Policy: Leaving Care and After Care Support

Policy Purpose

To provide direction on the provision of support to young people transitioning from care, the development of clear and agreed plans to support successfully transition to independent adulthood, and the obligation to provide after care support and services for young people who have left care.

Policy Statement

Territory Families is committed to continue supporting children and young people after they have left care. This is in recognition that young people may require different types and varying levels of support as they transition to independence. Territory Families must ensure that young people, whether in care or after leaving care, are provided with support and services to promote their wellbeing.

Supporting Participation

An interpreter must be provided for any individual who does not have a sufficient understanding of English, or prefers to participate in another language, so they can meaningfully engage in leaving care planning discussions. Refer to the Using interpreters, translators and assisted communication services guidance for information about how to determine if a person requires an interpreter and how to arrange one. The Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) also provides a step by step guide to support the determination of When to use an Aboriginal Interpreter.

Planning For Transition from Care

Under section 70 of the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (the Act), planning for transition from care must commence from the age of fifteen, with the needs of the young person, and the actions required to address these needs, detailed in the young person’s My Leaving Care Plan (refer to Policy: Transition to Independence). Supports identified in the young person’s My Leaving Care Plan must be provided in a timely manner.

The CEO must ensure a child or young person is provided with any services the CEO considers appropriate to help them transition to independence. This includes providing support and services for young people who have left care and in the future seek assistance. For example a child may leave care at age 10 and request assistance from Territory Families at any time from age 15 to 25 years.

Eligibility

Section 85A of the Act mandates that a child who is in the CEO’s care and 15 years of age or older, or a young person who has left the CEO’s care as defined in s68 of the Act, must be provided with services the CEO considers appropriate to support their transition to independent living. This includes circumstances where a young person up to the age of 25 years requests additional assistance from Territory Families in order to successfully maintain their independence into adulthood.

Support Provided

The CEO may assist the young person to obtain:

- Accommodation;
- Employment;
- Further education;
• Legal services;
• Health services; and
• Therapeutic services.

The young person may also be provided with financial assistance for any of the following:
• Education and training;
• Obtaining and furnishing their accommodation;
• Living in close proximity to the place where they are or will be; and
• Employment or seeking employment.

The CEO must financially support a young person leaving care who is completing education or training, or to stay in their accommodation until they complete their study or course.

The CEO must ensure the child or young person is provided with any services, including child-related services, to assist the young person transition from the CEO's care to independence. This may include funding suitable external services to deliver contracted Leaving and Aftercare Support to young people transitioning to Independent living.

Legislative Basis and related documents

Care and Protection of Children Act 2007

Procedure: After Care Support

Policy: Transition to Independence

Authorised by: HPRM (TRIM): DCF 2014/3835

Executive Director, Service Development and Policy

Version 1.0

To inform Territory Families staff of the requirements for leaving care planning for young people leaving the CEO’s care.

Current Version 2.0

Approver: Executive Leadership Group

Update: Aligns with Schedule Includes addressing Interpreter needs