

Guidelines – Interim Inspection Process During COVID-19 for a Children’s Residential Facility

The purpose of this guideline is to assist service providers in understanding the interim licensing process during the COVID-19 period for Children’s Residential Facilities (CRF) in South Australia. It is anticipated that this process will remain in place whilst a state emergency has been declared by the South Australian Government.

The Department for Child Protection (DCP) has the legislated mandate under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (the Act), to grant (either with or without conditions) licenses for Children’s Residential Facilities (CRF) in South Australia. The current licensing process includes an onsite inspection of the facility. In order to undertake this legislative obligation safely during the COVID-19 period, the licensing process has been modified in some cases.

Process to apply for an initial CRF licence:

- 1) The Service Provider will contact DCP Licensing at DCPLicensing@sa.gov.au to discuss details of the CRF, and establish if the CRF is required to be licensed under the Act.
- 2) If the CRF is required to be licensed, an application pack for an initial licence will be sent to the enquirer for consideration and completion.
- 3) Upon receipt of the completed application pack, DCP Licensing will schedule an onsite inspection at the CRF, where the inspection assessment report will be completed.

Process for the renewal of a CRF licence:

- 1) The Service Provider will contact DCP Licensing at DCPLicensing@sa.gov.au to commence the licence renewal process, and a licence renewal pack will be forwarded for completion.
- 2) While waiting for the renewal pack to be returned, DCP Licensing will undertake an audit of any compliance issues and conditions applied to the licence during the licence period. This will include but not limited to legislative provisions, a breach in the standards, care concerns, fire safety, electrical safety, work health safety.

A) If it is determined that the facility does not require an onsite inspection:

Upon receipt of the completed renewal pack, DCP Licensing will forward a checklist tool with accompanying instructions. This checklist tool outlines criteria that the DCP Licensing team use to assess compliance when conducting an onsite inspection. Service Providers will be required to complete the checklist tool and provide evidence attachments. This evidence will then be assessed by a DCP Licensing team member, and the inspection assessment report will be completed via teleconference.

This process will also apply when:

- ◆ There has been confirmed case of novel coronavirus in the facility
- ◆ Intrastate travel is required and flights are unavailable

B) If it is determined that the facility does require an onsite inspection:

Upon receipt of the completed renewal pack DCP Licensing to schedule an onsite inspection for a maximum of 1 hour with 1 Service provider staff member in attendance only. Once the onsite inspection is complete, the inspection assessment report will be completed via teleconference.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, DCP Licensing has taken precautions to ensure the health and safety of staff and clients by implementing safety measures for onsite inspections. These include following SA Health Guidelines, contacting Service Providers shortly before the onsite inspection to complete health screening questions, exercising social distancing protocols and utilising personal protective equipment.

Definitions and Abbreviations

Term	Definition
The Act	<i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> is the governing legislation that provides direction for the Government's commitment to the care and protection of children and young people in statutory out-of-home care and provides the legislative authority for licensing.
Children's Residential Facility (CRF)	<i>Part 7, Section 103</i> states: children's residential facility means a place where 3 or more children or young people are, for monetary or other consideration, cared for on a residential basis apart from their parents or guardians; or any other place in which children or young people are cared for on a residential basis declared by the regulations to be included in the ambit of this definition <i>See Regulation – as per part 7, S105 Licence to operate children's residential facility (Prescribing the basis for less than 3 children or young people and the Approved Carer standard).</i>
The Standards	<i>National Out of Home Care Standards 2009-2020</i> and <i>South Australian Standards of Alternative Care 2008</i>
DCP Licensing Officer	The DCP Licensing team member coordinates the arrangements for licensing applications and is located within the Service Contracts and Licensing Unit, Finance and Corporate Services Directorate, Department for Child Protection.