

Casework Support Scheme – New Provider Policy v2

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines regarding the addition of new providers to the Casework Support Scheme (CSS) panel of approved providers (panel).

DESCRIPTION OF CSS

CSS is a fee-for-service arrangement between DCJ and approved service providers. It enables DCJ frontline caseworkers to purchase additional support services to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people in out-of-home care (OOHC) placements which are managed directly by DCJ.

The aim of CSS is to establish a panel of approved service providers who can deliver a suite of clearly defined, sustainable, quality and child safe, fee-for-services that support caseworkers to meet the needs of children.

THE CSS PANEL OF APPROVED PROVIDERS

The current CSS panel was established through state-wide open tender in 2019. It consists of approximately 90 approved service providers. This number provides good coverage across the state. The initial term of the current panel is until November 2022 with two optional extension periods of up to 12 months each.

CSS can only be provided by approved service providers on the panel.

THE POLICY

Fundamentally, the CSS panel is closed. DCJ has no further plans to expand on this panel and no future tenders are scheduled at this stage. DCJ will continue to limit the entry of new providers to:

- preserve the integrity of the 2019 tender process
- ensure all service providers meet the minimum standards for delivery of child safe services
- encourage more opportunities for service providers on the CSS panel in what is a crowded market where supply exceeds demand
- enable DCJ to monitor and undertake performance reviews of a manageable number of providers.

However, the CSS Panel **may** be opened for a limited tender refresh annually, if/where a comprehensive demand and supply analysis has determined that:

- there are not enough providers to meet the demand for services in a specific location, normally non-metro rural or remote locations;
or
- there is an opportunity to increase participation of Aboriginal organisations, provided there is sufficient demand for their services.

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Districts should:

- explore using other existing approved providers on the panel
- not engage providers who are not on the panel.

If you cannot identify a provider in your area, please contact the CSS Team on CaseworkSupportScheme@dcj.nsw.gov.au for advice and assistance.

PROCEDURE FOR PANEL REFRESH

- The CSS team will conduct a comprehensive demand and supply analysis on annual basis (in November – to coincide with the annual anniversary of the CSS panel term) to identify whether the current panel meets the CSS services demand.
- Where a need is established, expansion of the service footprint of existing CSS approved providers will be considered. However, if the CSS analysis identifies significant service coverage gaps, a further tender refresh may be undertaken, to enable additional service providers to be introduced to the panel.
- If the annual CSS analysis determines that there is a need for a panel refresh, the CSS team will decide on the most appropriate tender type, conditions and process. This will depend on the findings identified through the annual CSS analysis and the specific supply shortage(s) (e.g. targeting providers in specific geographical area(s), Aboriginal providers or specific service types).
- The information about future CSS panel refresh activities will be published via the NSW Government eTender website <https://www.tenders.nsw.gov.au/> and Procurement Central the DCJ procurement platform on <https://justice.bravosolution.com/web/login.html>.
- Service providers that wish to participate in future CSS tender activities should register on Procurement Central the DCJ procurement platform on <https://justice.bravosolution.com/web/login.html> and the website <https://tenders.nsw.gov.au/> to receive notification of any upcoming CSS tenders.
- The position of existing service providers already appointed to the panel will remain unchanged. Existing providers will remain appointed to the panel, and will not be required to respond to the panel refresh tender(s), and the existing arrangements will continue to function as normal during the panel refresh processes.

MESSAGE FOR POTENTIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Districts should advise potential providers that the panel is closed and service providers that wish to participate in future CSS tender activities should register on the DCJ procurement platform <https://justice.bravosolution.com/web/login.html> and <https://tenders.nsw.gov.au/> website to receive notification of any upcoming CSS tenders.

Providers may contact the CSS Team on CaseworkSupportScheme@dcj.nsw.gov.au to receive further information about the CSS.