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Service Stream	Families and Young People Services	Category	Foster and Kinship Care
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Purpose

- The welfare and best interests of children and young people residing in foster and kinship care is paramount.
- Foster and Kinship Care is a partnership embracing parents and children, carers and their families, MC workers, Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services (the Department) staff, and other stakeholders – all planning and working in the best interest of the child.

Scope

This procedure applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors engaged within Foster and Kinship Care (FKC) programs across Mercy Community (MC) – Families and Young People Services (FYPS).

This procedure relates to general FKC placements, Intensive Intervention Placement Support (IIPS), and High Plus (HP) support programs.

Procedure

1. Transfer-out of Carers – overview

- 1.1 MC will follow the regional protocols for transfers, where an agreed protocol exists. Where there is no regional protocol for transfers, the processes outlined in this Procedure apply.
- 1.2 MC acknowledges that partner agencies may have their own processes and procedures around the transfer of carers. Where this is the case, MC will reasonably support the partner agency's requests, undertaking parallel processes, if necessary. Regardless of the partner agencies procedure, if there is no regional protocol, MC employees must ensure that the processes outlined in this Procedure are undertaken.

2. Receiving a request to transfer-out a carer

- 2.1 A foster or kinship carer may request to transfer-out of a MC program and be supported by another agency. Where this occurs, the carer's allocated FKCP Practitioner (FKCP) will inform the Line Manager, who will then discuss this with the carer/s, including their reasons for transferring. The allocated FKCP will inform the carer of possible agencies they may choose to be supported by and will explain the transfer process.
- 2.2 Wherever possible, when a carer advises of an intention to transfer out, the allocated FKCP will arrange a meeting. The meeting should include the carer, the Department, the MC Line Manager, MC allocated FKCP, and, if available, a representative of the agency the carer is transferring to.
- 2.3 All requests to transfer-out must be made to MC in writing. The allocated FKCP will inform the carer wishing to transfer-out of this requirement, and may assist them to prepare their request.
- 2.4 The carer must also provide MC with a signed *Privacy Agreement – Carer and AHM* (specifically, completion of the 'Declaration' section) to allow the allocated FKCP to liaise with other agencies who may go on to support the carer.

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- 2.5 The allocated FKCP will liaise with the regional Placement Services (PS) regarding the transfer-out request.

3. Facilitating the transfer-out of a carer

- 3.1 Where a carer's transfer-out is confirmed and another agency has agreed to accept the transfer, the allocated FKCP will complete a *Agency Transfer Report* in the carer's FKC Service File under 'Documents', export the File as PDF, and provide this to the Line Manager for review.
- 3.2 After being reviewed by the Line Manager, the allocated FKCP will provide the *Agency Transfer Report*, along with the signed *Privacy Agreement – Carer and AHM* to the agency accepting the transfer. A copy will also be given to the carer, if requested. The allocated FKCP may also provide the new agency with:
- Certificates of Approval;
 - Initial and renewal assessment documentation;
 - Blue Card information;
 - Standards of Care review information and any Action Plans;
 - Any current or previous *Foster Carer Agreements*; and
 - Any *Applications for Approval (APA)*.
- 3.3 When the agency confirms receipt of the documentation and confirms that they have assumed the support and monitoring of the carer, the Line Manager will notify PS and Child Safety Service Centre (CSSC).
- 3.4 Where the carer has children placed, refer to *FS PROC FKC Child Exit and Placement Closure*.

4. Records management

- 4.1 After a carer has transferred to a new agency, all relevant documentation is updated, documented, or attached to the carer's FKC Carer Assessment and Approval Service File. The file is closed by entering each Service File and clicking the 'Close Service File' link to the righthand side of the summary page. The date of closure, reason for closure, and any relevant notes are entered into the dialogue box and click 'save'. The allocated Business Support Officer (BSO) is responsible for closing the file, as advised by the Line Manager.
- 4.2 FKCPs will save emails to child/carers files by copying and pasting unformatted email content into a *Case Note* under a Case Note Service Event. Attachments are saved to the 'Attachments' tab in the relevant Service Event, while MC documents are completed in the 'Documents' or 'Outcomes' Assessments tabs.
- 4.3 All documentation is to be uploaded to the Service Files within ten (10) working days. Where uploading is anticipated to take longer than this, FKCPs must negotiate this with their Line Manager.
- 4.4 Refer to the *FS IP FKC Document Filing Guide* for further guidance on CMS recordkeeping requirements and naming conventions.

Definitions

Foster and Kinship Care Practitioner (FKCP)

The employee who has been delegated by the Line Manager to undertake specific case management or placement support tasks.

Line Manager

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Employees with supervisory and program management responsibilities within the fostering service.

Regional Director

The manager with overall finance and program management responsibilities, who is a member of the leadership team.

References

Application for Approval – Form 3 APA (available on the Department's website)
Departmental Child Safety Practice Manual (CSPM)
Foster Carer Agreement (available on the Department's website)
FS DOC FKC Program Overview
FS IP FKC Document Filing Guide
FS PROC FKC Child Exit and Placement Closure

Related Documents

Penelope Forms:

Agency Transfer Report
Privacy Agreement – Carer and AHM

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