

Will my allowances change?

For most carers the amount will not change. However, it is important to discuss allowances offered by agencies. The child's needs will be assessed as part of the transition and for some this may result in a change.

"We work with you and the Community Services caseworker to make the process as smooth as possible and get to know you and your child."

Fay Layton, OOHC Manager, Anglicare (Orange)

My current caseworker organised services for my child with a disability – will that change?

The child's needs remain a priority for everyone. It's important to talk through the child's case plan and health plan with the new caseworker and discuss any early intervention and disability services in place. Children with a disability will be supported through the move and you will be able to talk to the new caseworker about any other supports the Agency may offer.

Remember to ask questions if you feel worried about anything.

What if I have started the adoption process?

If you have begun the adoption assessment process you will not be asked to move to a new agency.

Find out more

- Talk to your caseworker about moving to a new agency and about what agencies are in your area.
- Attend a *Carer Information Event* or expo in your area.
- Talk to Connecting Carers NSW on **1300 794 653** or the carer support team at Aboriginal Statewide Carer Support on **1800 888 698**.
- Find out about agencies at **www.fosteringnsw.com.au**.
- Read updates in *Fostering Our Future*.
- Talk to other carers who have made the move.



Moving to a new agency

What you need to know about moving from Community Services to a non-government agency.



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www.connectingcarersnsw.com.au
www.absec.org.au

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Moving to a new agency

To better help vulnerable children and families, the NSW Government is expanding the role of non-government agencies in out-of-home care.

As part of this, the government is transferring foster care and kinship care placements to accredited non-government agencies.

Already many children and their carers throughout NSW have moved to a new agency.

If you care for an Aboriginal child you will move to an Aboriginal agency.

If you care for a child in statutory foster care or relative kinship care with "parental responsibility" to the Minister for Family and Community Services – then it's now time to think about moving to an agency in your region.

Your Community Services caseworker will work with you and the agency to make the transfer as smooth as possible.

Why transfer to a new agency?

The transfer decision has come about through many years of research showing children and young people are actually better off in non-government agencies placements. Agencies do a great job working with families and kids and many offer programs that help kids shine.

Agency accreditation

In NSW only agencies accredited by the Children's Guardian can provide placements for children in foster care and statutory relative/kinship care. To be accredited an agency must meet the *NSW Standards for Statutory Out-of-Home Care*. These are important standards that support and protect children and young people in care and support the carer. All agencies must meet these standards.

Finding an agency

You will need to talk to the Community Services caseworker about what agencies are offering services in your area. Your choice will depend on where you live, the number of agencies offering services, the type of care services, and the number of placements available. In some towns or areas there may be just one or two agencies offering services to children and carers.

You can find out more by going to a Carer Information Event if there is one being held in your area, or by talking to the Community Services caseworker about what agencies are offering services in your area.

"We made the move. I'm happy to say things are pretty much the same for me and my family. The new caseworker seems good. She visited us in the beginning to get to know us."

Debbie, foster carer



How do I make the move?

The first step is to talk to your Community Services caseworker. When you transfer to an agency, so does the case management of the child in your care. It all happens together.

The Community Services caseworker and the agency caseworker work together with you to make the transfer happen smoothly.

Will I need to be authorised with the new agency?

Yes, but you will not start from scratch. You may need to give the agency information about your family, home and current circumstances. The process depends on your history as a carer, who lives in your home and whether Community Services has up-to-date information on file.

This information helps the authorisation process and assists your new agency to understand the needs of the child and you as the carer (e.g. support or training). A caseworker from your new agency will visit you to discuss this.



Will the new caseworker want to visit my home?

The agency caseworker will meet with you and the child or young person in your care. As part of joining the agency, they will need to find out what support you and the child in your care need and tell you about their service.

Contact and visits from the new caseworker will vary, so it's best to directly ask the agency that you are interested in moving to.