

Statement of Duties

Position Title: Child Safety Officer	Position Number: Generic	Effective Date: May 2011
Group and Unit: Children and Youth Services – Children and Families		
Section: Child Safety Service	Location: South, North, North West	
Award: Allied Health Professionals (Tasmania State Service) Agreement	Position Status: Permanent/Fixed-Term/Casual	
	Position Type: Full Time/Part Time/Casual	
Level: 1-2	Classification: Allied Health Professional	
Reports To: Team Leader and/or Senior Worker		
Check Type: Schedule	Check Frequency: Pre-employment	

Focus of Duties:

- The *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997* provides the legal mandate for the department to take action to protect children and young people from abuse and neglect and promote their safety stability and development. Child Safety Workers have a specific statutory role in protecting children and young people from harm and promoting their rights and healthy development. In Tasmania, Child Support Officers work within a legislative framework, the Child Protection Practice Framework and the Child Protection Professional Practice Standards (attached).
- Child Safety Officers are responsible for receiving, investigating and assessing notifications of children at risk of harm from abuse or neglect. They work with families and other professionals to resolve problems and keep children safe. In circumstances of severe risk, Child Safety Officers may be involved in legal interventions in the Magistrates Court.
- Child Safety Officers have sound self-management skills, self-awareness, and emotional maturity, with the ability to understand the personal impacts of child protection work and strategies for managing stress and building resilience. It is important that Child Safety Officers have the ability to conduct work with integrity and honesty, adhere to confidentiality requirements, and demonstrate a commitment to working with children, young people and their families.

Duties:

1. Under general supervision, provide quality, timely and effective intervention and case management services within a defined child safety service delivery framework, working within the Tasmanian Child Protection Professional Practice Standards.
2. Use effective pre-planning, planning and time management strategies to manage case loads.

3. Establish and maintain effective partnerships with children, young people, their families and service providers, utilising a range of appropriate communication, collaboration and decision making processes.
4. Engage and work with children and young persons and their families to promote safety, stability and development of the child, and to strengthen family capacity. This includes directly guiding, encouraging and supporting the child and family while monitoring impacts and outcomes
5. Respond to and investigate reports concerning children at risk of harm and undertake assessments of the child and their circumstances utilising standard assessment and intervention procedures.
6. Exercise legal delegations as an Authorised Officer and functions pursuant to the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*.
7. In consultation with a Team Leader, prepare and present information and documentation for relevant court processes, such as preparing affidavits to support applications before the Magistrates Court (Children's Division).
8. In consultation with a Team Leader and other specialists, make recommendations to the Court on decisions and actions in the best interests of the child.
9. Work collaboratively with team members, team leaders and other specialists in the development and review of best interests plans related to strengthening families and promoting a child's safety, stability and development.
10. Develop plans, compile reports and accurately update and maintain client information, both written and electronic, to a professional standard and in accordance with departmental guidelines and confidentiality principles.
11. Provide information to children, families and service providers on procedures, practices, guidelines and legislation and provide advice and case consultation on reports regarding child safety and wellbeing and the role of Child Safety in those matters.
12. Participate in professional supervision and development activities to maintain knowledge of legislative requirements, child's social and developmental needs, and case management techniques.
13. Participate in consultative processes to improve workplace health and safety and observe the safe work practices, including procedures, guidelines and policies.
14. Develop an awareness and understanding of the Agency, its goals and operations, and the relevant legislative framework for child protection.
15. Actively participate in and contribute to the organisation's Quality & Safety and Work Health & Safety processes, including the development and implementation of safety systems, improvement initiatives and related training, ensuring that quality and safety improvement processes are in place and acted upon.
16. The incumbent can expect to be allocated duties, not specifically mentioned in this document, that are within the capacity, qualifications and experience normally expected from persons occupying positions at this classification level.

Scope of Work Performed:

- Work within an allocated team, including Intake Services, Response Services, Case Management or Out of Home Care and Adoption Services, to undertake primary tasks assigned.
- Reports and information will be accurate and objective in order to be presented to the Court and other statutory organisations concerned.
- Work within designated delegations, legislative requirements, set guidelines and time frames.
- Adhere to relevant Work Health and Safety legislation in order to perform duties.
- Use general guidelines, Departmental procedure manuals and documents to exercise professional judgement when working under limited direction.
- Participate in supervision provided by the Team Leader, Senior Practice Consultant or Manager - Child Safety as applicable.
- Undertake work with integrity and honesty, adhering to confidentiality requirements and demonstrate a commitment to working with children, young people and their families.

Essential Requirements:

Registration/licences that are essential requirements of this role must remain current and valid at all times whilst employed in this role and the status of these may be checked at any time during employment. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that registration/licences remain current and to advise the Employer if their circumstances change. This includes notifying the Employer of any new criminal convictions and/or if a registration/licence is revoked, cancelled or has its conditions altered.

- A Bachelor of Social Work or a Diploma of Community Welfare Work or other tertiary qualifications at Diploma or above level which include units of case management/casework practice and supervised practical work placements in relevant fields.
- Current Driver's Licence.
- Current Tasmanian Working with Children Registration.
- The Head of the State Service has determined that the person nominated for this job is to satisfy a pre-employment check before taking up the appointment, on promotion or transfer. The following checks are to be conducted:
 1. Conviction checks in the following areas:
 - a) crimes of violence
 - b) sex related offences
 - c) serious drug offences
 - d) crimes involving dishonesty
 - e) serious traffic offences
 2. Identification check
 3. Disciplinary action in previous employment check.

Selection Criteria:

1. **Building Relationships:** Identifies and initiates contact with key individuals and or groups who are important in decision making processes or who can provide information, support, expertise or assistance, invests time to create and maintain professional relationships based on mutual respect and contributes to a supportive and collaborative team environment, including being an effective team member.
2. **Casework:** Knowledge of and/or experience in assessment and casework intervention with individuals and families who have complex needs, and knowledge of theoretical perspectives that relate to child protection practice and the ability to apply this in a service delivery context.
3. **Interpreting and Analysing Information:** Capacity to draw upon relevant information, including alternate points of view and legislative requirements, to logically assess and analyse a situation, and utilise sound professional judgement to decide the best way forward.
4. **Communication:** Ability to confidently present both written and verbal messages, whilst seeking to respectfully understand a variety of stakeholder needs and tailoring communication style and message accordingly, even in complex and difficult circumstances.
5. **Self Management:** Demonstrates initiative, self motivation. Possesses well developed organisational and time management skills, with a proven ability to set clear goals and tasks to deal with competing demands within established timeframes, to plan and prioritise workloads along with a demonstrated capacity to be flexible, self-motivated and show initiative.
6. **Confidence and independence:** Acts and speaks confidently, respectfully and independently especially in difficult or stressful circumstances; takes responsibility for own actions and exercises professional authority appropriately.

Working Environment:

Child Safety Officers are Authorised Officers under the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997* and are expected to work in accordance with section 20 of the Act. As a State Service Employee the Child Safety Officer is also required to work under the Code of Conduct contained in the *State Service Act 2000*.

The Child Safety Officer is a generic role and the incumbent may be required to work across different areas of the service, including the Intake, Response, Case Management or Out of Home Care teams.

Child Safety Intake

Notifications of abuse or neglect are directed to the Child Safety Intake. Intake is the first point of contact for the community and other agencies within the statutory child protection system. As a result of a notification and subsequent risk assessment, the case may be given a priority rating and referred for investigation to an Area Office.

Response Services

Response Teams are responsible for the investigation and assessment of cases referred by the Child Safety Intake. This includes face-to-face contact with the young person and their family. Response Services provides short-term care planning and management for children and young people during the immediate period following the referral of a notification.

Case Management Services

The Case Management Teams provide care planning and management for children and young people receiving longer-term protection and support services. This involves the collaborative development and implementation of care plans, using the Child Protection Service Practice Framework philosophy and framework.

Out of Home Care

- The Out of Home Care team provides placements to children and young people in need of short, medium or long term care. Out of Home Care also provides recruitment, assessment training and support for carers.
- A driver's licence is required in undertaking the duties of this position. As part of providing intervention services for children and young people, it is a routine requirement to provide transport to clients who are at risk or in emergency situations. Occupants of this position are also required to travel to sites external to the workplace to undertake assessments and reviews of children, young people and their families, communities and foster carers.
- The employee will be required to work in various locations and branches/units within Child and Family Services as directed. The employee maybe requested to participate in the After Hours Emergency Service as agreed.
- Primary tasks relating to specific team/s will be advised by Team Leader, Senior Practice Consultant, or their delegate.

Communities Tasmania brings together a range of functions, programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing and improving the lives of all Tasmanians. To create strong, inclusive and proud communities the Department will collaborate with our community based partners to empower individuals and families throughout Tasmania to lead fulfilling lives.

Communities Tasmania provides opportunities for all Tasmanians to participate in community life and sport and recreation; supports, protects and nurtures vulnerable children, young people and their families; delivers and facilitates specialist disability services; and provides services to support social and affordable housing. The services of Communities Tasmania are based in all major centres throughout Tasmania, therefore some roles may require intrastate travel.

State Service Principles and Code of Conduct: The minimum responsibilities required of officers and employees of the State Service are contained in the *State Service Act 2000*. The State Service Principles at Sections 7 and 8 outline both the way that employment is managed in the State Service and the standards expected of those who work in the State Service. The Code of Conduct at Section 9 reinforces and upholds the Principles by establishing standards of behaviour and conduct that apply to all employees and officers, including Heads of Agencies. Officers and employees who are found to have breached the Code of Conduct may have sanctions imposed.

The *State Service Act 2000* and the Employment Directions can be found on the State Service Management Office's website at <http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ssmo>

Fraud Management: The Department of Communities Tasmania has a zero tolerance to fraud. Officers and employees must be aware of, and comply with, the Agency's fraud prevention policy and procedure and it is the responsibility of all officers and employees to report any suspected fraudulent activity to their Director or line manager, the Director HR Management and Strategy or to the Manager Internal Audit. DCT is committed to minimising the occurrence of fraud through the development, implementation and regular review of fraud prevention, detection and response strategies, and is conscious of the need to protect employees who advise management of suspected fraudulent activity from reprisal or harassment, and to comply with its obligations under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2002*. Any matter determined to be of a fraudulent nature will be followed up and appropriate action will be taken. This may include having sanctions imposed under the *State Service Act 2000*.

Delegations: This position may exercise delegations in accordance with a range of Acts, Regulations, Awards, administrative authorities and functional arrangements mandated by Statutory office holders including the Secretary. The relevant Unit Manager can provide details to the occupant of delegations applicable to this position. DCT has a zero tolerance in relation to fraud and in exercising any delegations attached to this role the occupant is responsible for the detection and prevention of fraud, misappropriation and other irregularities, and for ensuring that all officers and employees are aware of the Agency's fraud policy and reporting procedures.

Blood borne viruses and immunisation: Health Care Workers (as defined by DCT policy) with the Department of Communities Tasmania are expected to comply with Agency policies and procedures relating to blood borne viruses and immunisation, including against Hepatitis B. Depending on the level of risk associated with their duties, Health Care Workers may be required to demonstrate current immunity, previous seroconversion to Hepatitis B or immunity following vaccination.

Records and Confidentiality: Officers and employees of the Department of Communities Tasmania are responsible and accountable for making proper records. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times and information must not be accessed or destroyed without proper authority.

Smoke-free: The Department of Communities Tasmania is a smoke-free work environment. Smoking is prohibited in all State Government workplaces, including vehicles and vessels.