

PROCEDURE
Carer Accreditation and Review Committee
Terms of Reference

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1. PURPOSE STATEMENT

Baptcare will ensure that carers are appropriately assessed and accredited prior to commencing in the role. The suitability of existing carers will be regularly reviewed and their accreditation status and registration will be updated in accordance with the Act.

Baptcare will establish a Carer Accreditation and Review Committee to determine the accreditation and ongoing suitability of carers. Initial carer applications and annual reviews will be considered by this committee.

Unsuccessful carer applicants will be supported where appropriate if they wish to appeal the decisions of the Carer Accreditation and Review Committee.

2. SCOPE

The Carer Accreditation and Review Committee is the body which considers and approves carer applications and considers and determines the ongoing suitability of carers engaged by Baptcare.

As appropriate, matters in relation to the following groups of carers may be considered by the Carer Accreditation and Review Committee (with changes in membership to reflect BFACS and DHS program area):

- Foster carers
- Family Options carers
- Home Stay carers

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 To advise the Out of Home Care Program Manager or Disability Manager regarding the suitability of prospective carers and their families, for accreditation as foster or other carers with the program.

2.2 To consider carer reviews (annual reviews and extraordinary reviews instigated for any reason) and to advise the Out of Home Care Manager or Disability Manager regarding the continued accreditation of carers and any changes to their accreditation as a result of the review process.

2.3 To authorize in relation to the Carer Register the registration, de-registration or disqualification of any Baptcare carer.

2.4 To advise the Out of Home Care Manager as to the suitability of conversions from foster care to permanent care in relation to a specific child/children.

2.5 To consider other matters in relation to the suitability of carers engaged by Baptcare, that may be referred by the General Manager or Operations Manager.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- Operations Manager Victoria (ex officio)

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- Out of Home Care Program Manager* (Chairperson) OR Disability Manager* as appropriate (Chairperson)
- Out of Home Care/Disability team members* as appropriate
- Carer representative (Baptcare appointment)
- Child Protection representative (DHHS) OR DHHS Disability representatives as appropriate
- Local Engagement Officer (DHHS)*
- Foster Care Representative from other agency (optional)
- Consultant/s as required

*Essential participants in this meeting.

4. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Frequency of meetings is as required but at least quarterly. Meetings will be convened by the Chairperson.

5. MINUTES

Minutes will be recorded by a designated member of the Out of Home Care/Disability team.

6. PROCESS AND DOCUMENTATION

6.1 All assessment and review reports will be presented to the committee in the prescribed written format, and will include clear recommendations in relation to:

- accreditation and registration
- the type of care and number of children for which the caregiver household is being recommended
- conversions to permanent care
- any other actions required to be undertaken.

A copy of assessment and review reports and the documented outcome of the panel meeting will be placed on the carer's file.

6.2 If the information provided is insufficient for decision, the committee may seek additional information prior to resolving the matter.

6.3 Consensus decision-making will be sought. If a consensus is unable to be reached on the basis of all available information, the chairperson will make the decision regarding the recommendation informed by the expressed views of committee members. If DHHS representatives express views contrary to those of other panel members, the Chairperson will take this difference into account in determining his or her decision.

7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If any applicant or carer whose accreditation status is being reviewed is personally known to a committee member, this is to be declared and the committee member must withdraw from the part of the meeting during which this application is considered.

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8. INFORMATION TO APPLICANTS

- 8.1 All applicants and carers whose accreditation status is being reviewed, will be informed of the role, composition and functions of the Carer Accreditation and Review Committee.
- 8.2 Written confirmation of the Committee's decision will be provided by the Out of Home Care or Disability Manager to each carer whose accreditation has been considered, within one week of the meeting. At the discretion of the Chairperson, applicants may also receive prompt verbal advice from the assessing worker as to the outcome of the committee's consideration of their application.
- 8.3 Carers whose application has not been supported or whose accreditation has been revoked, will receive written information regarding the process of appeal.
- 8.4 Carers are entitled to receive clear information and support from the Out of Home Care/Disability teams as they undergo consideration before the panel, and afterwards.

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