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<b>Service Stream</b>	Families and Young People Services	<b>Category</b>	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.
- Children and young people need to be cared for within a healthy family environment that is characterised by 'positive-parenting-practices', including: structure and routine; reasonable rules, expectations and age-appropriate limits; guidance, support and encouragement; positive reinforcement; with fair, consistent, and reasonable discipline, and demonstrating tolerance for normal and/or symptomatic behaviour.

### Scope

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

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

### Procedure

#### 1. Carer recruitment – overview

- 1.1 Carer recruitment is the process of identifying and enlisting new Foster Carers to provide placements for children and young people in the care of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services (the Department). Recruitment processes may be undertaken in different ways across services however this procedure outlines general processes that must occur across all services.
- 1.2 Recruitment strategies within MC are targeted at the local level to address identified placement needs, in particular, the cultural needs of children and young people.
- 1.3 The recruitment process will utilise culturally appropriate information, employees and community members who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent to enable the recruitment of culturally appropriate Foster Carers.
- 1.4 Recruitment processes may involve current Foster Carers in order to promote a positive profile of the foster carer role.
- 1.5 The recruitment of Foster Carers will also see the profile of foster care enhanced within the general community.

#### 2. Developing the annual recruitment plan

- 2.1 All services must have an annual recruitment plan. This plan must span across the calendar year.
- 2.2 The Team Manager (TM)/Program Manager (PM) of the service (in collaboration with the Senior Program Manager (SPM), where relevant) is responsible for drafting the annual carer recruitment plan. In drafting this plan, consideration must be given to:
  - The service agreement;
  - Current service capacity;
  - Feedback from workers;
  - Recruitment evaluations;

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- The Program Overview; and
  - Consultation with other stakeholders and relevant sources.
- 2.3 Once the plan has been developed, the TM/PM (in collaboration with the SPM, where relevant) will provide the Regional Director (RD) the draft plan for approval. Should further development be required, the RD will liaise with the TM/PM and/or SPM to finalise the plan. The final Annual Recruitment Plan will identify:
- Target areas/strategies;
  - What strategies are being utilised;
  - Timeframes for each strategy
  - Person/position/agency responsible for actions;
  - Costs of the strategy; and
  - Evaluation methodology (if relevant).
- 2.4 The Annual Recruitment Plan will be actioned by relevant Foster and Kinship Care Practitioners (FKCPs) and monitored by the TM/PM (in collaboration with the SPM, where relevant). The Annual Recruitment Plan will be saved locally for each region on the Shared Drive (S:) folder named 'Recruitment'.
- 2.5 The Department may request a copy of this plan to inform regional initiatives. Any request received from the Department must be made to the TM/PM and/or SPM (where relevant) and responded to within two (2) working days.

### 3. Reviewing the annual recruitment plan

- 3.1 Between October and November each year, the TM/PM (in collaboration with the SPM, where relevant) of the service will commence evaluation of the current plan. The evaluation methodology will be articulated in the original Annual Recruitment Plan and will consider:
- The number of enquiries for each strategy;
  - The number of people who attended training;
  - The number of carer assessment conducted in the year;
  - The number of new foster carers; and
  - Any other information that is relevant.
- 3.2 Evaluation outcomes will be provided to FKCPs, internal stakeholders and, if appropriate, the Department.
- 3.3 Using the information gathered from the evaluation, the TM/PM (in collaboration with the SPM, where relevant) will commence the development of the new Annual Recruitment Plan, as per section 2 of this Procedure.

### 4. Records management

- 4.1 Recruitment Plans and any supporting documentation are saved in region-specific Shared Drive folders named 'Recruitment'.
- 4.2 All documentation is to be uploaded to the Shared Drive within ten (10) working days. Where uploading is anticipated to take longer than this, FKCPs must negotiate this with their Line Manager.

#### Definitions

##### FKC Practitioner

The employee who has been delegated by the Line Manager to undertake specific case

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management or placement support tasks.

**Line Manager**

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

**Program Manager/Senior Program Manager (PM/SPM)**

Employees tasked with day-to-day oversight of MC programs. The Program Manager/Senior Program Manager reports to the Regional Director.

**Regional Director**

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

**Team Manager**

The employee with supervisory and program management responsibilities within the fostering service.

**References**

Department's Child Safety Practice Manual (CSPM)  
FS DOC FKC Program Overview

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