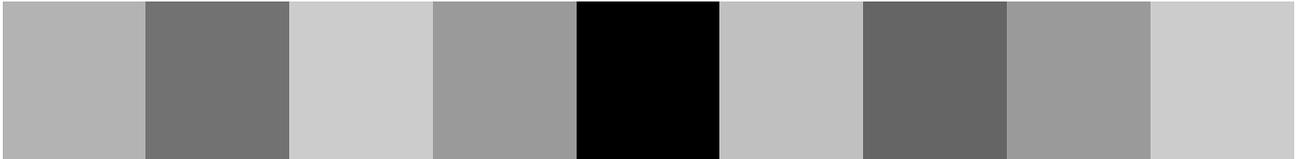


Assessment Record

Part of *Step by Step* Aboriginal Assessment Tool



Original material written by Paula Hayden and Louise Mulroney
Revision for Victorian version by Louise Mulroney and Joanne Cowell

Produced by the Centre for Community Welfare Training as
a project of the
Association of Children's Welfare Agencies

Funded by the
NSW Department of Community
Services.

Introducing *Step by Step* Aboriginal Assessment Tool

This booklet is part of *Step by Step*, a resource package to assist foster care agencies in assessing potential foster carers who are Aboriginal. It is a revision of the original *Step by Step* package produced in 2003. The booklet has been extensively revised in response to feedback from Aboriginal staff who identified the need to address issues of Aboriginal cultural competency.

The total Package contains seven booklets

Four of these booklets have been revised for use with Aboriginal applicants. The other booklets are generic and can be used in both a mainstream or Aboriginal context.

Background Paper

An outline of the research and practice base for the package.

Familiarisation Guide

A detailed outline for a two day workshop to familiarize assessors with the package and how to use it.

Information Pack for

Potential Carers

A resource for people making enquiries about being a carer that can be adapted to the particular needs of your agency.

Manual for Assessors

A detailed outline of the assessment activities undertaken with applicants.

Applicant Booklet

A collection of handouts and worksheets used by the applicant during the assessment interviews.

Assessment Record

A tool for recording and analysing information gathered in the assessment process.

Assessment Resources

A collection of materials to support the assessment process.

Key



This symbol marks booklets that can be downloaded as a pdf file from <http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/step-by-step>



This symbol marks booklets that can be downloaded as a word file (able to be altered and/or containing forms that can be completed on computer) from <http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/step-by-step>



This symbol marks booklets that are available on the *Step by Step* Victoria CD



This symbol marks booklets that are Aboriginal specific and should be used when assessing potential carers who are Aboriginal.

Additional printed copies

For additional hard copies of booklets or the *Step by Step* CD, contact
Placement and Support
Child Protection and Family Services
Level 9, 50 Lonsdale Street
GPO Box 4057 Melbourne Vic 3001

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NSW Department of Community Services
Locked Bag 28, Ashfield NSW 1800
Ph 02 9716 2222

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Acknowledgements

Step by Step Aboriginal Assessment Tool is an adaptation of the mainstream package Step by Step. The original package, published in 2003, did not attempt to address the particular issues of assessing Aboriginal carers.

This specialised edition has been produced in response to requests from Aboriginal workers and organizations, who appreciated the competency based approach of Step by Step, but identified significant areas where the original required change or additional material to make it a reliable tool to use within an Aboriginal context.

In producing this specialised edition, the contribution of Aboriginal workers and applicants named below has been critical. Reference Group members, from both the government and non-government sector, guided the development of this edition, while the Working Group spent many hours going over every detail of the material to ensure it reflected good practice in Aboriginal foster care.

Once the material had been drafted, a number of Aboriginal foster care workers piloted the material. Our special thanks to those workers and applicants who have provided such important feedback before the material was finalised.

We need to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the original Step by Step, who gave this project such a valuable starting point.

We also want to acknowledge the NSW Department of Community Services which funded this edition, and the dedicated work of staff from the Aboriginal Services Branch, the OOHC Directorate and the Aboriginal Reference Group in ensuring that this edition was produced.

Reference Group

Mhairi Barnes: Association of Childrens Welfare Agencies
Kerry Crawford: Aboriginal Services Branch, NSW
Department of Community Services
Kate Lindsay: Aboriginal Child, Family and Community
Care Secretariat
Wendy Nicholson: Operations, NSW Department of
Community Services
Cheryl Purchase: Aboriginal Services Branch, NSW
Department of Community Services
Rowena Spink: Learning and Development Branch, NSW
Department of Community Services
Sharon Storey: Out of Home Care Directorate, NSW
Department of Community Services
Marie Wighton: Out of Home Care Directorate, NSW
Department of Community Services

Working Group

Vicky Anderson: Senior Caseworker, NSW Department of
Community Services
Robyn Bird-Hedges: Senior Caseworker and Member, Aboriginal
Reference Group, NSW Department of Community Services
Terry Donnelly: Foster Carer Support Project, Aboriginal Child,
Family and Community Care Secretariat
Lynette Lawrie: Senior Caseworker and Member, Aboriginal
Reference Group, NSW Department of Community Services
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were a part of this process.

Victorian Acknowledgements

A number of consultations were undertaken in 2008 with the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations providing home based care in Victoria. Everyone agreed that there were benefits in using the *Step by Step* Aboriginal Assessment Tool for assessing carers of Aboriginal children providing some adaptations were made for Victorian users.

We want to acknowledge and thank all those who participated in the consultation process from

- Bendigo Aboriginal Co-op
- Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative
- Mildura Aboriginal Co-op
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-op
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-op
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agencies

The adaptations drafted into the Victorian version of the Assessment Record were suggested by those organisations. Joanne Cowell and David Clements from the Department of Human Services facilitated the process.

Finally, we need to acknowledge the work of the original central reference group who developed the adaptation in *Step by Step Victoria*. Some of their work appears in the Assessment Record adapted for Victoria.

Design and production: Pro Bono Publico Pty Ltd

Using the Assessment Record

This record is designed as part of *Step by Step Aboriginal Assessment Tool*, a resource for assessing potential foster carers who are Aboriginal.

Step by Step contains a range of material to assist applicants and assessors to make an informed decision about an applicant's suitability to undertake the tasks of foster caring.

The **Assessment Record** is a tool for analysing and recording evidence that an applicant has the competencies necessary to undertake the task of fostering. The evidence will include

- > responses by applicants to interview questions and activities (*as described in the Manual for Assessors*)
- > legal and other background checks
- > other external reports.

The **Assessment Record** therefore forms the basis for the decision to approve or decline the approval of the applicant. It may be used in any appeal process.

The **Assessment Record** is based on four key competencies that have been identified as essential when undertaking effective foster caring. These are

- > demonstrate personal readiness to become a foster carer
- > work effectively as part of a team
- > promote the positive development of children and young people in foster care
- > provide a safe environment that is free of abuse.

More details of the competencies, including detailed performance criteria, are set out on pages 22-26 of the booklet, **Manual for Assessors**.

Record cover page

This record should be commenced when

- > “Registration of Interest” (Form 1.3) has been completed and filled in by applicant
and
- > an appointment for an Information Exchange Session has been made

1. Name of applicant

2. Date initial enquiry received

3. Date “*Information Pack for Potential Carers*” sent

4. Name of assessors

5. Date assessment completed

Assessment record checklist

Date form
completed
or returned

1. Data forms

1.1 Initial enquiry information (*completed by assessor*)

1.2 Action sheet following enquiry (*completed by assessor*)

1.3 Registration of interest (*completed by applicant*)

1.4 Application to be a foster carer (*completed by applicant*)

2. Withdrawal of application

2. Withdrawal of application (*completed by applicant and assessor*)

3. Health checks

3.1 Health checklist (*completed by applicant*)

3.2 Medical questionnaire (*completed by doctor*)

3.3 Health check outcomes (*completed by assessor*)

4. Background record checks

4.1 Consent documents for background checks
(*completed by applicant/s*)

4.2 Receipt for Working with Children Check
(*provided by applicant/s*)

4.3 Results of Disqualified Register check
(*completed by assessor*)

4.4 Notification of results of police record check
(*provided by external agency*)

4.5 Notification of results of Working with Children Check
(*provided by external agency*)

4.6 Background record check outcomes (*completed by assessor*)

5. Home and environment check

5.1 Home and environment checklist (*completed by assessor*)

5.2 Home and environment check outcome (*completed by assessor*)

6. Personal references

6.1 Personal reference form *(completed by referee)*

6.2 Personal references outcomes *(completed by assessor)*

7. Agency checks

7.1 Agency check outcomes *(completed by assessor)*

8. Outcomes of sessions

8.1 Outcomes of Information Exchange Session
(completed by assessor)

8.2 Outcomes of Session with children of household
(completed by assessor)

8.3 Observations from training *(completed by trainer)*

9. Evidence of competency

9.0 Summary report coversheet *(completed by assessor)*

9.1 Evidence of Competency A: demonstrate personal readiness
to become a foster carer
(completed by assessor)

9.2 Evidence of Competency B: work effectively as part of a team
(completed by assessor)

9.3 Evidence of Competency C: promote the positive development of
children and young people in foster care
(completed by assessor)

9.4 Evidence of Competency D: provide a safe environment that is
free of abuse *(completed by assessor)*

10. Household information

10.1 Life history
(completed by applicant and submitted with application form)

10.2 Household drawings
(done by household members during Information Exchange Session)

11. Applicant's preferred options

(completed by applicant during Interview D)

12. Approval panel recommendations and minutes

12.1 Coversheet

12.2 Final summary report and recommendations

(completed by assessor. Signed by chairperson of panel)

1.1 Initial enquiry information

1.1.1 Date of enquiry

1.1.2 Name of worker

1.1.3 Name(s) of enquirer

1.1.4 Are you Aboriginal? (mark one) Yes

No

1.1.4a If yes, are you interested in caring for Aboriginal children?

Yes

No

If yes, explain that there are Aboriginal staff who assess Aboriginal applicants who want to care for Aboriginal children.

If no, explain that the applicant will be invited to participate in assessment and training with non-Aboriginal staff.

1.1.4b If no, what is your cultural identity/ethnicity?

Explain if your agency has particular resources or programs relevant to that particular culture..

1.1.5 Date of birth of enquirer

If age of enquirer is outside agency policy re age of carers, advise the enquirer.

1.1.6 Phone

Home

Work

Mobile

1.1.7 Address

If address is outside agency boundaries, advise the enquirer.

1.1.8 Do you plan to move or make major changes in your housing in the near future?

(mark one) Yes

No

If yes, advise that assessment process will only start once their housing environment is stable.

1.1.9 Names of household members

(this includes people who usually or regularly stay overnight)

Advise the enquirer that the process of assessing suitability to become foster carers involves all household members, including children, in at least one information session. Adults in the household will also need to be part of training sessions.

1.1.10 How did you hear about our foster care program?

1.1.11 Have you applied to any other agencies to foster (now or previously)?

(mark one) Yes No

Any details provided

Explain that your agency will only proceed if there are no other current applications, and information from previous applications will be requested from other agencies.

1.1.12 What has made you decide to call us today about fostering?

1.1.13 Are you interested in a particular type of fostering?

eg length of care, age range of child

Explain types of care available through your agency.

1.1.14 What work or other commitments on your time do you have?

Advise enquirer if the time they have available is not appropriate for the type of care they are interested in.

1.1.15 Is there space in your home for a(nother) child?

eg adequate sleeping space, suitable play/homework space?

Advise enquirer if the space they describe would not be considered adequate by your agency.

1.1.16 Do you plan to have any (or any more) children?

(mark one) Yes No

Any details provided

If yes, explain that applications to foster are only considered once people are no longer involved in fertility or adoption processes, as it is not helpful to start a foster placement with a child that may be disrupted when the carer becomes pregnant or adopts a child.

1.1.17 Have you had any contact with Department of Human Services (Child Protection) regarding allegations of abuse or neglect of any child while in your care?

(mark one) Yes No

Any details provided

If yes, explain that your agency would not take an application if any allegation of abuse or neglect had been substantiated or is currently being investigated.

1.1.18 Other issues

Add questions relating to any policies your agency has about essential criteria for applicants eg religious affiliations or beliefs.

1.1.19 Questions asked by enquirer

1.1.20 Briefly describe the process of application and assessment.

Ensure the following topics are covered

- > need to check criminal record but stress that depending on the nature of the record it is may still be possible for people with criminal records to become foster carers
- > need for medical and referee checks
- > anticipated length of process, including the number of interviews involved
- > next step: the applicant to return response form after reading the carer information pack.

1.1.22 Do you want me to send out a “Foster Care Information Pack”?

(mark one) Yes No

Form completed by
Assessor *Date*

**At conclusion of enquiry, assessor to complete
“Action sheet following enquiry”**

1.2 Action sheet following enquiry

(To be completed by assessor following enquiry)

1.2.1 Name of person making enquiry

1.2.2 Information Pack for Potential Foster Carers sent

(mark one) Yes No

If yes: Date sent

Now go straight to section 1.2.6 at the end of this form.

If *no*: Complete sections 1.2.3-1.2.6 below.

1.2.3 Please mark one of the boxes below and complete any necessary details.

enquirer placed on waiting list as agency is not recruiting at this time

enquirer did not fulfil the following essential criteria of our agency

Provide details

enquirer demonstrated inability to meet competencies

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

enquirer decided not to pursue their enquiry at this time

other

Provide details

1.2.4 When and how was enquirer informed that agency would not proceed (*mark one*)

During the initial telephone enquiry conversation

other

Provide details

1.2.5 What other options (if any) were provided to enquirer?

1.2.6 Form completed by

Assessor

Date

1.3.6 What language(s) do you speak at home?

1.3.7 Are you of Aboriginal background?

(mark one) Yes No

1.3.8 Are you of Torres Strait Islander background?

(mark one) Yes No

1.3.9 Have you previously applied to any other agencies to foster?

(mark one) Yes No
If yes, please provide details and the result of the application.

1.3.10 What type of care are you interested in applying for?

(mark any you are interested in)

- respite care
- temporary or short term care
- long term care

Please return to

(name of agency worker)

(address of agency worker)

1.4 Application to become a Foster Carer

To be completed by applicant after participating in an Information Exchange Session

1.4.1 Personal details Applicant 1 Applicant 2 (if a couple)

Last Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
-----------	----------------------	----------------------

First name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
------------	----------------------	----------------------

Previous names	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------	----------------------	----------------------

Date of birth	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---------------	----------------------	----------------------

Aboriginal?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
-------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------

Torres Strait Islander?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
-------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------

Country of birth	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Occupation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
------------	----------------------	----------------------

No. of employed hours a week	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Home address	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
--------------	----------------------	----------------------

Contact phone	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---------------	----------------------	----------------------

Email address	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---------------	----------------------	----------------------

1.4.4 Do you have children residing away from home?

(mark one) Yes No

If yes, please detail name, age and location of child, and reason why they are living elsewhere if under 18 years

1.4.5 Do you speak a language other than English?

(mark one) Yes No

If yes, please detail

1.4.6 What previous experience do you have in caring for children?

1.4.7a Do you have a current driver's license?

(mark one) Yes No

1.4.7b Do you have a motor vehicle which is insured?

(mark one) Yes No

Ability to drive is not essential, but may affect the type of placement considered.

1.4.8 Conditions of application

I/we apply to be foster carer (s) for _____
(name of agency)

Please mark each box to indicate you have read and agreed or provided any attachments requested.

I /we understand that I /we can withdraw the application at any stage. This will not prevent my/ our re-application, but my/our reason(s) for withdrawal will be documented and discussed with me / us if I/we do re-apply.

I/we have signed and attached the following forms

> Police record check form*

(This form is to give consent for background screening, including relevant criminal record. I/we understand that a criminal record does not automatically debar me/ us from foster caring, but the implication of any convictions on my / our suitability to be a foster carer(s) will be discussed with me / us and will be taken into account in the assessment process.

> Authorisation for release of medical information from my/our doctor.

I / we have attached additional police record check forms, completed and signed by each member of our household who is 18 years or older.

I/we have submitted the form(s) for a Working with Children Check and have attached the receipt(s).

I/ we understand additional Working with Children Check Consent Forms, may be required for each member of our household who is 18 years or above.†

I / we understand that international police checks will be undertaken, if appropriate.#

I/we have attached my / our life history.

I agree to take part in the process to assess foster carers for approval and I understand it will include interviews with any children or young people who are a part of my household.

I/we understand that I /we will need to complete a training course prior to being approved as a foster carer.

I/we understand that *(name of community service organisation)* will ask my / our permission to contact any other people or community service organisations who are able to provide relevant information about my /our suitability to provide foster care.

I/we understand that *(name of community service organisation)* will check the register held by the Victorian Department of Human Services which records the names of people disqualified from caring.

I state that the information contained in this application, including all attachments, is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

(if application is being made by a couple)

Signed

Name

Date

For Agency Reference:

- * The police record check and the Working with Children Check are a legal requirement in Victoria.
- # In certain circumstances a Working with Children Check is required for household members over 18 years. Applicant(s) should clarify their circumstances with the community service organisation.
- + If applicant(s) has / have lived outside of the Australia, consideration must be given to requesting a criminal record check from the country in which they lived previously. In these circumstances the applicant(s) should contact the relevant Embassy and request this information.

2. Withdrawal of application

2.1 Details of withdrawal

(name of applicant(s))

withdrew his/her/their application to be a foster carer on

Date

2.2 Reasons given for withdrawal by applicant

2.3 Comment by assessor

Must include any advice given to applicant

- > *that a particular issue(s) indicated that the applicant could not currently meet all required competencies*
- > *about possible strategies to address relevant issues before resubmitting an application.*

2.4 Signed

Assessor

Date

Applicant (s)

Date

3.1 Health checklist

- > One copy of this checklist will be put on the assessment record.
- > One copy will be forwarded to your doctor, when he/she is provided with the Medical Questionnaire

3.1.2 Name of applicant(s)

Name of Applicant 1

Name of Applicant 2

3.1.2 What illness or physical conditions do you have that may affect your ability to foster?

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

3.1.3 What psychological or mental health conditions do you have that may affect your ability to foster?

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

3.1.4 Do you smoke?

Applicant 1

(mark one)

Yes

No

a. If yes, how many cigarettes per day do you smoke?

b. Are you prepared to follow our agency policy of no smoking inside a house or car in which a foster child is residing/travelling?

(mark one)

Yes

No

Applicant 2

(mark one)

Yes

No

a. If yes, how many cigarettes per day do you smoke?

b. Are you prepared to follow our agency policy of no smoking inside a house or car in which a foster child is residing/travelling?

(mark one) Yes No

3.1.5 Do you drink alcohol?

Applicant 1 (mark one) Yes No

If yes, when and how much?

Applicant 2 (mark one) Yes No

If yes, when and how much?

3.1.6 Do you regularly use any prescribed drugs?

Applicant 1 (mark one) Yes No

If yes, please describe your usage

Applicant 2 (mark one) Yes No

If yes, please describe your usage

3.1.7 Do you regularly use other unprescribed drugs?

Applicant 1 (mark one) Yes No

If yes, please describe your usage

Applicant 2 (mark one) Yes No

If yes, please describe your usage

3.1.8 Signed Applicant 1

Applicant 2
(if application is being made by a couple)

Signed

Name

Date

3.2 Medical Questionnaire

3.2.1 Name of applicant to be a foster carer

3.2.2 Name of doctor completing questionnaire

3.2.3 Address of doctor

3.2.4 Phone number of doctor

3.2.5. How long have you been the applicant's doctor?

3.2.6. Please comment on the general health and health history of the applicant, with reference to both physical and psychological aspects.

3.2.7 Does the applicant have any current illnesses or medical conditions which may affect their ability to care for a child or young person? *(please provide full details)*

3.2.8 Is there any potential for recurring or developing illnesses or medical conditions which may affect their ability to care for a child or young person? (please provide full details)

3.2.9 Is the applicant currently taking medication or treatment which may affect their ability to care for a child or young person? (please provide full details)

3.2.10 (If applicable,) do any of the applicant's children currently have any illnesses or medical conditions that may impact on the applicant's ability to provide care for a child or young person?

(mark one) Yes No

If yes, please detail:

3.2.11 Is the applicant unable to have children because of fertility issues?

(mark one) Yes No

If yes, please detail:

3.2.12 Are you aware of any past or present psychiatric conditions with regards to the applicant which may impact on their potential to care for a child or young person now and in the future? (please provide full details)

3.2.13 Are you aware of whether the applicant is currently seeing any specialists? (If so, please provide the name of the specialist(s) and contact details).

3.2.14 Do you consider that further specialist reports may be of use in the assessment of the applicant's physical, emotional or psychological well being? (If so, please detail).

3.2.15 Please comment on any aspects of the applicants' suitability and/or parenting ability (if known to you) that would deem them as suitable or unsuitable as Foster Carers.

3.2.16 Any other comments?

[Empty rectangular box]

[Empty rectangular box]

[Empty rectangular box]

Signature of Doctor

Date

3.3 Health check outcomes

3.3.1 Details of information supplied *(mark those completed)*

health checklist *(completed by applicant)*

medical questionnaire *(completed by applicant's doctor)*

other

3.3.2 Is there evidence from the medical information gathered that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (3.3.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process.

c. Go to last section 3.3.5 of this form.

3.3.3 From the medical information provided, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (3.3.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

3.3.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the medical check provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

3.3.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

4.1 Consent documents for background checks

Place copy of completed, signed documents here.

4.2 Receipts for Working with Children Check(s)

Place receipts here.

4.3 Results of check of Disqualified Register

Outcome of contact with the Disqualified Register is:

Applicant(s) is / are not disqualified

Applicant(s) is / are disqualified

4.4 Notification of results of police record check(s)

Place notification results here.

4.5 Notification of results of Working with Children Check(s)

Place notification results here.

4.3 Outcome of background record checks

4.3.1 Details of information supplied *(mark those completed)*

- Police record check
- Working with Children Check
- Check of Disqualified register held by the Vic Department of Human Services
- other

4.3.2 Is there evidence from the background record checks that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (4.3.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the *Manual for Assessors* for more details of this process.

c. Go to last section 4.3.5 of this form.

4.3.3 From the police and background record checks, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (4.3.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? (mark one)

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

4.3.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the background check provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

4.3.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

5.1 Home and environment check

Name of applicant(s)

Name of applicant 1

Name of applicant 2

Address

Telephone

Home

Work

Mobile

Assessor

Date of assessment

Date of review

This assessment tool will assist the assessor to make an assessment about a potential foster carer's capacity to be responsible for the safety of a child in their home. The tool is used in both an initial assessment and then yearly as part of a carer's annual review. The tool enables Community Service Organisations to demonstrate compliance with Standard 5.1 of the Registration Standards for Community Service Organisations to provide a safe and nurturing environment (Evidence Guide for Registered Community Service Organisations DHS - [http:// www.cyf.vic.gov.au/every-child-every-chance/ registration-of-community-service-organisations/review-tools-and-guides](http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/every-child-every-chance/registration-of-community-service-organisations/review-tools-and-guides)).

During an initial assessment, outcomes are recorded in *5.2 Home and environment check outcomes*. The recommendation should include evidence to support any concerns that the application should not be approved or that safety needs to be further explored. The information recorded in both documents, including the assessor's recommendation about the carer's capacity to manage safety issues, will assist the accreditation panel to make a judgement about the suitability of the carer's home environment.

It is not possible for the checklist to be a complete list of all possible risks in the home environment; either at the time the tool is administered or in the future. The tool should prompt the assessor and potential carer to identify together possible areas of risk or concern, engage in discussion, collate information, and prompt the carer to address any concerns. A common sense and collaborative approach is required when discussing issues arising from the check and any changes needed.

General home environment

The carer's home and property must be safe, hygienic and appropriately furnished in line with community standards and expectations.

- Blind and curtain cords are secured and out of reach of children.
- Areas where people may possibly trip over, i.e. steps, loose cables or cords, are made safe.
- Glass doors have safety glass and/or marking stickers.
- Electric socket covers are fitted *(if small children in family)*.
- Safety locks are fitted on lower cupboards *(if applicable)*.
- Food is appropriately and hygienically stored.
- Stairs are fitted with safety gates *(if applicable)*.
- Banister is secured *(if applicable)*.

Concerns identified:

Smoke-free environment

Community Service Organisations will ensure that all children and young people in home-based care reside in a smoke-free environment; that is, carers and their families must not smoke in their home or their car, whilst a child or young person is in their care.

Community Service Organisations will ensure that potential foster carers are made aware of this requirement prior to commencing an assessment.

- No smoking in the home, whilst the carer is engaged in active care giving responsibilities.
- No smoking in the car whilst the carer is engaged in active care giving responsibilities.
- The external area used for smoking does not contaminate internal environment of the home.
- Cigarette butts are disposed of safely, with ashtrays not accessible to children and young people.

Concerns identified:

Sleeping arrangements and privacy

Sleeping arrangements for a child or young person must be age appropriate and meet the child or young person's individual needs, including when a child shares a bedroom.

The following are details of a child or young person's bedroom:

- Own bedroom.
- Shares a bedroom with
- There is adequate space for appropriate furniture and storage.
- There is adequate privacy available for the child or young person.
- There is adequate space to securely store belongings.

Concerns identified:

Equipment and furniture

All equipment and furniture used by a child or young person must be safe, stable and appropriate, and must comply with Australian safety standards where they exist (information can be sourced from www.consumer.vic.gov.au > *Banned & Regulated Products* > *Toy and Nursery Safety Line*).

- Space and opportunity for play indoors and outdoors.
- Cots, high chairs, prams, pushers and other relevant equipment used for infants and toddlers are safe and stable and comply with Australian safety standards.
- Furniture, toys and recreational equipment are safe and stable.
- The sandpit has a cover.
- Play equipment is appropriate for the age of the child or young person the foster carer is wanting to care for.
- Toys or objects that are unsuitable for a younger child are able to be safely stored out of their reach.
- The top bunk bed is fitted with a safety rail.

Concerns identified:

Hazardous and dangerous materials

Community Service Organisations will ensure that hazardous or dangerous materials in a carer's home, including any materials that may be used as inhalants, will be securely stored and will not be accessible to children or young people.

Safe storage of:

- utensils and sharp knives;
- dangerous materials, garden chemicals, cleaning fluids, medicines and alcohol;
- machinery and other equipment;
- aerosol and toilet tablets are not stored next to the toilet.

Concerns identified:

Fire safety

Community Service Organisations will comply with the most current departmental fire risk management guidelines, to ensure that children and young people are appropriately protected from the risk posed by fire. (Refer to the Funded Agency Channel - <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement> 5.1-fire-risk-management).

The carer's home must be fitted with smoke detectors and, where the Community Service Organisation considers appropriate, fitted with a fire blanket and/or fire extinguishers.

- Smoke detectors are installed and working.
- Access doors and windows can be easily opened in event of fire.
- A fire blanket or fire extinguisher is fitted (as per Community Service Organisation policy).
- A fire evacuation plan is in place.
- There is safe storage of matches and lighters.
- Open fires and heaters have fire guards fitted.

Concerns identified:

Vehicles

Carer's vehicles must be registered and bolts for seat restraints must be fitted correctly.

All child car seats used by a child or young person must be fitted correctly, age appropriate and meet Australian safety standards

(<http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/RoadSafety/>).

- Bolts for seat restraints are correctly fitted by an authorised service.
- All children under 12 in care are required to sit in the backseat of a vehicle.
- Sufficient room and a seatbelt available in the family vehicle for the extra child or young person.
- The vehicle is registered and roadworthy.
- The vehicle is insured.
- There is a first aid kit in the vehicle.

Concerns identified:

Fencing

Perimeter fencing on a carer's property must restrict a child or young person's access to hazards, such as access to roads. Fencing for swimming pools (including spas) must comply with relevant legislation and not prove a hazard for children and young people (www.buildingcommission.com.au > swimming pools & spas or contact your local council for the current guidelines). Access to other waterways, dams, creeks, rivers, ponds and water features must not prove a hazard for children and young people. It is acknowledged that this will require careful consideration by Community Service Organisations for carers living on farms or large properties. Where completely restricted access to waterways is impracticable, carers will be required to provide vigilant supervision of children and young people.

- Play areas are safely fenced.
- Fencing for pools and spas comply with relevant legislation.
- Access to other waterways, rivers, creeks, ponds, dams, farm effluent ponds and water features do not present a hazard for children and young people.
- Gates are able to be locked/secured.

Concerns identified:

Pets or animals

Pets or animals kept by a carer must not present a risk to children or young people in a placement. The Community Service Organisation must assess where, pets/animals must be kept in areas not accessible to children and young people.

- Appropriate and hygienic feeding, sleeping and waste disposal for pets or animals.
- Fish tanks placed appropriately according to the age of the child.
- Pets or animals kept by a carer do not prove a risk to children or young people in a placement.
- Foster carer(s) has/have capacity to secure animals away from children and young people if required.

Concerns identified:

Firearms

Carers who have a firearm must comply with relevant legislation (www.legislation.vic.gov.au Acts > *Firearms Amendment Act 2007* or contact your local police station for relevant guidelines) in relation to safe storage of firearms and cartridge ammunition and must have a current firearms licence, which has been viewed by the Community Service Organisation.

- The foster carer has a current firearms licence, which the assessor has sighted.
- Firearms and cartridges are adequately stored in separate lockable locations.

Concerns identified:

The following is a full list of firearms and similar equipment (guns, pistols, spear guns, air rifles, cross bows) kept at the above address.

Details of firearm/missile discharging equipment	Details of licence and/or relevant certificates	Current from	Expiry date

I/we

agree to maintain a home environment that meets the needs of children and young people in line with the requirements of the Registration Standards for Community Service Organisations.

Signed Dated

Signed Dated

Re-assessment date *(if applicable)*

Signed Dated

Signed Dated

Assessor Dated

5.2 Outcome of home and environment check

5.2.1 Details of information supplied *(mark those completed)*

home and environment checklist *(completed by assessor)*

Other?

5.2.2 Is there evidence from the housing check that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (4.3.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process.

c. Go to last section 5.2.5 of this form.

5.2.3 From the housing check, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (5.2.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

5.2.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the background check provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

5.2.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

6.1 Personal reference form

6.1.1 Name of Applicant 1

Name of Applicant 2

6.1.2 Name of referee

6.1.3 Phone numbers of referee

Home

Work

Mob

6.1.4 How long have you known the applicant(s)?

Applicant 1

2-3 years

4-10 years

11 plus years

Applicant 2

2-3 years

4-10 years

11 plus years

6.1.5 What is the nature of your relationship to each?

(eg work colleague, friend, neighbour, minister, relative)

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

6.1.6 Approximately how often are you in contact with the applicant(s)?

(eg daily, weekly, monthly, couple of times a year)

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

6.1.7 How does this contact mostly occur? *(telephone, letter, face to face, visits to your home, visits to their home, in community places such as work, church, school)*

6.1.8 Please describe your experience of this applicant(s) parenting and caring abilities.

6.1.9 Children and young people coming into care often have special needs and may have behavioural or other problems.

Do you have any reservations at all about the applicant's ability to care for and respond to the needs of such children or young people?

(mark one) Yes No

If yes, please detail

6.1.10 How would a foster child or young person fit in with the lifestyle and routine of the applicant(s)?

6.1.11 Please comment on your knowledge of the applicant(s)' relationship as a couple. (if applicable)

6.1.12 Please comment on applicant(s)' ability to work through problems or differences of opinion.

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

6.1.13 Please comment on applicant(s)' ability to cope with a major crisis or difficulty?

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

6.1.14 Please comment on your knowledge of applicant(s)' ability to work in a team setting.

Applicant 1

Applicant 2

6.1.15 Would you consider placing your own child in the care of the applicant(s)?

(mark one) Yes No

If no, what would be the reason?

6.1.16 Please take this opportunity to include any other comments you may wish to make.

6.1.15 Please mark a number on the scale below to indicate how comfortable you feel about recommending this family to become foster carers with our agency.

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not comfortable						Very comfortable					

6.1.18 Signature

The community service organisation collects this information for the purpose of processing and considering the application of the prospective foster carer(s). The information collected from you is only for this purpose. Although this information is confidential, you need to be aware that issues raised by you may need to be discussed with the applicant(s).

Signature of referee

Date

6.2 Personal reference outcomes

6.2.1 Details of information supplied (mark those completed)

Three written references

Follow-up contact

Name of referee (1)

Date of contact

Name of referee (2)

Date of contact

Name of referee (3)

Date of contact

other

6.2.2 Is there evidence from the referees that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If **no**, proceed to next question on this form (6.2.3)

If **yes**, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 6.3.5 of this form.

6.2.3 From the referee check, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (6.2.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

An additional interview

other

6.2.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the personal referees provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

6.2.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

7.1 Agency check outcomes

7.1.1 Details of information supplied (mark those completed)

Own agency information records

Other agency

Name of agency

Contact person at agency

Please attach completed copy of any documentation provided

7.1.2 Is there evidence from the referees that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (7.1.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 7.1.5 of this form.

7.1.3 From the agency check, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If **yes**, complete a, b and c below of this question

If **no**, go to the next part of this form (7.1.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? (mark one)

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

7.1.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the agency check provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

7.1.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

***(if applicable)* Attach documentation of agency check**

8.1 Outcomes of Information Exchange Session

8.1.1 Session details

Date of session

Those present

Did this session enable the *(mark those areas covered)*

- enquirers to have their initial questions about fostering answered
- assessors provide information about the assessment process?
- assessors provide fundamental and practical details regarding fostering arrangements?
- enquirers to provide information about their family?

8.1.2 Is there evidence from the Information Exchange Session that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (7.1.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	

Provide safe environment	
--------------------------	--

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 8.1.5 of this form.

8.1.3 From the Information Exchange Session, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (8.1.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

8.1.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the Information Exchange Session provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

8.1.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

8.2 Outcomes of session with children of household

8.2.1 Session details

Date of session

Those present

Did this session enable the *(mark those areas covered)*

family relationships from the children's perspective

children and young people's expectations of the rewards and challenges of fostering

children and young people's readiness to foster

8.2.2 Is there evidence from the Information Exchange Session that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (8.2.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	

Provide safe environment	
--------------------------	--

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 8.2.5 of this form.

8.1.3 From the Information Exchange Session, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (8.2.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

8.21.4 Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



If the session with children and young people provided evidence of applicant's competency, please detail this in Section 9 of this record.

8.21.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.

8.3 Observation from training

8.3.1 Attach any copies of "Observations from training" sheets completed by Trainers for Module 1-8 of *Our Carers for our Kids* pre-service training. Make sure information about other participants is not included on copies.

Any issues raised will be covered in more depth in

Session A

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

9.1 Evidence of Competency A: demonstrate personal readiness to become a foster carer

9.1.1 Session A details

Date of session

Those present

Did this session explore the *(mark those areas covered)*

- applicant's motivation to care
- the nature and significance of family relationships in the applicant's life
- response of applicants to loss and grief
- response of applicants to change and stress
- (if applicable)* the impact of fostering on carer's own children
- (if applicable)* dealing with infertility

9.1.2 Is there evidence from Session A or training sessions that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (8.1.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	

Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 9.1.5 of this form.

9.1.3 From the Session A or training sessions, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (9.1.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session B

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

9.1.4a Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



This competency covers the requirement to recognise and apply relevant personal experiences to the task of caring for children and young people in out of home care.

Note: In dealing with this competency, assessors must take account of cultural assumptions and norms when gathering information that relates to emotional responses.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>A1. Applicant can identify personal issues that may affect the decision to become a foster carer</p>	<p>a. Evidence that motivation to become a foster carer includes a focus on the needs of children and young people in out of home care has been identified by applicant.</p> <p>Details of evidence <i>(must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session A Part 2, Session C Part 1.</p>

b. Evidence that applicant can identify relevant experiences in their own life history that may have impacted on their emotional stability, resilience and the ability to deal with stress

Tips for assessors.

Evidence that applicant has identified relevant experiences include:

- > *applicant is not preoccupied with only one aspect of section of their life history*
- > *the affect of the applicant is congruent with the emotional content of the material identified in their life history.*

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session A Part 3.

c. Evidence that applicant can identify the quality of relationships within their family of origin.

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session A Part 4.

d. (If applicable) Evidence that applicant identifies issues relating to own children that may be relevant to the decision to become a foster carer

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session A Part 5.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>A2. Applicant can reflect upon own experience, capacity and readiness to become a foster carer</p>	<p>a. Evidence that experiences of grief and loss will not impede the ability of the applicant to provide appropriate support to a child or young person in care.</p> <p><i>Tips for assessors.</i> <i>Evidence that applicant has dealt with grief and loss appropriately include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>life history is not dominated by grief experiences</i> > <i>applicant can discuss grief experiences with a degree of comfort</i> > <i>applicant can highlight positive outcomes from grief experiences</i> > <i>issues of infertility do not dominate the applicant’s life history.</i> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session A Part 3b.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can identify a range of enduring emotional attachments</p> <p><i>Tips for assessors.</i> <i>Evidence that applicant enjoys enduring emotional attachments can include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>the applicant has experienced positive attachments and bonds with own parents/carers or other significant people, and</i> > <i>patterns of relationship within family indicate applicant has the ability to maintain family connections where possible and deal with family tensions and conflict appropriately, and</i> > <i>life history covers all stages in the applicant’s life and does not have any unexplained gaps or preoccupations with particular experiences.</i> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session A Part 4.</p>
	<p>c. (If applicable) Evidence that applicant can describe a process of</p>

resolution of issues associated with infertility that will enable the applicant to focus on the needs of a child or young person in care, not their need to have a child of their own.

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session A Part 6 and 7.

d. Evidence that applicant demonstrates ability to deal with stress constructively

Tips for assessors.

Evidence that applicant can deal with stress appropriately include:

- > *the applicant can recognise the impact of stress on them*
- > *the applicant can identify appropriate sources of support*
- > *applicant is not currently experiencing stress that dominates their life*
- > *the applicant uses humour appropriately to diffuse situations.*

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session A Part 3c.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>A3. Applicant can determine the course of action to be followed in their application</p> <p><i>Note: This element cannot be assessed till the conclusion of the assessment process, so should be completed at the conclusion of the final interview.</i></p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant applies relevant information, including needs of children in care and any risk to self and family, to determine capacity to become a carer</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session A Part 1, Session B Part 1, Session C Part 1, Session D Part 1.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can identify areas of concern about readiness to become a carer and can identify workable strategies to address them</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 1, Session C Part 3, Session D Part 1, Session D Part 8.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant has a realistic commitment to upgrading skills and knowledge</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session D Part 8.</p>

9.1.4b Any other evidence of applicant(s)' ability to make an informed decision about personal readiness to become a carer?

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...

9.1.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.
(The applicant is competent in the area of demonstrating personal readiness to become a foster carer.)

9.2 Evidence of Competency B: work effectively as part of team

9.2.1 Session B details

Date of session

Those present

Did this session explore the *(mark those areas covered)*

the personal and emotional support available to applicant as an individual and within their relationships

dealing with conflict

local networks of support

working as part of an agency team

9.2.2 Is there evidence from Session B or training sessions that the application should not proceed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (9.2.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	

Provide safe environment	
--------------------------	--

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated.

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 9.2.5 of this form.

9.2.3 From Session B, or training sessions, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (9.2.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? *(mark one)*

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session C

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

9.2.4a Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency B



This unit covers the requirement to operate and communicate collaboratively within personal networks, agency staff, birth families and other key people involved in the care plan for the child or young person in care.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>B1. Applicant can work effectively as part of a team</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify sources of personal and emotional support that will enable them to focus on the needs of a child or young person in care.</p> <p><i>Tips for assessors.</i> <i>Evidence that applicant has sources of personal and emotional support include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > applicant can give examples of times they have sought and received significant personal and emotional support > (if applicable) description of the history of marriage/ partnership is congruent and expressed in positive terms > (if applicable) description of their partners is realistic and respectful > (if applicable) description of decision making processes within the partnership is constructive > (if applicable) applicants can identify patterns of dealing with conflict within their partnership that lead to resolution. <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 2, Session B Part 4.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can realistically identify the impact of foster caring on their existing support networks</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 2, Session B Part 4.</p>

	<p>c. Evidence that applicant describes potentially positive outcomes of working as a team within foster care</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 3, Session B Part 5.</p>

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>B2. Applicant is committed to establishing a positive relationship with birth family members</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify strategies to promote ongoing contact between a child or young person in foster care, their family, their community and other significant relationships.</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 5.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can describe ways of managing communication and conflict effectively to keep opportunities open for a positive relationship between the child or young person in foster care and their family and their own community.</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 2.</p>

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>B3. Applicant can communicate appropriately</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant has a clear communication style</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 3.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant seeks clarification in understanding when required</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 3.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant uses skills of assertive communication when appropriate</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 3.</p>
	<p>d. Evidence that applicant can describe appropriate strategies to resolve conflict and misunderstandings.</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 3.</p>

9.2.4b Any other evidence of applicant(s)' ability to work effectively as part of a team?

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

9.2.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.
(The applicant is competent in the area of “working effectively as part of a team”.)

9.3 Evidence of Competency C: promote the positive development of children and young people in foster care

9.3.1 Session C details

Date of session

Those present

Did this interview explore the (*mark those areas covered*)

- awareness of the needs of children and young people
- ability to communicate with children and young people
- ability to set boundaries and manage behaviour
- understanding of the need to promote a child's or young person's identity
- (*if applicable*) ability to promote the positive identity of Aboriginal children and young people
- commitment to encourage children and young people to participate in decision making
- awareness of diversity and special needs
- ability to advocate for a child or young person.

9.3.2 Is there evidence from Session C or training sessions that the application should not proceed?



(*mark one*)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (9.3.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	
Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated.

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 9.3.5 of this form.

9.3.3 From Session C, or training sessions, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (9.3.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? (mark one)

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Session D

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

9.3.4a Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



This unit covers the requirement to support and advocate for the developmental and special needs of children and young people in foster care, including the need to promote the development of a positive identity and the active participation in decision making.

Note: In dealing with this competency, assessors must take account of cultural assumptions and norms when gathering information that relates to child rearing practices.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
C1. Applicant can promote the social, emotional psychological and intellectual development of children/young people	a. Evidence that applicant identifies importance of individual attention for each child or young person which is responsive to his/her needs and development. <i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i> This issue was covered in Session C Part 2, Session C Part 5.
	b. Evidence that the applicant has demonstrated ability to provide warmth, care and appropriate affection to children and young

people

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...

This issue was covered in Session C Part 3, Session C Part 5.

c. Evidence that applicant can describe strategies to develop life skills in children and young people whilst in foster care

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...

This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.

d. Evidence that applicant identifies the importance of promoting the educational achievement of children and young people in care

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...

This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.

C2. (option 1): for use only when assessing an applicant who will NOT be caring for an Aboriginal child or young person.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>C2. Applicant can promote the exploration and development of identity by children and young people</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify ways of encouraging children and young people to take pride in their own cultural identity, gender identity and abilities</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can describe opportunities for children and young people to participate in and learn about their cultural, religious and language heritage</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session B Part 4, Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant can identify the importance of sharing and safely storing memorabilia during the placement</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>d. Evidence that applicant can describe opportunities for children and young people to develop strengths and abilities</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>

C2. (option 2): for use only when assessing an applicant to care for an Aboriginal child or young person.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>C2. Applicant can promote the exploration and development of identity by children and young people</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify ways of encouraging children and young people to take pride in their own cultural identity, gender identity and abilities</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can describe opportunities for children and young people to participate in and learn about their family and own community including their cultural, religious and language heritage</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Active participation in formal and informal networks in Aboriginal communities > Understanding of Aboriginal kinship systems > Knowledge of local Aboriginal community organisations and key people providing services to Aboriginal children and young people
<p>Applicant can promote the positive identity of Aboriginal children</p>	<p>c. Evidence that applicant can identify the importance of sharing and safely storing memorabilia during the placement</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example</i></p>

and young people

provided by applicant)...

This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.

d. Evidence that applicant can describe opportunities for children and young people to develop strengths and abilities

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...

This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>C3. Applicant can create opportunities and activities that encourage children and young people to express their feelings, needs and ideas and to participate in decisions that affect them.</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can describe the importance of listening attentively to children and young people to encourage them to express their needs and feelings</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 4, Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can identify that the needs of children and young people can vary with their stage of development</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant can recognise the need for children and young people in care to deal with feelings and issues that may arise from separation from their family</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>d. Evidence that applicant can identify the importance of children and young people being involved in decisions which affect them</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 2, Session C Part 5.</p>

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>C4. Applicant can manage behaviour</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify their personal responses that can impact on appropriate behaviour management</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 4, Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can describe effective strategies to manage the behaviour of child or young person that takes into account their development and life experiences and the applicant's personal responses</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 4, Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant can describe approaches to behaviour management that are flexible and responsive to changing situations</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 4, Session C Part 5.</p>

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
C5. Applicant can advocate on behalf of child or young person in care	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify specialist services, such as medical and educational providers, as relevant for Aboriginal children and young people in care</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that applicant can identify the role of advocacy by a carer to address the needs of child or young person in care to secure relevant services or support</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session C Part 5.</p>

9.3.4b Any other evidence of applicant(s)' ability to promote the positive development of children and young people in foster care

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

9.3.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

- c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment.
(The applicant is competent in the area of “promoting the positive development of children and young people in foster care”.)

9.4 Evidence of Competency D: provide a safe environment that is free of abuse

9.4.1 Session D details

Date of session

Those present

Did this session explore the (*mark those areas covered*)

- address issues of emotional abuse
- understand the impact of sexual abuse on children and young people
- put strategies in place to protect children and young people
- respond to potential of allegations of abuse against carers
- understand the issue of confidentiality

9.4.2 Is there evidence from Session D or training sessions that the application should not proceed?



(*mark one*)

Yes

No

If no, proceed to next question on this form (9.4.3)

If yes, complete a, b and c of this question.

a. Complete the relevant box(es) of the table below

Competency	Evidence that applicant cannot demonstrate this competency*
Personal readiness to care	
Work as a team	

Promote positive development of child	
Provide safe environment	

* See pages 28, 43, 60, 75, 87, 95, and 104 of the Manual for Assessors in the Aboriginal Assessment Tool for examples of evidence indicating that competencies cannot be demonstrated.

b. Make arrangements to contact applicants and inform them that there will be a recommendation that their application will not be approved.

See page 29 of the Manual for Assessors for more details of this process

c. Go to last section 9.4.5 of this form.

9.4.3 From Session D, or training sessions, have the assessors identified issues that need to be explored further before the assessment is completed?



(mark one)

Yes

No

If yes, complete a, b and c below of this question

If no, go to the next part of this form (9.4.4).

a. Brief description of issue

b. Which specific competency does the issue relate to?

c. How will this issue be explored with the applicant(s)? (mark one)

Issue will be covered in more depth in

Referee checks

An additional interview

other

Please detail

9.4.4a Evidence that applicant(s) can demonstrate competency



This unit covers the requirement to provide a safe and respectful home environment for children and young people in out of home care.

Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>D1. Applicant can provide a safe environment for the physical safety of children and young people in foster care</p> <p><i>Tip for assessors</i> This element is assessed primarily through the housing check and in acceptance of agency code of no physical punishment of children (covered in the Information Exchange Session prior to the assessment interviews.)</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant’s home meets minimum standards required for an out-of-home care placement.</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in the Housing Check.</p>
	<p>b. Evidence that the applicant identifies the need to ensure that children and young people in care are not physically punished</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in the Information Exchange Session, Part 1.4.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant identifies the importance of appropriate health and hygiene practices in home.</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in the Information Exchange Session, Part 1.4.</p>

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Element	Evidence of performance indicator
<p>D2. Applicant that carer can implement work practices which support the protection of children and young people</p>	<p>a. Evidence that applicant can identify the impact of abuse on children and young people</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session D Part 3, Session D Part 6.</p>
	<p>b. (If applicable) Evidence that the effect of applicant's own experiences of abuse will not impede the ability of the applicant to focus on the needs of a child or young person in care</p> <p><i>Tips for assessors.</i> <i>Evidence that applicant's experience of abuse will not impede their care for a child a young person includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>applicant can discuss an experience of abuse without being overwhelmed by grief, anger or other strong emotion</i> > <i>applicant does not assume that all children and young people will have the same response to abuse as themselves</i> > <i>applicant can detail the process of dealing with their own experience of abuse</i> > <i>applicant can reflect on the impact of abuse on their own parenting capacities.</i> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session D Part 2, Session D Part 4, Session D Part 6.</p>
	<p>c. Evidence that applicant can describe strategies to keep children and young people safe from abuse</p> <p><i>Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...</i></p> <p>This issue was covered in Session D Part 4, Session D Part 6.</p>

d. Evidence that applicant can describe strategies to support and promote wellbeing of carer's own children during the foster care placement

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session A Part 5, Session C Part 1.

e. Evidence that applicant recognises the importance of maintaining confidentiality

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session D Part 7.

f. Evidence that applicant can demonstrate the appropriate exchange of information on a need to know basis

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)....

This issue was covered in Session D Part 7.

9.4.4b Any other evidence of applicant(s)' ability to provide a safe environment that is free of abuse.

Details of evidence (must be specific concrete information or example provided by applicant)...

9.4.5 Interim assessment recommendation

Mark a, b or c only. If b is marked, you must complete relevant details in space provided.

a. This application should not proceed.

b. Further work should be undertaken in relation to

There would need to be evidence of

before proceeding to the next stage of the assessment process.

c. This application can proceed to the next stage of assessment. (The applicant is competent in the area of providing a safe environment that is free of abuse.)

10.1 Life History

Place copy of completed life history as prepared in Session A.

10.2 Family/household drawings

Attach any drawings collected in Information Exchange Session or Session with children in household.

11.1 Applicant's preferred options –

Which child or young person would you be able to provide care for?

11.1.1 Age range

11.1.2 Sex

11.1.3 Would you be able to take siblings (*more than one child from the same family*)?

(*mark one*) Yes No

11.1.4 Would you consider providing care for a child or young person who (*mark if applicable*)

is from a different religion from yours

is from a different nationality from you

has a physical disability

has a development delay (*slow learner/intellectual disability*).

11.1.5 What needs and behaviours may you find difficult to handle and may need more training about?

11.1.6 Any other comments?

12.1 Coversheet for summary report

12.1.1 Applicant details

Surname

Assessing workers

Manager:

Date of report:

12.1.2 Identifying Information

Family names

Given names

Address

Date of birth

Place of birth

Occupations

Citizenship / residency

Ethnicity

Children in the Family

12.1.3 General information

Date of application

Previous applications and outcomes

Experience or knowledge of children or young people, including through fostering, permanent care, adoption and so on:

12.1.4 Report completed by

Date:

12.2 Final summary report and recommendations

The following issues should be covered

12.2.1 Name of applicant

12.2.2 Assessment activities undertaken

- Information Exchange Session
- Session A
- Session B
- Session C
- Session D
- Session with children of household
- Health check
- Working with Children check
- Disqualified Register Check
- Home and environment check
- Personal references
- other

Please detail

12.2.3 Name of assessors

12.2.4 Panel members present

12.2.5 Panel date

12.2.6 Next review date

12.2.7 Household profile

- a. Kinship diagram showing all members of the household and their relationship to each other.

- b. Brief description of each household member. (eg. name, age, educational achievements, current occupation, particular experience or characteristics relevant to future foster care placements).

- c. Any other comments about this household relevant to the capacity to meet the needs of children or young people in care.

12.2.8 Comments on Competency A

Applicant(s) can demonstrate personal readiness to become a foster carer.

12.2.9 Comments on Competency B

Applicant(s) can work effectively as part of a team.

12.2.10 Comments on Competency C

Applicant(s) can promote the positive development of children and young people in foster care.

12.2.11 Comments on Competency D

Applicant(s) can provide a safe environment that is free of abuse.

12.2.12 Comments on any other issues

12.2.13 Recommendations

Should this applicant be approved as a foster carer at this stage?

(mark one) Yes No

If no, what steps could be undertaken to address concerns?

If yes, detail below

- > type of care approval is being given for (respite, short-term, long-term)
- > numbers, ages and gender of children for which approval to care is given
- > special conditions of approval impacting on care arrangements
- > on-going training needs that have been identified as a priority?
- > level and type of support provided to foster carer through agency, including 24 hour and emergency contacts, training opportunities
- > other avenues of support available to carers eg foster carer support organizations
- > process of review of suitability
- > copy of carer code of conduct to sign

12.2.14 Final summary report and recommendations provided to applicant(s).

The applicant(s) have read the final summary report and recommendation, and have had the opportunity to make any additional or dissenting comments below.

Signed

Signature of Applicant (1)

Date

Signature of Applicant (2)

Date

Applicant(s) comments (if applicable)

12.2.15 Approval documentation (*mark when completed*)

Approval documentation has been prepared and signed by the chairperson of the approval panel.

Signed

Signature of chairperson of the approval panel

Name of chairperson

Date