



## Post Care Education Financial Support Procedure for Placements Managed by Funded Service Providers

These procedures relate to the provision of Post Care Education Financial Support (PCEFS) for carers in Funded Service Provider (FSP) managed placements.

The procedures are in accordance with the *Post Care Education Financial Support for Carers Policy* and section 161(3) of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

Financial support under this policy is to be assessed and monitored as part of leaving care planning and aftercare support.

### Terms

Term	Definition
Course completion	A course of study is considered complete two weeks after classes and assessments have finished and the young person is no longer required to study or complete work. Graduation is not be used as the 'course completion' date.
DCJ (formerly FACS)	NSW Department of Communities and Justice (formerly Family and Community Services).
Funded Service Provider (FSP)	An accredited and DCJ funded agency or organisation which provides OOHHC services.
Full-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Secondary school where course completion is the young person's primary occupation</li><li>• TAFE course provided the course is at least 15 hours per week including work placement</li><li>• Any other course equivalent to Year 12 provided that the course is not specifically described as a part-time course.</li></ul>
Year 12 or equivalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Higher School Certificate (HSC)</li><li>• HSC via school-based apprenticeship or traineeship</li><li>• HSC via Vocational Education and Training (VET) Board Endorsed<sup>1</sup> courses</li><li>• TAFE NSW Certificate IV in Tertiary Preparation</li><li>• International Baccalaureate, diploma level</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> Courses that are endorsed by the Board of Studies NSW to contribute to the HSC.

## Financial support

- Where a carer managed by a Funded Service Provider (FSP) is eligible for Post Care Education Financial Support (PCEFS), the PCEFS payment will be provided by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) to the FSP who will pass it on to the carer in full.
- The PCEFS rate is determined by the Child Needs Package.

Child Needs Package	PCEFS Rate
Low	Standard
Medium	Care +1
High	Care +2

- DCJ will provide the payment directly to the FSP every fortnight in arrears for each eligible young person.
- If the young person turns 18 during the fortnightly pay period, the payment to the FSP will be calculated at a pro rata rate.
- Back payments can be made for the previous quarter if the carer was eligible for PCEFS.
- PCEFS is available until the young person completes the course, ceases to study full-time, leaves the carer's home or attains 25 years, whichever is sooner.
- Some carers will also be eligible to receive the means tested Teenage Education Payment (TEP) for the young person after they turn 18 years if it is part of an approved leaving care plan.
- Access to other support payments which are part of an approved leaving care plan remain in place for the duration of the PCEFS period. However, a carer may not receive PCEFS if the young person is receiving the Aftercare Allowance which also provides financial support for accommodation while undertaking studies.

## Eligibility

To receive Post Care Education Financial Support the young person must be:

- exiting statutory or supported care due to age (OOHC ends at 18 years), and
- continuing to reside in their foster/kinship carer's home after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in order to support their completion of Year 12 or equivalent studies, and
- achieving the minimum standards in their studies which suggests they are likely to achieve successful completion, and
- under 25 years of age.

**NB:** If a young person leaves the carer's home having reached 18 years of age, but returns to reside with them within twelve months, PCEFS may be provided from that date onward if the criteria are met.

## Assessment

1. The decision to provide Post Care Education Financial Support is made during leaving care planning prior to the young person's exit from care.

2. Course completion is to be the young person's primary occupation.
3. In exceptional circumstances, PCEFS may be approved for part-time study where a young person has parental responsibilities or health issues that prevent them from undertaking full-time studies.
4. If there are other children and young people in out-of-home care under 18 years in the home, the young person is required to obtain a Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance or a Continuing Residence Approval.

**NB:** completion of studies on a full-time basis should be monitored as part of leaving care planning and aftercare support.

## **Payment Process**

### **The FSP:**

- Is responsible for advising carers about Post Care Education Financial Support and assessing the carer's application
- Gathers evidence to ensure the young person satisfies the eligibility criteria
- Advises the carer of the outcome
- Requests Post Care Education Financial Support approval by DCJ as part of the young person's leaving care plan
- If there are other children and young people in care in the same household, ensures the young person completes a Working with Children Check (WWCC) upon turning 18 years. If unable to obtain a WWCC clearance, ensure the young person holds a Continuing Residence Approval.
- Within the Partner Community locate the young person in the "Children" section and select "Person Service Request". In the Type field select "Use Financial Entitlements" and in the Request Summary section specify that it is a request for Post Care Education Financial Support Allowance. The Request Summary is to include details of the educational institution and course of study. The start date and end date of the request should reflect the period that the allowance is to be created for which can be for a maximum period of 6 months at a time. If under 6 months, the end date is the anticipated course completion date (two weeks after classes and assessments have finished) which may be prior to the end of term or graduation.
- One month prior to the end of the approval period, confirm that the young person is still living in the carer's home, actively engaged in an eligible form of study and achieving at least the minimum standards to indicate likely successful completion. Advise DCJ of ongoing eligibility and the anticipated end date. For auditing purposes, the FSP retains evidence of ongoing eligibility however this does not need to be provided to DCJ when requesting an extension.
- If the young person is no longer studying or has left the carer household the FSP must notify DCJ immediately so that the allowance can be ceased. Within the Partner Community locate the young person in the "Children" section and select "Person Service Request". In the Type field select "Use Financial Entitlements" and in the Request Summary section specify that the Post Care Education Financial Support Allowance is to be discontinued.

- Makes individual, fortnightly payments of the PCEFS allowance to approved eligible carers.

*Additional notes*

- The PCEFS allowance paid by DCJ to the FSP may occasionally be adjusted, e.g. to align with the Consumer Price Index. This can occur part way through the approval period. The FSP should be alert to this possibility and is to pass on any such increase to the carer in full.

**DCJ [Child and Family District Unit]:**

- Verifies that Post Care Education Financial Support has been approved by DCJ as part of the young person's leaving care plan by navigating to the young person's active case in ChildStory and reviewing the most recent case plan. The leaving care plan completed by the FSP will appear in the Notes and Attachments related list of the case plan.
- Creates a PCEFS allowance in the young person's placement record and selects the relevant care type (e.g. Standard Care, Care +1 or Care+2). Refer to "How do I Add a Placement Allowance?" and "How do I run an Allowance Due for Review report?" within ChildStory Knowledge for steps on how to create and review allowances.
- Once the allowance is approved, payments will be made to the FSP every fortnight.
- Advise the FSP that the allowance has been approved, the date of approval and the date at which the PCEFS should be reviewed and re-requested through the Community Partner Portal if required (generally 1 month prior to end date).

*Additional notes*

- The CFDU need to ensure that the placement record has the correct organisation in the Authorised By field of the placement record
- The CFDU need to ensure that the correct bank details are recorded and approved against the organisation in ChildStory
- Placement record must be approved before the allowance can be created