State or Territory.

Casework assistance required for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants, children and young people should be discussed with the receiving State or Territory at the time of making the request. It is essential that cultural needs, protocols and culturally safe practice are given appropriate consideration to support the infant, child or young person's connection to family and culture.

Casework assistance required for children and young people with a culturally and linguistically diverse background should be discussed with the receiving State or Territory at the time of making the request to ensure connection to cultural and ethnic identity, religion and language are appropriately considered.

For further guidance about requests for casework assistance, refer to Section 6 of the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#).

## 4.4 Locating an interstate placement

Where a child or young person is subject to a child protection order and requires a care arrangement in another State or Territory, the case managing State can submit a request to another State or Territory for assistance in locating a non-relative carer.

The ATSCPP must be applied when placing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants, children or young people including, where reasonably practicable, consultation with and regard to any submissions of a recognised Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation.

When placing a child or young person from a culturally and linguistically diverse cultural background it is important to consider the importance of connection to cultural and ethnic identity, religion and language and how these will be maintained and the [placement priorities for CALD children and young people](#).

For further guidance about placements, refer to Section 7 of the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#).

## 4.5 Transfer of child protection orders



It is preferable that orders relating to the protection of a child or young person are to have effect and be enforced in the State or Territory in which the child or young person resides. Where a child or young person resides in a different State or Territory to where their order is registered, the order may be transferred to the State or Territory where they are residing. This will however depend on a number of factors including the type of order.

ILOs actively monitor and track DCP children and young people who are residing outside of SA to ensure case workers have identified and are progressing a longer-term plan. Where children or young people are placed under long-term orders and are residing interstate on a permanent basis, ILOs will actively work with case workers to ensure a plan is progressed that explores Long-term Guardianship to Specified Person (LTG (SP)) or order transfer.

Decisions regarding the interstate transfer of care and protection orders are made in accordance with each State or Territory's legislation and policy requirements. Within SA, Chapter 10 of [the CYPS Act](#) provides for the transfer of child protection orders and proceedings between SA and another State or Territory of Australia or between SA and New Zealand.

Guidance and further information regarding the transfer of an order can be found in Section 8 of the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#) and within the [Transfer care and protection orders and proceedings between SA and other jurisdictions](#) key step of the [Ongoing Intervention](#) Chapter of the [Manual of Practice](#).

It is essential that the guiding principles of the [CYPS Act](#) and the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle](#) are considered and actioned appropriately when undertaking assessments and making decisions regarding placement.

If there are any open care concerns, discussions must occur between the ILU and the relevant DCP office prior to the transfer of any orders or proceedings or the interstate placement of children or young people.

Where a transfer order relates to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infant, child or young person, it is essential the DCP case worker consult with a Principal Aboriginal Consultant (PAC) about the intention to transfer the order prior to commencing.

## 4.6 Transfer of child protection court proceedings

In some circumstances, a State or Territory can request to transfer child protection court proceedings to another State or Territory.

For further guidance about the transfer of proceedings, refer to Section 9 of the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#) and [Transfer care and protection orders and proceedings between SA and other jurisdictions](#) in the [Ongoing Intervention](#) chapter of the Manual of Practice.

## 4.7 Assisting with warrants

There may be circumstances where DCP receives a request from another State or Territory to assist in matters where:

For further guidance, refer to the [Assess notifications, alerts and warrants from outside of South Australia](#) in the DCP Call Centre chapter of the Manual of Practice.



For further guidance about interstate warrants, refer to the [Interstate child protection warrants Protocol](#).

## 5. Requests for the transfer of information and Child Protection checks

Under the [Interstate Child Protection Protocol](#), DCP can request information held by another interstate child protection department in relation to a child or young person or family. There are certain conditions under which this information can be requested and released.

Within SA, requests for information are managed by the DCP Subpoena and Information Release Team (SIRT).

It should be noted the SIRT does not process requests for interstate criminal history or requests for information from other interstate agencies (such as Health or SAPOL). For further guidance, refer to the [Information gathering and sharing chapter](#) of the Manual of Practice.

## 6. Connect for Safety

Connect for Safety (C4S), a national child protection information sharing solution, contains information from all jurisdictions about children, young people and their relevant relationships. C4S provides a more accurate and timely information exchange between jurisdictions and seeks to improve information sharing and long term outcomes of vulnerable children and young people known to more than one jurisdiction.

Only biographical and demographical information is available via C4S. Further information required such as child protection history required from other jurisdictions is to be requested by completing an [Interstate Child Protection Information Request](#) via the SIRT.

## 7. Out of hours services

The DCP Call Centre After-Hours team will address urgent interstate liaison matters that arise out of hours. For matters that require an urgent response, the DCP After-Hours team will contact the relevant interstate child protection department's after-hours service by telephone. For further guidance about after hours processes, refer to [Assess notifications, alerts and warrants from outside of South Australia](#) in the DCP Call Centre chapter of the Manual of Practice.

## 8. Related documents

Supporting Documents:
<a href="#">Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle Practice Paper</a>
<a href="#">Consent to share information Form</a>
<a href="#">Culturally and linguistically diverse child placement Policy</a>
<a href="#">Information Sharing Protocol between the Commonwealth and Child Protection Agencies</a>
<a href="#">Interstate Child Protection Protocol</a>
<a href="#">Interstate Child Protection Warrants Protocol</a>
<a href="#">Request for interstate casework assistance Form</a>
<a href="#">Request to locate an interstate placement Form</a>



[Request for assessment of carer/s interstate](#)

[Request for interstate notification or alert Form](#)

## Document control

<b>Reference No./ File No.</b>			
<b>Document Owner</b>		<b>Lead Writer (name, position)</b>	
Directorate/Unit: Far North Far West Interstate Liaison Unit		Lead Project Officer, Quality and Practice Directorate	
Accountable Director: Regional Director, Far North Far West			
<b>Commencement date</b>	21 March 2025	<b>Review date</b>	21 March 2028
<b>Risk rating</b> <a href="#">Risk Assessment Matrix</a>	<b>Consequence Rating</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>
	Minor	Likely	Medium

REVISION RECORD		
Approval Date	Version	Revision description
7 February 2025	V1.0	New document