



Communities
& Justice

Casework Support Scheme
(CSS)

Program Guidelines

23 April 2021



Document approval

The Casework Support Scheme has been endorsed and approved by:

Philippa Welman

Director, Statewide Contracts

Approved: 16 November 2020

Eleri Morgan-Thomas

Executive Director

Approved: N/A

Document version control

Distribution: All DCJ Staff, CSS service providers

Document name: Casework Support Scheme Program Guidelines

Version: Version 3.0

This document replaces Version 2.0 (September 2019)

Document status: Final

File name: CSS Program Guidelines version 3.0

Authoring unit: Statewide Contracts

Date: April 2021

Next Review Date: April 2022

Table of contents

1. Purpose	4
2. Legislative framework	4
3. Policy context	4
3.1 CSS historical overview	5
4. Description of Casework Support Scheme	6
4.1 CSS objectives	6
4.2 Eligible clients	6
4.3 Eligible service providers	6
4.4 Allocation of work	7
4.5 Services types	8
4.5.1 Overview of service types	8
4.5.2 Mentoring	9
4.5.3 Supervised contact	9
4.5.4 Supervised transport	10
4.5.5 Daytime Respite	10
4.5.6 Overnight Respite	11
5. Performance Indicators for service providers	12
6. Service Provider Obligations	13
7. Reporting and monitoring of CSS Service quality	16
7.1 Reporting	16
7.2 Monitoring of Service quality	16
7.2.1 Monitoring of Service quality for caseworkers	17
7.2.2 Monitoring of Service quality for service provider	17
7.2.3 Addressing performance issues	18
8. Pricing Approach	18
9. Roles and responsibilities	19
9.1 Service providers	20
9.2 Districts	20
9.3 Central Office - District Operations	20
9.4 Central Office – State-wide Contracts team (CSS Team)	20
Appendix A. Checklist for DCJ/caseworkers	21
Appendix B. Checklist for service providers	22

1. Purpose

The Casework Support Scheme (CSS) is a fee-for-service scheme that enables Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) frontline caseworkers to purchase additional support services to meet the needs of vulnerable children/young people in out of home care (OOHC) placements which are managed directly by DCJ.

These Program Guidelines provide an overview of CSS, including:

- its relationship to DCJ Permanency Support Program (PSP)
- description of service types
- obligations, performance measures, and roles and responsibilities.

Service providers are required to ensure they meet the requirements specified in this document.

Unless otherwise stated or the context otherwise requires, capitalised terms in these Program Guidelines have the meaning given to them in the Panel Deed for CSS Services entered into by DCJ and a service provider (**CSS Panel Deed**).

These Program Guidelines may be amended or replaced from time to time by DCJ.

2. Legislative framework

Design and delivery of CSS is guided by the following legislation and associated regulations:

- Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2006
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Community Services (Complaints, Review and Monitoring) Act 1993 (No 2)
- Community Welfare Act 1987
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Public Finance and Audit Act 1983

3. Policy context

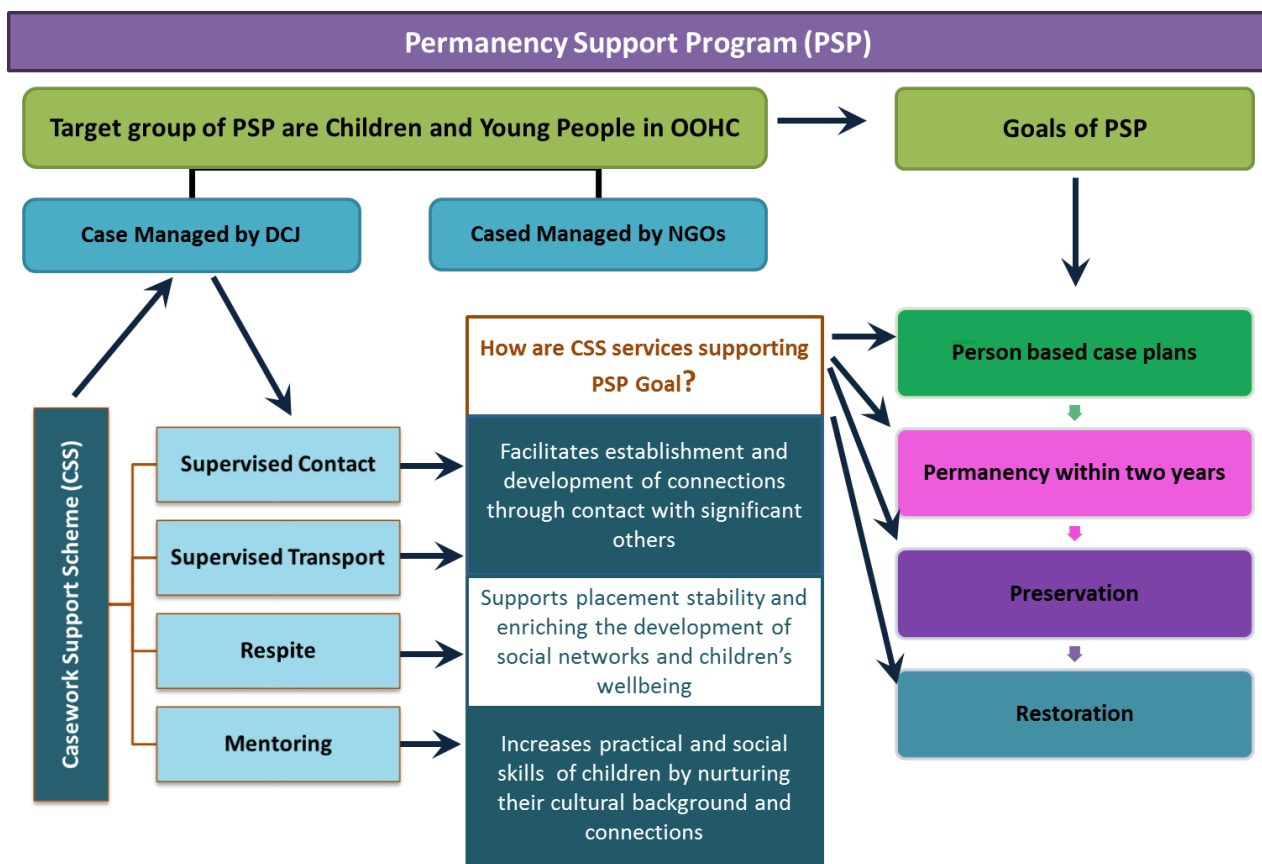
DCJ delivers services to some of the most disadvantaged individuals, families and communities in NSW. We support over 800,000 people, through services provided by a network of 15 Districts comprising of 82 Community Services Centres throughout NSW. In fulfilling its role, DCJ operates in close collaboration with other government departments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the community.

Our vision is that *“all people are empowered to live fulfilling lives and achieve their potential in inclusive communities”*. We are committed to being client centred, improving our client experience and ensuring that our staff members feel they have the support they need to do well in their roles in order to change people’s lives (DCJ Strategic Plan 2017-2021).

The Safe Home for Life reforms, announced in October 2014, strengthened the child protection system through legislative change, new policy and practice, and a redesign of how technology is used in child protection.

As part of these reforms, DCJ PSP commenced in October 2017. PSP has a strong emphasis on achieving permanency and placement stability for children as early as possible. DCJ is working to increase family preservation and restoration rates and to give open adoption and long-term guardianship greater consideration.

Notwithstanding this emphasis on permanency, it is acknowledged that the role and need for foster care is likely to continue for some time. CSS plays an important role in maintaining contact with family, an important foundation for restoration and in meeting the broader needs of children/young people.



3.1 CSS historical overview

DCJ established the Non-Placement Support Services Scheme (NPSS) in mid-2012. This fee-for-service arrangement was utilised to purchase non-placement support services for children/young people in OOHC. The NPSS offered eight service types - supervised transport, supervised contact, youth work support, respite, behavioural support, kinship/relative carer assessments, therapeutic camps and disability care.

Prior to 2012, these types of services were purchased from approximately 40 providers under a head agreement. NPSS replaced this with a standing offer agreement to detail the terms and conditions for provision of services.

An internal review of the NPSS Scheme was undertaken by DCJ in 2016 and in 2017, Westwood Spice (WWS) consultants were commissioned by DCJ to undertake a redesign of the NPSS Scheme to align with key reform changes and the introduction of PSP.

The design of the CSS reflects the findings and key recommendations of these reviews and DCJ's current business needs.

4. Description of Casework Support Scheme

4.1 CSS objectives

Children/young people need a range of services to meet their needs, beyond what is provided in their placement. These include services that facilitate connections and relationships through contact and respite and assistance through provision of mentoring and transportation services.

Support services available for purchase under CSS - supervised contact, supervised transport, mentoring and respite, play an important role in maintaining children/young people's contact with family by creating a foundation for restoration and in meeting the broader needs of children/young people.

The need for CSS is identified through case planning.

4.2 Eligible clients

Eligible clients of CSS are vulnerable children/young people (0-18 years) who are:

- under the parental responsibility of the Minister, or care responsibility of the Secretary, and are in an OOHC placement with a DCJ authorised foster or relative and kinship carer which are managed directly by DCJ, or
- under a Care Order allocating parental responsibility to a relative for a period of more than 14 days.

Children/young people whose placements are with OOHC funded non-government designated agencies, and children/young people 'not in placement' or under Guardianship Orders, **are not** eligible for CSS. CSS Services (including daytime respite and overnight respite) cannot be used for alternative care arrangements (e.g. placement breakdown or for children/young people without placement).

4.3 Eligible service providers

CSS can only be provided by service providers on the CSS Panel of Approved Service Providers (approved service providers). These providers have participated in a tender process to ensure they meet the minimum requirements to deliver services to children and young people in OOHC. These providers have entered into a Panel Deed with DCJ and are subject to performance monitoring and audits.

The service providers engaged to deliver CSS must be capable of and committed to understanding the circumstances, interests and requirements of DCJ and its clients. They must provide Services in a manner which is sensitive to DCJ's circumstances, supports DCJ's interests, and meets DCJ's requirements.

4.4 Allocation of work

CSS service providers who are on the CSS approved service providers list may be engaged by Districts (fee-for-service) to provide one or more CSS Service Types for a child/young person.

DCJ has the discretion to:

- allocate all or part of these Services to any service provider
- allocate the Service to a suitable DCJ employee.

The Districts' referring offices will ordinarily be responsible for managing the Service engagement.

DCJ will provide instruction and background information on each Service engagement through the issuing of a request for service. The process followed is:

Availability Request (optional)

- (a) District Representative will contact a service provider with an initial Request for Services (verbal or in writing).
- (b) The service provider will indicate its willingness and availability to perform the Services.
- (c) An estimate of time and costs may be discussed at this time.

Issue of Request for Services Form (required)

- a) If the service provider is available to perform the Services, the District Representative will issue a Request for Services Form (via email or using the Request for Services Form template). The Request for Services Form must be in writing and include:
 - the required CSS Service Type(s)
 - a description of the required Services
 - the time(s) and date(s) on which the Services will be required
 - the location(s) at which the Services will be required to be performed; and
 - a request for a cost estimate for the provision of the described Services.
- b) The service provider must respond to the Request for Services Form within 3 Business Days, either:
 - confirming its availability to perform the requested Services and setting out the cost estimate; or
 - proposing amendment to the request; or
 - non-acceptance of the request
- c) Upon acceptance of the Request for Services Form by the service provider and the cost estimate by DCJ (in writing - usually via email), an individual agreement for Services is formed between DCJ and the service provider, incorporating the Request for Services Form and all the terms and conditions of the existing CSS Panel Deed agreement between DCJ and the service provider. DCJ will issue the service provider with a purchase order or ask that the service provider refers to an existing purchase order. One purchase order may be generated by the DCJ to cover the entirety of CSS engagement for that one provider for the full financial year.

- d) Subject to the CSS Panel Deed, DCJ and the service provider are bound by the agreed costs and Services. Amendments (including to costs) or cancellation to the Request for Services Form must be made in accordance with the terms of the CSS Panel Deed.

Amending, recalling or suspending an agreed Request for Service

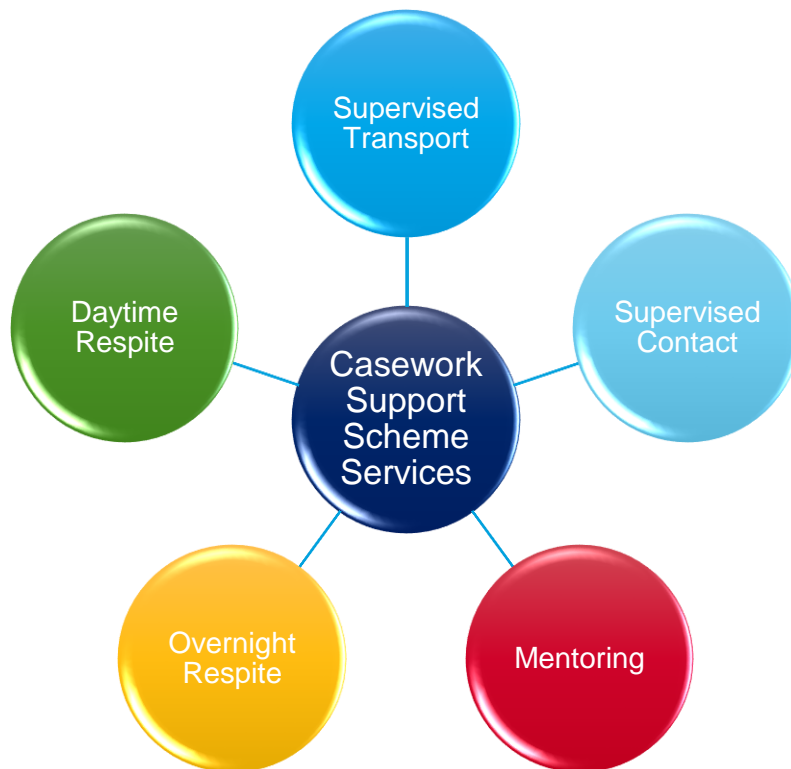
Upon acceptance of the Request for Services Form by the service provider and the cost estimate by DCJ (in writing - usually via email), an individual agreement for Services is formed between DCJ and the service provider, incorporating all the terms and conditions of the existing CSS Panel Deed agreement between DCJ and the service provider.

Subject to the CSS Panel Deed, DCJ and the service provider are bound by the agreed costs and Services. Where practical DCJ will provide a minimum of three days' notice in respect of the amendment, suspension or recall of Services under a Request for Services Form. However, in accordance with the CSS Panel Deed, if a suspension or recall occurs after 5.00pm the day before the Service Provider was due to provide the service DCJ will pay the Service Provider a sum equivalent to 3 hours of the staff rate for the applicable CSS Service Type. No fee in respect of transport costs (Item 1 of the Price Guide) will be payable.

Nothing in these paragraphs limits clause 4.3 or paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 of the CSS Panel Deed.

4.5 Services types

4.5.1 Overview of service types



4.5.2 Mentoring

The provision of an appropriately trained and qualified support worker for a specific time scheduled between a child/young person and support worker for a designated number of sessions/package/numbers of weeks. This might be home-based e.g. supervision/help with homework or involve activities out of the home. Included in this category is assistance to help the child/young person to maintain links with their cultural background.

Prior to engagement, the DCJ caseworker will identify specific mentoring goals and skill development outcomes, with written detailed success criteria for each goal.

The tasks of the support worker include:

- liaising with the caseworker as required
- undertaking mentoring appointments and ensuring appointments occur in the manner directed by DCJ
- providing reports on the progress and outcomes of mentoring in the manner directed by DCJ.

4.5.3 Supervised contact

The provision of an appropriately trained and qualified contact worker, to facilitate enjoyable, positive and meaningful supervised contact between a child/young person and their parents/family.

The single factor most connected with positive outcomes for children/young people is meaningful, lifelong connections with their family. Contact visits are an important part of maintaining these connections and are essential to achieving restoration.

The main aim of providing supervised contact is to enable children/young people who are living in OOHC to interact with their parents/family in a safe, supportive and non-judgmental environment.

The DCJ caseworker will identify the frequency, duration and location of contact visits as part of the child/young person's case plan.

The tasks of the contact worker include:

- liaising with the caseworker as required
- ensuring that contact arrangements are safe and meet the needs of the child/young person
- identifying and supporting the physical, emotional and relational needs of the child/young person and family during the contact session
- managing any challenges that arise during the contact session in a responsive, empathic and appropriate way
- supporting parents/family members to identify and respond to the child's/young person's needs, emotions, and behaviour
- modelling, coaching and supporting parents and children to play, communicate and interact in mutually enjoyable ways
- monitoring child's/young person's safety, observing, recording and reporting on observations and the effectiveness of contact arrangements following contact session, in the manner directed by DCJ

- providing contact report in the manner directed by DCJ.

4.5.4 Supervised transport

The provision of an appropriately trained worker, vehicle and child seats to transport and/or supervise a child/young person for a variety of activities.

The circumstances in which supervised transport might be required include the following:

- in association with a contact visit
- attending appointments
- attending court
- placement changes
- attendance at camps etc.

The tasks of the transport worker include:

- liaising with the caseworker as required
- picking up, supervising, transporting and dropping off the child/young person
- ensuring the appointments occur in the manner directed by DCJ
- ensuring the transport arrangements are safe and meet the needs of the child/young person

Provision of supervised transport may be required as part of any of the CSS Services.

4.5.5 Daytime Respite

The provision of an appropriately trained and qualified respite worker for a planned reoccurring or one-off, time-limited breaks and/or support for carers and children/young people between 6:00am – 11:00pm. Daytime respite can occur in a variety of in or out-of-home settings. It can be for different lengths of time and frequency, depending on the needs of the child/young person and the carer.

Respite can be effective in maintaining placements and it is important that all carers and children/young people have the opportunity to access planned respite of a type and level that suits their circumstances. It provides carers with support, breaks and time-out from the demands of their role and can enrich the range of social networks and experiences for the child/young person. Respite may also be provided as part of a carer development plan to support placement stability.

Caseworkers should consider the unique needs of the child/young person, when thinking about the type of respite, and whether respite provided by CSS is the most appropriate form of respite for the child/young person. Caseworkers should refer to the 'respite' mandate on Casework Practice for more guidance.

The DCJ caseworker will identify the need for respite, specific respite requirements, frequency, duration and other daytime respite arrangements in the child/young person's case plan.

The tasks of the respite worker include:

- liaising with the caseworker as required
- obtaining and reviewing the respite specifications prior to the respite session
- ensuring the respite arrangements are safe and meet the needs of the child/young person

- supervising and supporting the child/young person during the respite session
- utilising appropriate behaviour management strategies
- facilitating age and ability appropriate activities that meet the child's/young person's needs
- ensuring respite sessions occur in the manner directed by DCJ
- providing feedback and reports on the outcome of respite in the manner requested by DCJ.

The daytime respite is either provided by a designated agency (preferred) or there is a statutory case management function.

4.5.6 Overnight Respite

The provision of an appropriately trained and qualified respite worker for overnight respite arrangement between 11:00pm – 6:00am for regular and planned overnight respite that supports a child/young person and sustains a placement.

The service provider must be a designated agency and be on the CSS Approved Overnight Respite Providers List. Where a designated agency is not available, a non-designated service provider on the CSS Approved Overnight Respite Providers List can be used to provide this service.

Overnight Respite can be used:

- as an extension of daytime respite, where overnight stay is required
- in conjunction with supervised contact, where overnight stays are required due to the geographical distance of family that the child/young person is visiting.

Refer to 'daytime respite' for more information on accessing respite.

The DCJ caseworker will identify the need for overnight respite, specific respite requirements, frequency, duration and other overnight respite arrangements in the child/young person's case plan.

The tasks of the overnight respite worker include:

- liaising with the caseworker as required
- obtaining and reviewing the overnight respite specifications prior to the overnight respite session
- ensuring the overnight respite arrangements are safe and meet the needs of the child/young person
- supervising child/young person during the overnight respite sessions
- ensuring respite sessions occur in the manner directed by DCJ
- providing feedback and reports on the outcome of respite in the manner directed by DCJ.

Engaging an Overnight Respite Service Provider

Before engaging any overnight respite service provider (designated or non-designated), caseworkers must first ensure authorisation in line with the Office of Children's Guardian requirements, specifically:

- obtain approval from their Principal Officer
- check that the service provider is on the CSS Approved Overnight Respite Providers list

- be satisfied that the person is safe and suitable to work with children and young people and is able to carry out the functions of an authorised carer, and:
 - verify the person's Working With Children Check
 - be satisfied that the person has an up-to-date national criminal record check
 - be satisfied that the person has been subject to an appropriate recruitment and selection process
 - provide the person with a letter of authorisation as an emergency carer.
 - notify the Office of the Deputy Secretary Northern Cluster, through Cross Cluster Issues Management.

5. Performance Indicators for service providers

Service providers delivering CSS are expected to meet the Performance Indicators. Performance Indicators form part of the CSS Panel Deed concluded with each service provider.

The Performance Indicators applicable to all Service types are as follows:

- The children/young people were safe at all times during the Service.
- Personnel remained focused on the child/young person throughout the provision of Services. This means the child/young person's needs and welfare are the primary concern and the primary focus of the service provider. This includes:
 - recognising and responding to the developmental, emotional and physical needs of the child/young person;
 - taking the child/young person's needs into account; and
 - allowing the child/young person the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them.
- The service provider has met their obligations imposed by law, these Program Guidelines and the CSS Panel Deed, including that all Personnel hold current clearance under Working with Children Legislation, National Police Checks and direct delivery Personnel hold current first aid certificates prior to the provision of Services.
- The Service was conducted as directed by DCJ and the provider worked towards the identified goals for the child/young person. These are identified in the Request for Services Form or other agreement with DCJ.
- Prior to the provision of Services, all Personnel to be involved in the provision of CSS Services have completed qualifications and child-related training that makes them capable of delivering the particular CSS Service Type.
- Personnel arrived on time and were well prepared to deliver the Service.
- Personnel utilised their skills to facilitate positive interaction and where required, appropriate discipline methods and strategies.
- Service was delivered within agreed costs and invoicing occurred in accordance with DCJ agreements.
- Reports are succinct, accurate, objective, and in plain English, utilising the stipulated DCJ templates, and submitted to DCJ within the designated timeframe (5 days unless otherwise agreed).

Additional Service specific Performance Indicators are listed below:

Supervised Transport - The vehicle is clean and tidy and fitted with age appropriate child seat.

Mentoring - A positive role model has been provided in the life of a child/young person through regular one on one mentoring or other planned activity.

Contact - The contact worker does not proceed with the contact if the parent/family are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, fail to comply with the agreed arrangements, are in inappropriate emotional state such as highly agitated, aggressive or abusive.

Respite - The respite worker is present at all times.

6. Service Provider Obligations

The service provider and its Personnel are expected to meet all requirements specified for each relevant Service type.

In addition to the terms and conditions specified in the CSS Panel Deed and each Request for Services Form, the service provider must meet the obligations listed below in Table 1.

Table 1:

Obligation area	Service provider must
Service Delivery	
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate fully and coordinate its performance of the Services with other service providers or organisations that are or may be engaged by DCJ from time to time. • Develop joint working relationships with relevant Government agencies, information sources and non-government providers. • Demonstrate capacity to provide a high level of professional supervision and accountability at all times. • Carry out minor changes to the Services to incorporate DCJ's or any Authority's reasonable requirements at no additional cost to DCJ. • Utilise any system, app or platform prescribed by DCJ. • Obtain and maintain the insurances and policies with a reputable insurer as specified in the CSS Panel Deed. • Inform DCJ in a timely manner of any changes to organisation details or key Personnel.
Child Safe Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement child safe Services in accordance with the OCG advice for good child safe policies and practices to ensure a 'child safe' organisation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ develop and implement child safe policies ○ have a child safe code of conduct ○ ensure effective Personnel recruitment and training ○ understand privacy considerations ○ have a plan for managing risk ○ encourage children/young people to participate in decision making about the Services they receive ○ effectively deal with concerns or complaints about behaviours towards child/young person

Obligation area	Service provider must
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ attend child safe organisations training that may be offered by the OCG, DCJ or other relevant training body. <p>Service providers should refer to the OCG website for more information.</p>
<p>Notifications, reporting and recording</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Immediately notify DCJ if it becomes aware of any matter which may change the scope, cost or timing of delivery, or of the Services. ● Consult and keep informed DCJ on a regular basis regarding the performance of the Services. ● During the CSS Panel Deed term, the service provider must immediately notify DCJ (in writing, with sufficient details) of the occurrence of any Incident, or any event which might reasonably be considered to be an Incident as per clause 12.4(b) in the CSS Panel Deed. ● Maintain accurate and detailed records of all Services and outcomes, and provide these to DCJ on request. Refer to clause 9.5 of the CSS Panel Deed for more information. ● Maintain records of financial administration. ● Comply with statutory reporting and notifications listed below.
PERSONNEL	
<p>Personnel checks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that, before provision of CSS Services, all Personnel have current: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ clearance under Working with Children Legislation; ○ National Police Check; and ○ direct delivery Personnel have current first aid certificate. ● A National Police Check supports informed decision making about a person’s suitability to work with children in OOHC. Without limiting anything in the Panel Deed, no Service Provider Personnel may have a recent relevant disclosable court outcome or pending charges that make them unsuitable to work with vulnerable young people and children. This may include, but is not limited to violent or drug related offences, or serious or repeated traffic offences.
<p>Personnel qualifications and training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appoint appropriately skilled and qualified Personnel to undertake a range of tasks associated with delivery of CSS Services. ● Ensure all CSS Personnel have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ qualifications, training and personnel development appropriate for the Service type provided and the needs of a child/young person. DCJ recommends a certificate level 3 or above qualification and/or demonstrated appropriate experience with working with children/young people and their families. ○ Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics training.

Obligation area	Service provider must
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all Personnel are supported by appropriately qualified and experienced management. DCJ recommends the management to have a minimum qualification of a relevant Bachelor's Degree and demonstrated related experience. • Maintain a list of Personnel who are or may be involved in providing Services, such list to include, at a minimum, the following information in respect of each Personnel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ full name and date of birth; ○ details of clearance under Working with Children Legislation; ○ National Police Check details; ○ first aid certificate details (for direct delivery Personnel); and ○ a list of all relevant qualifications, education and training, <p>and must provide such list to DCJ upon request.</p>
LEGISLATIVE and STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	
Statutory Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of and comply with all relevant legislations, protocols, regulations or authorisations required to lawfully provide the Service. • Comply with the following special statutory requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 76 of the Community Welfare Act 1987 ○ Section 45 of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 ○ Section 254 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
Reporting Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with mandatory reporting requirements under section 23 and 27 of the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) No 157</i> • Comply with the reporting requirements of the <i>Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW) No 68</i>, including Part 3A and Part 3C
SERVICE TYPE SPECIFIC	
Supervised Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the children/young people are safe during the transport. Among other things, this means providing a vehicle that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has age-appropriate child seat(s)/restraints fitted in the vehicle ○ is comprehensively insured ○ has current registration ○ has a first aid kit ○ has a fire blanket and fire extinguisher ○ has relevant forms that may include emergency contact details, critical incident response /reporting guide • Ensure Personnel have:

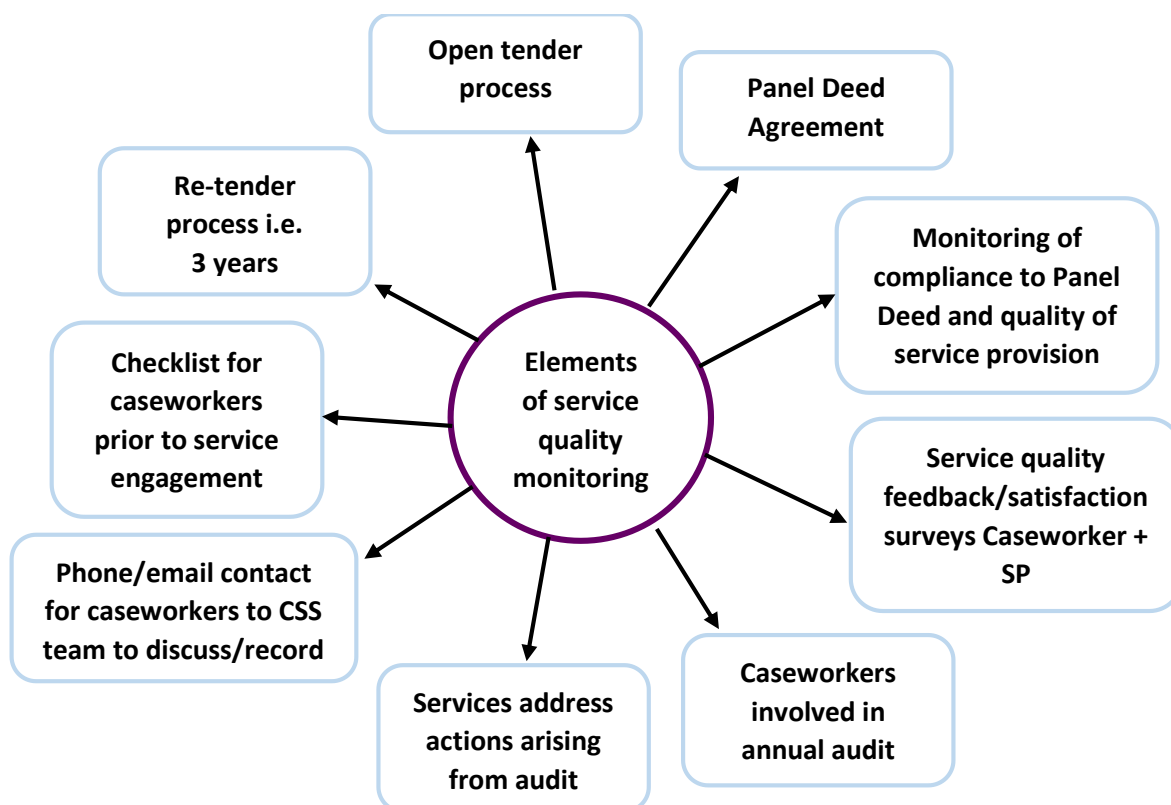
Obligation area	Service provider must
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a current full NSW Drivers Licence (P Plates drivers are not eligible to provide supervised transport) ○ completed training in the use of current compliant car seats and appropriate baby car restraints per industry standards.
Respite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not provide respite in a Personnel's home unless this is clearly agreed by DCJ, and DCJ (Principal Officer) has reviewed compliance with regulations, including a home safety inspection and confirmation that all adult house members hold a current clearance under Working with Children Legislation. ● If providing overnight respite ensure Personnel have been approved by DCJ in accordance with section 4.5.6.

7. Reporting and monitoring of CSS Service quality

7.1 Reporting

Standard CSS reporting templates are to be completed by caseworkers and service providers on each Service occasion. Service providers may be required to complete additional reports as agreed with caseworkers at acceptance of the request for Service.

7.2 Monitoring of Service quality



7.2.1 Monitoring of Service quality for caseworkers

District Representatives may utilise the below quality monitoring processes:

- List of prompts/questions for caseworkers to consider prior to engagement of a CSS Service (see Appendix A).
- Involvement in the annual audit process (see below).
- Option to contact the DCJ Central Office (CSS Team) to discuss concerns regarding individual Services and request an audit.
- Capacity to track expenditure through ChildStory reporting.
- Financial delegations established for Service types.

Satisfaction Survey/Service Quality Feedback Loop

- It is proposed that an ongoing tool for measuring quality form part of CSS. If implemented the tool may include the below elements: Simple online app/tool with two response channels, one targeting caseworkers and one for service providers. This app enables the collection of data from individual caseworkers across each individual instance of Service delivery to develop an aggregated overall picture of quality provision and comparable feedback from service providers.
- Results will be provided to service providers about their satisfaction rating.

7.2.2 Monitoring of Service quality for service provider

Procurement

All service providers will be subject to a procurement process to be placed on the approved providers list. Elements of the procurement include:

- a clear application and approval process for provider registration
- stringent selection criteria
- consideration of qualifications and previous experience
- focus on achieving a choice of providers for each Service type wherever possible
- a fast track process for providers who have OCG accreditation
- approved service provider status time-limited (e.g. 3 years)
- Service agreement requirements clearly spelt out in a CSS Panel Deed.

Maintenance of Personnel information

Service providers must maintain a list of Personnel (including subcontractors) names and dates of birth (for purposes of compliance checking), together with details of each such individual's clearance under Working with Children Legislation, National Police check, first aid certificate (for direct delivery Personnel) and appropriate qualifications, education and training. This list must be kept up to date and provided to DCJ when requested.

Self-Assessment

Each year, DCJ selects a sample of service providers to complete a self-assessment survey (e.g. 10%). The information sought through the survey is designed to verify the requirements which the service provider must meet – e.g. requesting information about the required training/safety checks of their Personnel. This process will include:

- survey sent to service provider (e.g. via SurveyMonkey)
- service provider completes the survey within specified time frame
- results and required actions communicated to service provider.

Audit

DCJ may conduct an audit of a service provider as part of a standard compliance review mechanism. Additionally, each year, DCJ will select a sample of service providers to audit (e.g. 10%). The information sought through the audit is designed to verify whether the service provider is meeting their obligations, Performance Indicators, Service Provider Obligations and responsibilities included in these Program Guidelines, the CSS Panel Deed and/or a Request for Services Form.

This process may include:

- notification of audit to the service provider
- self-assessment tool for the service provider to complete prior to the audit, including:
 - quantitative summary of Service delivery
 - statement of currency of insurances
 - Personnel training data
 - complaints data
- assessment tool completed by the/a caseworker/s who have engaged the service provider in the previous 12 months
- DCJ audit – conducted by a representative from Central Office – based on the self-assessment, production of evidence and the assessment completed by the caseworker/s
- DCJ notification to the service provider of the outcome of the audit and any actions that are needed to ensure the service is meeting the requirements of the CSS Panel Deed.

7.2.3 Addressing performance issues

In most cases, the caseworker or District Representative will discuss performance issues with the service provider directly. Where these issues have occurred on more than one occasion, or a significant breach of the CSS Panel Deed has occurred, then the matter may be escalated to DCJ Central Office for review and follow up. The review process can include compliance audit and may result in suspension or termination of the CSS Panel Deed.

8. Pricing Approach

A capped price guide has been developed for all Service types. While the price guide allows for a consistent approach to pricing across service providers, it enables Districts to negotiate lower rates with service providers at local level as appropriate.

Refer to the CSS Price Guide and the CSS Price Help Guide for further information.

9. Roles and responsibilities

The below table of roles and responsibilities is for information purposes only and does not impose any obligations on DCJ or a service provider beyond those imposed elsewhere in these Program Guidelines or in the CSS Panel Deed.

Role	Responsibilities
9.1 Service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver professional, child-safe services in accordance with the CSS Panel Deed, these Program Guidelines and the Request for Services Form • Work collaboratively with DCJ to respond to any issues • Participate in quality feedback, audits and reviews when requested by DCJ • Provide accurate and timely invoices • Inform DCJ of any changes to organisation details and key personnel • Provide information to DCJ when requested
9.2 Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure service providers are engaged only from the approved service providers list • Provide the service provider with a request for Services form and ensure this is accepted by the service provider • Make available all relevant information to the service provider in a timely manner so the service provider can deliver the Services according to DCJ's requirements and the needs of the child/young person • Ensure that the information provided to the service provider is purposeful, clearly outlining the expectations of service provider during the Service provision • Instruct the service provider regarding DCJ's templates and guidelines to be used in preparing documents and reports • Ensure that any Personnel details, probity checks or other requested information is provided by the service provider prior to provision of Services • Ensure reports are completed following provision of Service • Ensure invoices are processed in a timely manner • Participate in quality feedback, audits and reviews when requested by DCJ Central Office. • Advise DCJ Central Office, CSS Team via email of provider concerns/complaints when they are unable to be resolved at District level • Advise the Central Office, CSS Team via email of serious breaches of CSS Service standards that warrant an audit of the service provider
9.3 Central Office - District Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and review Service usage, volume, anomalies, financial spend, trends and issues • Identify any anomalies and provide feedback to State-wide Contracts team/Districts
9.4 Central Office – State-wide Contracts team (CSS Team)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the CSS contract monitoring process • Monitor, track and record the registration process of new applications and the breach, suspension, termination or closure of providers • Maintain the CSS database and complaints log • Lead the quality feedback, audits and review process • Coordinate and collate reports to be provided to District Forums and DCJ Executive • Recommend additional contracting rounds as required • Make recommendations to the Executive Director Partnerships to suspend/terminate/breach service providers

Appendix A. Checklist for DCJ/caseworkers

This is a checklist for DCJ/caseworkers to consider prior to purchasing a CSS Service

Questions for caseworkers to consider prior to purchasing a CSS Service: Yes/No

1. Is the Service necessary/unable to be fulfilled internally?

2. Is the approval within the child/young person's financial plan?

3. Is the work approved in the child/young person's case plan?

4. Has a 149 Part B-K been completed – re contact/supervised contact?

5. Can DCJ caseworker do the work?

6. Can the carer/other person do the work?

7. What other options might be available?

8. Is a risk assessment of child/young person needed prior to engaging Services?

9. What information does the service provider require to deliver the Service?

For supervised contact

1. For restoration cases: is the nature of the supervised contact being considered the parent's choice?
2. Has 1 in 3 of the supervised contact been done by the caseworker?

For respite

1. Is a foster care placement appropriate?
2. Is a designated agency available?
3. How many days of respite has the foster carer already had this year (not exceeding the annual cap)?

Appendix B. Checklist for service providers

This is a checklist for service providers to consider prior to providing CSS Services

Checklist for service providers to complete prior to providing a CSS Service:	Yes/No
1. Prequalification process completed successfully	
2. Current CSS Panel Deed is in place	
3. All Personnel have current WWC and National Police checks cleared	
4. Direct delivery Personnel have a current First Aid certificate	
5. Organisation has a Charter of rights for children/young people	
6. Insurances are current	
7. A Service profile has been completed	
8. Evidence of policies and procedures has been supplied. including: a. HR recruitment b. Code of conduct c. Personnel training and supervision d. Report writing skills	
9. Evidence of policies and procedures to manage risk (per DCJ Fraud Policy and Subcontracting Policy), including: a. Financial risk b. Subcontracting risk	
10. Evidence of policies and procedures to support best practice/trauma informed care, including: a. Mandatory reporting b. ROSH c. Critical incident reporting processes	
11. Evidence Personnel employed have appropriate qualifications and training	
12. Evidence of capacity / ability to provide adequate training for all Personnel in accordance with the OOHC Standards and practices endorsed by the Office of Children's Guardian, including: a. Child Safe b. Mandatory reporting requirements	
13. Provide DCJ with copies of incident reports as required	
14. Complies with special statutory requirements: a. Section 76 of the <i>Community Welfare Act 1987</i> (NSW) b. Section 45 of the <i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012</i> (NSW) and c. Sections 23, 27 and 254 of the <i>Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> (NSW)	