



# SA Ambulance Cover Procedure

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the SA Ambulance Cover Procedure is to:

- inform staff of the arrangements between the Department for Child Protection (DCP) and the South Australian Ambulance Services (SAAS), specific to ambulance cover for eligible children and young people.
- outline the requirements for the management and processing of SAAS accounts.

## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all DCP officers responsible or involved in the management and processing of SAAS accounts.

## 3. Authority

### 3.1 Legislative context

- [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#) (CYPS Act)
- [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Regulations 2017](#)
- [Health Care Act 2008](#)
- [Immigration \(Guardianship of Children\) Act 1946](#)

### 3.2 Whole of Government requirements

- [Closing the Gap Initiatives](#)

### 3.3 DCP requirements

- Memorandum of Administrative Arrangement (MoAA) between DCP and SAAS
- [Transition to adulthood chapter of the Manual of Practice](#)
- [Supporting children and young people in care chapter of the Manual of Practice - Access health services for the child or young person](#)

## 4. Procedure requirements

DCP has a duty of care towards children and young people placed under the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive as per the [CYPS Act](#). DCP must provide appropriate care, protection and support these children and young people to ensure that they are safe from harm and are able to develop to their full potential.

Automatic centralised ambulance cover is one way that DCP provides such care, protection, and support through a Memorandum of Administrative Arrangement (MoAA) between the DCP and SAAS.



The aim of centralised ambulance cover is to ensure that all eligible children and young people have access to appropriate ambulance services without any associated financial burden for the children or young people, their carers or DCP.

Subject to medical necessity, children and young people who meet the eligibility criteria will be covered for the cost of ambulance transport to an appropriate medical facility for the purpose of receiving medical treatment.

#### 4.1 Who is eligible for cover?

Children and young people, subject to the following, are considered as eligible persons for the purpose of ambulance cover under the MoAA:

- Voluntary Custody Agreements pursuant to section 96 of the [CYPS Act](#)
- removal of a child or young person pursuant to section 41 of the [CYPS Act](#)
- children and young people who are placed in the long-term care of another person pursuant to a Family Care Meeting (FCM) agreement that was established under the former [Children's Protection Act 1993](#) and is subject to transitional arrangements under Regulation 43(9) of the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Regulations 2017](#). The transitional arrangements provide that FCM agreements that were in place immediately before the commencement of the [CYPS Act](#) remain valid until they expire, are superseded, or converted into a new family group conference agreement
- children and young people currently or formerly under the guardianship or custody of the Chief Executive pursuant to section 53 of the [CYPS Act](#) or subject to an administrative or judicial transfer of orders and proceedings pursuant to Chapter 10 of the [CYPS Act](#)

This extends to all children and young people who currently are or were at the time they turned 18 years old placed in the custody and guardianship of the Chief Executive for DCP, and specifically includes orders made in the Youth Court, granting:

- custody to the Chief Executive for any period
- custody to a parent, guardian, family member or another person for any period
- guardianship of the Chief Executive for any period
- guardianship to another specified person for any period or
- any interim or temporary custody or guardianship to the Chief Executive or any specified person.

The above does not apply to those who are over the age of 21 nor to those who were not under the guardianship or custody of the Chief Executive for DCP or any of the prescribed arrangements as detailed above at the time they turned 18 years old.

- interstate orders (for example, child protection orders made by interstate jurisdictions):
  - all children and young people residing in out of home care in South Australia subject to interstate court orders that are equivalent to South Australian Youth Court Orders made pursuant to the [CYPS Act](#)
  - these children and young people must be the subject of current court proceedings to transfer to interstate court orders to South Australia, or DCP must be providing case management or casework services to those clients on behalf of the interstate authority
- children and young people who are subject to the [Immigration \(Guardianship of Children\) Act 1946](#), placed in out of home care in South Australia, and case managed by DCP or
- Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (includes refugees, asylum seekers).



## 4.2 Who is not eligible for cover?

Ambulance cover will not be provided under the MoAA for:

- children and young people who are the subject of child protection concerns but remain at home with their parents and are not subject to any orders listed in section 4.1
- children and young people who had an order expire or revoked prior to turning 18 years old
- care leavers over the age of 21
- carers and their families (for example, foster carers, kinship carers, specific child only carers, etc.)
- rotational carers utilised by DCP to care for children and young people in “emergency care”
- birth/adoptive parents and other family members of eligible children and young people unless under the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive and are eligible for ambulance cover in their own right
- dependants of children and young people covered under the DCP membership, regardless of their residence. In these circumstances, the legal guardian must have their own ambulance cover policy for their dependants to be covered
- DCP employees.

## 4.3 Services included in the SAAS coverage

Ambulance cover is subject to the following conditions:

- emergency transport is to an appropriate medical facility for the purpose of receiving medical treatment
- for non-emergency transport, the patient’s treating medical practitioner must specify that an ambulance is the most appropriate means of transport and provide written authorisation (for emergency transport, no medical authorisation is required)
- after a request by DCP, SAAS, in its sole discretion, agrees in writing prior to the transport date that another person may provide the service, and that person is recognised under Part 6 of the [Health Care Act 2008 \(SA\)](#).

All services must be medically justified.

## 4.4 Services and costs not included in the SAAS coverage

Ambulance cover will not apply in the following circumstances:

- transports that are not medically necessary
- patient movements between two recognised hospitals where one of the hospitals is responsible for the cost
- public hospital or other places such as day centres for outpatient treatment where a hospital is responsible for the cost
- ambulance costs were incurred prior to a child or young person being placed under an order listed in section 4.1
- ambulance costs incurred following the expiration of orders listed in section 4.1, or following the exit of a child or young person from an out of home care placement, unless that child or young person has aged out of the system in which instances, costs can be incurred until the age of 21 years
- the cost of ambulance services where a third party is responsible for the cost, including without limitation:
  - Compulsory Third-Party Insurance



- any other insurance company pursuant to an insurance policy that is held by the eligible party
- Work Cover or
- any third party who caused the injury or illness for which the ambulance transport was provided.

#### 4.5 Service providers included in the SAAS coverage

In addition to services provided by SAAS, coverage includes the following recognised interstate services:

- St John Ambulance Western Australia
- St John Ambulance Australia (NT)
- Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS)
- NSW Ambulance Service
- Ambulance Victoria
- ACT Ambulance Service
- Tasmania Ambulance Service (TAS)
- Royal Flying Doctors Service.

#### 4.6 How are children and young people covered under the MoAA?

All children and young people who meet the eligibility criteria will have automatic SAAS cover via an MoAA.

The Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance in partnership with the Procurement and Contracting Unit and the Customer Service Centre Manager, SAAS, carry out an evaluation of these arrangements.

The MoAA ensures that eligible children and young people are continuously covered and is reviewed in accordance with the approved MoAA arrangements. In the event the terms and conditions of the MoAA are no longer accurate and require an update before the scheduled expiry, such updates will be discussed with the appropriate parties as required.

The DCP case worker is not required to arrange ambulance cover for individual children and young people that meet the eligibility criteria as the process is managed centrally.

An [SA Ambulance cover for young people up to 21 years fact sheet](#) is available for staff and care leavers to assist in providing information about eligibility for cover post 18 years old.

#### 4.7 Membership fees

In accordance with the MoAA, the number of eligible children and young people in care are provided to SAAS annually, around October.

DCP pays for SAAS cover based on these annual estimates, with the individual identities of children and young people kept confidential and only shared with SAAS if an ambulance service is required and a claim made.

Annual membership fees will be paid by DCP upon receipt of an invoice from SAAS.

SAAS calculates their fees based on DCP's advice about the number of eligible children and young people in care for SAAS cover, including eligible care leavers that have aged out of care at 18 to 21 years old.



## 4.8 Reporting requirements

SAAS will provide an annual data report that details the number of children and young people who have used ambulance cover during the paid period.

## 4.9 Processing SAAS accounts

SA Ambulance invoices and queries received by DCP offices should be reviewed to determine eligibility.

SA Ambulance invoices received by carers, DCP staff or young people who have aged out of the system at 18 years and up to 21 years old, should be forwarded to the Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance as soon as possible via:

- [DCPInsurance@sa.gov.au](mailto:DCPInsurance@sa.gov.au)  
(Young people 18 to 21 years old may take a clear photo of the SA Ambulance invoice and email it to DCP Insurance)
- Department for Child Protection  
C/- Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance  
GPO Box 1027  
Adelaide SA 5001

**NOTE:** Carers should be asked to forward ambulance accounts to DCP case workers so that receipt of the account can be recorded in C3MS.

When forwarding an ambulance account to the Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance, the following information should be provided:

- child or young person's C3MS ID
- child or young person's date-of-birth (DOB)
- type of order that the child or young person was on at the time of the service
- type of order that the care leaver was on at 18 years of age (for young people that aged out of the system at 18 years up to 21 years old).

**NOTE:** It is acknowledged that a young person aged 18 to 21 years old may not have information of their C3MS ID or type of order they were under. Therefore, care leavers should be encouraged to contact their local office to assist in identifying this information. If they are unable to contact their local office, or choose not to, they should be encouraged to provide their full name, DOB and as much information as possible when forwarding an invoice to the Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance.

Upon receipt of the ambulance invoice, the Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance will verify the details provided in C3MS and, if the child or young person is eligible, will process the account directly with SAAS.

The Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance, may contact DCP offices to obtain and/or clarify information regarding a child or young person to determine eligibility.

If the child or young person was not eligible at the time of the ambulance service, the invoice will be returned by the Financial Systems and Compliance Unit – DCP Insurance to the person who submitted the claim advising of their ineligibility. Where the office submitted the ineligible claim, the office is responsible for advising the child or young person (or guardian if applicable) that the debt remains outstanding, and they are liable to pay the SAAS ambulance account.



## 5. Compliance, monitoring, and evaluation

As part of the Policy Governance Framework, this procedure will be reviewed and updated by Finance and Corporate Services in accordance with the review date in the Document control table.

## 6. Related documents

Related documents, forms and templates
<a href="#">Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</a>
<a href="#">Children and Young People (Safety) Regulations 2017</a>
<a href="#">SA Ambulance cover for young people up to 21 years fact sheet</a>
<a href="#">Health Care Act 2008</a>
<a href="#">Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946</a>
<a href="#">Manual of Practice – Supporting children and young people in care chapter – Access health services for the child or young person</a>
<a href="#">Manual of Practice - Transition to adulthood chapter - Provide the young person with post-care support</a>
<a href="#">SA Ambulance cover for young people up to 21 years fact sheet</a>

## Document control

Reference No./ File No.			
Document Owner	Lead Writer (position)		
Directorate/Unit: Finance and Corporate Services/Financial Systems and Compliance Unit	Team Leader, Financial Operations		
Accountable Director: Chief Financial Officer			
Commencement date	10 February 2026	Review date	6 February 2029
Risk rating <a href="#">Risk Assessment Matrix</a>	Consequence Rating	Likelihood	Risk Rating
	Minor	Unlikely	Low

REVISION RECORD		
Approval Date	Version	Revision description
July 2010	1.0	Families SA Ambulance Cover Practice Guide
January 2016	Transitional	DECD document details, revision record and coversheet applied
5 February 2021	2.0	Update SA Ambulance Cover Practice Guide into DCP Procedure template with amendments in accordance with MoAA variations, including increasing the age from 18 to 21 years old.
6 February 2026	3.0	Minor updates upon scheduled review as per the DCP policy review cycle.