



Alternative care arrangements overview

FACS is committed to significantly reducing, and ultimately eliminating, the number of children and young people placed in alternative care arrangements (that is hotels, motels or serviced apartments).

Under the Permanency Support Program (PSP), there is an expectation that service providers have **emergency carers** available to prevent the use of alternative care arrangements. Service providers receive a **Placement Capacity Payment** to compensate them for the cost of resources needed to have a placement immediately available.

Before a child or young person is placed in an alternative care arrangement

Before a child or young person is placed in an alternative care arrangement, service providers must demonstrate to FACS that every effort has been made to support and maintain the child or young person in their current placement. Where this is not possible, service providers must exhaust all other placement options, including working with FACS to explore availability with other service providers, before an alternative care arrangement is considered.

If an alternative care arrangement is the only option available, service providers must obtain approval through their local Child & Family District Unit (CFDU) or CAU if the child or young person is in ITC, prior to placing the child or young person. CFDUs/CAU must notify the Deputy Secretary Northern Cluster's team by close of business the next day. CFDU/CAU should also be consulted by funded service providers before determining where the child or young person is placed to ensure the premises is appropriate for children and the Housing NSW 'Women and Children Temporary Accommodation list' has been checked.

If the placement extends to 5 or more days, service providers must complete the *Request for approval for an alternative care arrangement: for funded service providers* form. Approval will only be given for a maximum 8 weeks. If placement extends beyond this, the service provider will need to complete and submit another form. If the projected annual cost is over \$500,000, Secretary approval is also required.

How alternative care arrangements will be funded

FACS will pay the **difference** between the agreed cost of maintaining a child or young person in an alternative care arrangement and the funding the service provider receives under the PSP baseline package. That is, for each day a child or young person is in an alternative care arrangement, FACS will pay the agreed cost of maintaining them in the arrangement **minus** the relevant daily rate paid to service providers quarterly, in advance as part of PSP (as outlined in Schedule 3 (Table 6) of the [Program Level Agreement](#)).

Alternative care arrangements **will not be funded via a complex needs payment** but through a separate process for emergency accommodation.

If an alternative care arrangement is required, service providers are required to notify the **Office of the Children's Guardian**.

Review process

Where the child or young person is in an alternative care arrangement for a period of greater than one month, progress will be monitored either via the District Complex Case Panel or other agreed district oversight process.