

# POLICY

---

**Title:** Child safe organisation policy

---

## Policy Statement:

The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (the department) is committed to being a child safe organisation that protects and upholds the safety and wellbeing of children across all areas of our operations. This commitment is embedded in every aspect of our leadership, governance and culture.

We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children by implementing, and continuously improving, 10 child safe standards and upholding the right to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (Universal Principle), as outlined in the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*.

In this policy, the term 'children' is used to refer to children and young people under 18 years of age.

The child safe standards are:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
2. Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the department is safe for children.

We embed the Universal Principle in all 10 child safe standards, promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

## Principles:

- Children are at the forefront of our work with their needs, rights and best interests prioritised at all times.
- Every child accessing our services has a right to be protected from harm.
- Every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child accessing our services has a right to a culturally safe service. We recognise cultural safety means different things to different people and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are the only people that can define what cultural safety means for them.
- Children have a right to be heard and participate in decisions about them.
- Our interactions with children are conducted with respect, responsiveness and care. Behaviours that undermine the safety and wellbeing of children are not tolerated by the department.
- Partnerships with families and communities are critical in developing environments that are safe for children.
- The diverse needs and life experiences of children accessing our services are recognised and respected.

## Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety

- We are committed to best practice and continuous learning, regularly reviewing and improving our policies, procedures and practices to ensure a safe environment for the children who access our services.

**Objectives:**

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate the department's commitment to being a child safe organisation. In supporting this commitment, the policy aims to:

- prevent harm to children who receive our services;
- ensure the department meets our obligation to create a safe environment for all children in line with the child safe standards and Universal Principle effective from 1 October 2025;
- promote a shared responsibility in the department for our development as a child safe organisation, and
- establish best practice and continuous improvement in our implementation of, and compliance with, the child safe standards and Universal Principle.

**Scope:**

The department has a range of responsibilities under our various portfolios to provide services for children, directly and indirectly. This policy applies to every portfolio responsibility of the department that impacts the lives of Queensland children including child safety, families, disability services and domestic and family violence.

Everyone in the department has a role to play in ensuring the department operates as a child safe organisation. This policy applies to all persons that perform work of any kind for the department including employees, volunteers, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, carers and members of a carer's household, honorary officers and work experience students and trainees.

Everyone has a responsibility to apply the child safe standards and Universal Principle in their day-to-day work. This includes frontline service delivery, policy development, human resources, procurement and contracting, legal services and governance.

**Roles and responsibilities:****Director-General**

- Promote the department's commitment to being a child safe organisation.
- Lead the ongoing development of the department's child safe culture to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children across all portfolio responsibilities.
- Clearly communicate a zero-tolerance approach to workforce conduct or practices that undermine the safety and wellbeing of children accessing the department's services.
- Adhere to and promote compliance with child safe organisation policies and procedures.
- Ensure leadership and governance structures include regular consideration of strategies to continuously improve the department's implementation of the child safe standards and Universal Principle.

**Executive leadership**

- Promote the department's commitment to being a child safe organisation.
- Support the Director-General's leadership of the department's child safe culture across portfolio responsibilities.
- Model child safe behaviours and attitudes, ensuring workforce conduct or practices that undermine the safety and wellbeing of children, including cultural safety, are not tolerated.
- Ensure child safe organisation policies and procedures including reporting obligations are valued and followed.

## Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety

- Support senior officers, managers and supervisors to apply the child safe standards and Universal Principle in day-to-day practice including across frontline service delivery, policy development, human resources, procurement and contracting, legal services and governance.
- Drive continuous improvement by embedding child safe organisation obligations into governance and team arrangements.
- Adhere to and promote compliance with child safe organisation policies and procedures including reporting obligations and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service.
- Engage with the First Nations Council to continuously improve implementation of the Universal Principle across the child safe standards.

### Directors, managers and supervisors

- Promote the department's commitment to being a child safe organisation.
- Lead the development of the team's child safe culture and the team's approach to meeting its child safe organisation obligations.
- Model child safe behaviours and attitudes, clearly communicating that conduct that undermines the safety and wellbeing of children, including cultural safety, will not be tolerated.
- Adhere to child safe organisation policies and procedures including reporting obligations and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service.
- Support team members to understand their child safe organisation responsibilities and apply the child safe standards and Universal Principle in practice, using team meetings and supervision where appropriate.
- Identify gaps in knowledge and skills relating to child safety and wellbeing and use strategies such as targeted training or professional development to address these gaps.
- Contribute to continuous improvement processes by identifying opportunities to strengthen the application of the child safe standards and Universal Principle.

### Staff

- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children in day-to-day practice by understanding their child safe obligations and complying with the child safe standards and Universal Principle.
- Contribute to the development of a child safe culture and support colleagues to contribute to the development of a child safe culture.
- Adhere to child safe organisation policies and procedures including reporting obligations and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service.
- Participate in continuous improvement activities including ongoing learning, training and supervision.

### Risk management strategy:

The department manages a range of potential risks to the safety and wellbeing of children in the context of its service delivery to vulnerable children, including those in the guardianship or custody of the State. These risks include:

- Insufficient capability and capacity in the department to respond to growing demand and increasing complexity of children and families' needs.
- Children coming to harm through inadequate strategies to actively monitor and provide for the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Staff and volunteers being unaware of children at risk of harm, resulting in the needs of these children not being met.
- Children not being adequately consulted in the design and development of departmental policies and procedures, leading to services and processes that do not meet their needs.

## Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety

- Failure of staff to understand and comply with legislative frameworks that govern service delivery to children.
- Complex operating environments including less control over contributing factors to children and families having contact with our systems.

The department has a range of policies and procedures to manage risk of harm to children accessing services directly delivered by the department. The department also funds non-government organisations to provide critical services to children, and the department has a range of policies and procedures to manage risk of harm to children accessing these services.

The department's broader Risk Management Framework prescribes the obligations and responsibilities to be fulfilled and the processes to follow in managing all levels of risk across the department. The department's *Risk Management Strategy for Children, Young People and People with Disability* can be viewed as an element of this Risk Management Framework. Child Safety also has a range of relevant policies and procedures that assist in managing risks to the safety and wellbeing of children. The *Child Protection Act 1999* establishes a charter of rights for children in care and requires that children in care be cared for in a way that meets the statement of standards.

All organisations funded by the department to deliver out of home care services, including all foster and kinship care and residential care placement services, must meet a suite of legislative, contractual and quality framework obligations in relation to the safety of children. For licensed providers, or providers in-scope for licensing, this includes certification under the Human Services Quality Framework or self-assessed compliance with the Human Services Quality Standards. For providers engaged under Individualised Placement Support, the agreement requires compliance with the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*.

The department is committed to minimising risks posed to children and to continuous improvement in our implementation of the child safe standards and Universal Principle. Risks and risk management policies and procedures will be considered, reviewed, and updated consistent with child safe standard 9 – *Implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved*.

---

<b>Records File No.:</b>	NA
<b>Date of approval:</b>	30 September 2025
<b>Date of operation:</b>	1 October 2025
<b>Date to be reviewed:</b>	30 September 2028

---

<b>Office:</b>	Office of the Chief Practitioner
<b>Help Contact:</b>	Office of the Chief Practitioner

---

**Related legislation:**

[Child Safe Organisations Act 2024](#)

Child Safe Organisations Regulation 2025

**Internal Resources:**

Child Safe Organisation Statement of Commitment

**Resources:**

[Queensland Family and Child Commission](#)

---

Belinda Drew  
Director-General