



What preparation is required for the meeting?

Prior to the Family Group Meeting, the child safety officer may request information to assess the strengths and needs of the child and the family.

The convenor will contact the service providers and discuss whether they will be invited to attend the meeting and whether they will be present for all or part of the meeting.

The convenor or child safety officer will discuss with the family and child (where the child is at an appropriate age) which service providers will be involved.

The convenor will inform participants in the Family Group Meeting of:

- the purpose of the meeting
- why the meeting is being held
- the time and place for the meeting
- the importance of maintaining confidentiality.



What happens after the Family Group Meeting?

The case plan will be prepared to identify the required services to be provided to the child or their family.

The child safety officer will complete referrals to identified service providers and gain approval from the department for any costs involved.

A team leader endorses the case plan within seven days of the Family Group Meeting, and an endorsed copy of the plan is provided to people who are involved in the case plan.

Service providers identified in the case plan will be required to deliver the services for the child and family and report back to the department, as agreed to in the case plan.

The case plan will be reviewed within six months.

Contact information

For more information on family group meetings, you can contact the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs through:

- the child safety officer responsible
- for the child
- the local child safety service centre
- **www.cyjma.qld.gov.au**
- for general enquiries call **1800 811 810**

Family Group Meetings

Information for service providers





What is a Family Group Meeting?

A Family Group Meeting is convened by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (Child Safety) to develop a case plan for a child that has been identified as needing protection under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

Who will be at the meeting?

Family Group Meetings involve the child (where appropriate), the family, a Child Safety representative, service providers and other significant people who are important in the child's life.

Service providers include government and non-government organisations who will address the protection and care needs of the child.

The Family Group Meeting is organised by a convenor who facilitates the meeting. The convenor may be a departmental officer or a person independent of the department, but will not be the child safety officer involved with the child or the family.

The convenor will decide who should attend the meeting, including:

- the child (when they are old enough to participate and it is appropriate)
- the child's parents
- other members of the child's family who will continue to be involved in the child's life
- people who have a significant relationship with the child, for example, a carer, guidance officer or health worker

- a legal representative or support person for the child
- a legal representative or support person for the parents
- an Independent person or a member of the child's community if the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- the child's child safety officer or team leader
- appropriate service providers.

What happens at the meeting?

At the Family Group Meeting, the convenor will introduce all the participants and explain the process.

The child safety officer will talk about the reasons the department is involved with the child, and the assessed strengths and needs of the child and family.

The other people attending the meeting, including representatives from service providers, will be invited to provide information for discussion.

The convenor may present information from significant people who are unable to attend the Family Group Meeting.

During the meeting, the family will be given the opportunity to spend time alone to discuss the information that has been provided.

Upon conclusion of the Family Group Meeting, a case plan for the child will be developed based on the information provided.

What is a case plan?

The case plan is a written agreement between Child Safety, the child (where appropriate), the family and representatives from other service providers who have agreed to address the protection and care needs of the child.

A case plan will typically set out:

- what issues will be addressed
- when the issues will be addressed
- how the issues will be addressed
- who will address the issues.

What is the role of service providers?

Service providers (government departments and community agencies) give support and provide information and services to the child and family as described in the case plan.

Service providers can give information to the convenor prior to a Family Group Meeting through written materials or reports. The convenor may also invite a service provider to attend the Family Group Meeting to provide information.

A child or parent can nominate a service they want involved and request that a representative from that agency support them at the Family Group Meeting.