

Transporting children and young people

Service Provider Requirements

1. Purpose

This document identifies the requirements for service provider personnel in non-family based placements in transporting children and young people.

2. Scope

These requirements apply to all service provider personnel working in non-family based placements who are involved in coordinating and/or providing transport for children and young people.

3. Authority

3.1 Legislative context

Please refer to the [Legislation and standards](#) service provision requirement page on the service provider area of the DCP website.

3.2 DCP requirements

- [DCP Contract Management Framework](#)
- [DCP Contract Performance Management Framework](#)
- [DCP Performance Measurement Specification](#)

4. Requirements

If service provider personnel need to contact DCP in relation to transporting a child or young person, the following should be contacted:

- during business hours: DCP case worker or other DCP office staff (for example, supervisor/senior practitioner)
- after hours: DCP After Hours Call Centre 131 611.

4.1 Coordinating transport

Service provider personnel are responsible for coordinating all transports for children and young people in their care except in the following circumstances when transport will be coordinated by DCP:

- the transport will be carried out by DCP staff or volunteers
- service provider personnel contact DCP and asks for assistance because the service provider considers that the transport could pose a high risk to the physical or emotional wellbeing of the child or young person (known as a high-risk transport).

Service provider personnel are the preferred option to transport a child or young person in any situation, even if the transport is coordinated by DCP. If service provider personnel are unable to transport the child or young person, they should contact DCP for assistance.

Children and young people aged 12 years and under cannot be transported by taxi or chauffeured vehicle without service provider personnel or a member of DCP staff accompanying them, unless prior approval has been given by DCP. Service provider personnel should also not allow young people aged 13 years and over to travel alone in a taxi or chauffeured vehicle if they have additional needs that would make this unsafe (for example, disability, emotional difficulties or cultural needs). If service provider personnel are unsure whether the child or young person can be transported alone by taxi or chauffeured vehicle, they should check with DCP.

Service provider personnel must follow legal requirements for [child car restraints](#) when using taxis or ride share vehicles.

4.2 Providing transport

The child or young person's case plan should contain details of any additional needs that the child or young person has during transport. Service provider personnel should also take into consideration any other plans which may include information relevant to transport (for example, use of restrictive practices if required). If service provider personnel are providing transport when DCP have been asked to assist with coordinating, service provider personnel will be provided with details of what is required to support the child or young person during transport. If service provider personnel are unable to follow any of the requirements in either the case plan or the information provided directly by DCP, they must contact DCP.

Service provider personnel should always consider whether the plan is still appropriate on the day of transport. This may include considering the child or young person's current presentation (for example, whether they are emotionally distressed, suffering from illness, alcohol/substance affected) and any other factors that have changed since the plan was developed (such as extreme weather). Service provider personnel should contact DCP for support if needed.

4.2.1 Preparing the vehicle

When driving children and young people in care, service provider personnel must abide by the [road rules](#), including requirements for [child car restraints](#) and the vehicle to be roadworthy. Children and young people with disabilities may require specialist equipment for transport and this information should be included in their case plan. If service provider personnel require further information regarding how to prepare a vehicle for transporting children and young people they should contact DCP.

Additional considerations:

- install child car restraints according to manufacturer's instructions and adjust them to fit the child or young person snugly with no slack or twists. Children should not be wrapped in blankets or other swaddling before putting them in the child car restraint
- become familiar with operation of the child locks on the vehicle
- check the vehicle to ensure there are no loose objects which could cause injury
- ensure children or young people enter the vehicle from the kerb side seat for safer entry and exit
- if possible, ensure the vehicle is filled with the appropriate fuel prior to transporting children and young people. If absolutely necessary, ensure children and young people remain in the vehicle whilst filling it with fuel and take children and young people with you whilst making payment, if there is no appropriate other adult in the car to supervise

- ensure that children or young people do not have access to an open vehicle in the event that they get into car and become locked inside or are able to start the vehicle. Additional care should be taken when using a keyless vehicle
- supervise children and young people carefully when close to traffic or driveways.

4.2.2 Responding to issues during transport

If the child or young person is behaving in a way that places their own safety and/or the safety of others in danger during transport (including removing their own seat belt or child restraint), service provider personnel must:

- if driving, pull to the side of the road as soon as it is safe to do so, switch off the car, remove the keys from the ignition/key fob from the vehicle (for keyless start) and keep them secure
- attempt to calm the child or young person and resolve the situation.

If the situation has not been resolved the following may be considered:

- allow the child or young person time to calm down. It is not appropriate to leave a child under the age of four alone in a vehicle and older children or young people must be supervised at all times, ensuring that the keys/key fob are not left in the vehicle and children and young people cannot start the engine or lock themselves in the car. Service provider personnel should consider and monitor the temperature within the vehicle when deciding whether it is appropriate to leave a child or young person inside. Service provider personnel should be cautious leaving the child or young person alone in a keyless vehicle as they may still be able to start the vehicle
- walk to the destination with the child or young person if possible
- consult with DCP if additional support is required
- if the child or young person's behaviour is dangerous (such as there is a risk of physical assault) and/or there is risk of a crime being committed, contact South Australian Police (SAPOL) on 131 444 for assistance. It is important that DCP are contacted immediately after SAPOL to ensure any incident reporting requirements are known and reported as necessary.

If the child or young person leaves the vicinity of service provider personnel while providing transport, reasonable efforts should be immediately made to locate them, ensure their safety and resume transportation. If the child or young person cannot be located, service provider personnel should consider whether the child or young person should be reported as missing to SAPOL as outlined in the [Missing or absent from placement service provision requirements](#).

Service provider personnel should continue to attempt to resolve any issues and resume transport of the child or young person unless doing so would pose a risk to either their safety or the safety of the child or young person. If service provider personnel are unable to continue providing transport, they must contact DCP. Consideration should only be given to the child or young person travelling unaccompanied to their destination if this is considered appropriate based on the child or young person's ability to travel independently and their current presentation. If the attempt to transport is abandoned, service provider personnel must meet with the child or young person as soon as possible afterwards to check on the child or young person's wellbeing.

4.3 Recording requirements

Service provider personnel should maintain a record of any issues that arise during transport. Service provider personnel should update the DCP case worker in relation to any issues during transport and strategies used to respond.

5. Compliance, monitoring and evaluation

As part of the Policy Governance Framework, this document will be reviewed and updated in accordance with the review date shown in 'Document Control'.

Document control

Reference No./ File No.			
Document Owner	Lead Writer (position)		
Directorate/Unit: Quality and Practice	Senior Policy Officer, Operational Policy		
Accountable Director: Director Quality and Practice			
Commencement date	1 March 2024	Review date	28 February 2027
Risk rating	Consequence Rating	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Risk Assessment Matrix	Minor	Unlikely	Low

REVISION RECORD		
Approval Date	Version	Revision description
December 2023	V1.0	Final