

CARER RECRUITMENT, ASSESSMENT AND AUTHORISATION POLICY GUIDELINE

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Summary

Life Without Barriers believes it is important to implement clear and consistent processes when choosing people to be carers. In order to provide quality care services to children and young people in Out Of Home Care we have developed strategies to attract carers from a wide variety of backgrounds and with many different skills. We have a comprehensive assessment and authorisation process. These processes will assist us to grow a carer pool that can meet the needs of children and young people from a variety of backgrounds, with differing needs, in a safe and caring manner.

Who should read this document?

This policy sets out Life Without Barriers' commitment to recruit, assess and authorise carers in a planned manner that meets the needs of Life Without Barriers programs, that provides carers with sufficient and current information to make informed decisions about working with the agency, that are conducted in a transparent manner that is consistent across the agency and that complies with relevant legislation, policy and procedure. It applies to all personnel involved in the recruitment, assessment, selection and authorisation of carers.

The meaning of terms and words used in this document

In the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Personnel** include all employees, volunteers and self-employed contractors engaged by Life Without Barriers to deliver a service or support any activity of the agency. This includes individuals engaged short-term and ongoing, regardless of whether or not the engagement is paid.

What is our aim?

Life Without Barriers understands the complex nature of carer recruitment and assessment and the impact these processes will have on future decisions about carer authorisation, placement matching and the ongoing support and training provided to carers.

Life Without Barriers is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by ensuring all children and young people are placed with authorised carers, and staff and contractors engaged to undertake carer recruitment, assessment and authorisation tasks have the requisite expertise, knowledge and skills to undertake these tasks.

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Life Without Barriers will also ensure the quality of carer recruitment, assessment and authorisation processes is systematically monitored and reviewed by suitably qualified staff. Decisions regarding carer authorisation will be made based on an analysis of all available information by an identified senior manager following consideration by the Carer Assessment Panel.

Life Without Barriers understands that children and young people in Out of Home Care come from a broad range of ethnic, indigenous, religious, and language backgrounds. Life Without Barriers uses appropriately trained personnel and processes to recruit and assess carers who are able to care for children and young people from diverse backgrounds should they be assessed as suitable.

Life Without Barriers understands the importance of providing all applicant carers with detailed and accurate information about the realities of providing care, to allow them to make informed decisions about becoming carers.

Objectives

To make clear our commitment to recruiting and authorising carers best able to care for children and young people in safe and nurturing environments, to meet the needs of children and young people and to ensure the rights of children and young people are upheld.

To ensure that service development and delivery activities support the provision of thorough recruitment, assessment and authorisation processes that are undertaken by experienced practitioners with the required expertise, knowledge and skills.

To ensure recruitment processes are designed to reflect program and regional needs, as well as targeting carers from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and other culturally diverse backgrounds.

To provide personnel with the guiding principles that must underpin the recruitment, assessment and authorisation process to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and the longevity and wellbeing of carers and their families.

Guiding Principles

Life Without Barriers' policies, service development and delivery reflect our commitment to ensuring children and young people are cared for by skilled and caring adults, that carers are selected through fair and consistent processes and that systems and processes are in place to support and develop the carers we recruit.

Life Without Barriers is committed to providing culturally appropriate care to children and young people and will develop recruitment plans that are relevant to the circumstances of each region.

Life Without Barriers understands that the participation of children and young people in the recruitment process may assist the agency to better target and retain carers.

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Life Without Barriers is committed to ensuring the thorough assessment of all carers that is in line with industry standards. This includes assessing partners where an applicant identifies as a couple and involving all household members in the assessment process.

Life Without Barriers is committed to ensuring all personnel undertaking recruitment, assessment and authorisation of carers are trained and supervised on an ongoing basis.

Life Without Barriers understands the importance of maintaining thorough, accurate records of all stages of the recruitment, assessment and authorisation process. Life Without Barriers will provide clear guidelines around these processes, and ensure regular monitoring and review occurs. All carer assessment records will be maintained in line with Life Without Barriers records management policies.

Policy Commitments

All personnel involved in the recruitment, assessment and authorisation of carers will have the requisite expertise, knowledge and skills to undertake these tasks, in line with industry standards and reflecting the impact these processes have on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in out of home care.

Clear guidelines are developed to assist personnel involved in the selection, assessment and authorisation of carers to make consistent and fair decisions. These guidelines reflect legislation, current research and industry standards relating to the needs of children and young people in out of home care, and the competencies and attributes that indicate a person's/families capacity to meet these needs.

Each region and program will have a current recruitment plan that clearly identifies the types of carers to be targeted to meet the varying needs of the children and young people that use the service, including the needs of children and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other culturally diverse backgrounds.

Life Without Barriers will provide opportunities for children and young people to participate in the recruitment of carers.

Carer files and records, including all records and information collected during the recruitment, assessment and authorisation process are managed in line with Life Without Barriers records management policy, procedures and systems.

Policy relating to the recruitment assessment and authorisation of carers will be enacted through agreed procedures and practices to promote the selection of skilled and caring adults to this role.

Performance Indicators

Position descriptions of the roles relating to recruitment, assessment and authorisation of carers demonstrate an understanding of the expertise, knowledge and skills required to perform these tasks.

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Personnel records show personnel engaged in the recruitment, assessment and authorisation of carers meet the selection criteria for these roles as outlined in the position descriptions.

Personnel records show personnel engaged in the recruitment, assessment and authorisation of carers have received training in Life Without Barriers policy, procedure and practice guidelines.

Personnel records show that personnel engaged in the recruitment, assessment and authorisation of carers engage in ongoing professional development to maintain up to date industry knowledge and practices.

Carer recruitment, assessment and authorisation records demonstrate carers have been provided with sufficient and current information to make informed decisions about working with Life Without Barriers.

Carer recruitment, assessment and authorisation records demonstrate carers have been selected through a fair and consistent process.

There are clear guidelines outlining the skills and attributes required by carers to meet the needs of children and young people using Life Without Barriers services.

Intake and matching processes demonstrate that children and young people are placed with carers who are able to meet their individual needs, based on the information gained about carers and their families through the assessment process.

Feedback from service participants (and from their carers, families and advocates) indicates satisfaction that carers are able to meet the needs of the children and young people placed with them.

The design, delivery and review of services includes opportunities for individuals, families, carers, and community to provide information and expertise that relates to ensuring robust recruitment and authorisation practices are maintained and improved.

Life Without Barriers has implemented a range of procedures and practices that enable us to recruit and authorise suitable carers to meet the diverse needs of children and young people using our service and that contribute to the development and longevity of our carers.

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BUSINESS PORTFOLIO	Human Resources		
CONTACT FOR QUERIES	Trish Jean		
RELATED TOPIC/S	Assessment and Planning; Delegation of Authority; Recruitment and Selection		