

Out-of-home Care Transition Project

Requirements to support the transition of authorised
carers to Aboriginal OOHC providers

June 2023

About the OOHC Transition Project

This project will support the transition of Aboriginal children and young people and their carers to Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). Supporting the transition of Aboriginal children and young people to the care of ACCOs will help them remain connected to culture, kin and country.

Non-Aboriginal OOHC providers have a critical role in the success of the transition project by making sure that placements are ready for transition and that ACCOs receive comprehensive, current and accurate information to help them meet the needs of children and young people and their carers.

What this guide is for

This guide sets out the requirements to support the transition of authorised carers to Aboriginal OOHC providers.

The information in this guide will help designated agencies understand what information must be provided to Aboriginal OOHC providers so these agencies can re-authorise carers transitioning from another designated agency. It will also help agencies understand how this information can be used to support re-authorisation of carers.

Supporting the transition of carers

A carer authorisation is unique to the designated agency that authorises the carer.

Carer authorisations are not transferrable. When a carer transitions to a new agency, the new agency must make a decision whether to re-authorise the carer. This involves deciding whether the carer and their household members are safe and suitable and recording the decision on the Carers Register.

The new agency must start a new application for the carer and complete all the mandatory authorisation checks in the Carers Register. The new agency can use information it receives under the 'other designated agency check' when making a decision whether to re-authorise a carer transitioning from another designated agency. Further information about the 'other designated agency check' and how this information may be used, is set out below.

The transferring agency must maintain the carer's authorisation on the Carers Register until the new agency has completed the authorisation process. Once the new agency has completed the authorisation, the transferring agency must update the Carers Register to indicate that the carer has surrendered their authorisation.

Once the new agency completes the authorisation requirements on the Carers Register, the register will generate a unique carer authorisation number. This authorisation number is valid only while the carer remains with the authorising agency.

- [Log into Carers Register](#)

Exchanging information

When a carer is transferring from one agency to another, the new agency must complete its own authorisation assessment of the carer.

This includes obtaining information about the carer and their household members from any other designated agency that has done any or the following:

- previously authorised the person as a carer
- received an application from the person to be authorised as a carer

The exchange of information is referred to as an ‘other designated agency check’. The new agency must consider the information when deciding whether to authorise the person as a carer. The new agency must enter a record on the Carers Register confirming that information has been exchanged before the authorisation can be finalised.

Information that may be requested in the ‘other designated agency check’

Exchanging information helps the new agency to decide whether to re-authorise a carer transitioning from a new agency. It also helps identify any risks the person may pose to children and young people, and specific training or support the carer may need. The information that is shared should be relevant to the new agency’s assessment of the person’s suitability to be authorised as a carer.

Information may be exchanged under Chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. Relevant information that may be exchanged includes:

Information about a person’s current or previous applications to be authorised as a carer

- Identification information (names, aliases, dates of birth)
- Status of any previous applications to become an authorised carer, including the outcome of an application (whether the person was authorised as a carer, refused authorisation or withdrew their application)
- Details of any suitability assessments or probity checks undertaken by previous agencies, including WWCC outcomes, and the outcomes of National Police Checks, reference checks and Community Services Checks
- Copies of any carer authorisation assessments conducted by previous agencies

Information about authorisation decisions and carer reviews

- Details of any current or previous authorisation decisions, including whether the person’s authorisation was suspended or cancelled and the reasons for this
- Any conditions placed on the carer’s authorisation by previous agencies including the reasons for the conditions. Conditions might include, for example, a limit on how many children may be placed with the carer or the complexity of care needs that the carer can meet
- Information about the carer’s suitability, including strengths, risks or vulnerabilities, their understanding of their obligations as carers, their capacity to meet these obligations, and their willingness to work with and accept the supervision of the agency
- Details of any training the carer has completed and any ongoing or future training or support needs
- Copies of any carer reviews or risk assessments

Information about reportable conduct matters

Agencies must record on the Carers Register when a carer or adult household member has been the subject of an allegation of reportable conduct.

When the new agency begins a new carer authorisation on the Carers Register it will be able to see if the applicant has been the subject of a reportable conduct allegation and if the agency investigating the allegation has found there may be risks that future agencies should be aware of.

When the Carers Register notes there is a 'current reportable allegation', or a 'finalised reportable allegation – contact agency', this information can be shared with the new agency.

In some circumstances there may be highly sensitive information that requires special care when sharing with the new agency, or there may be legal reasons why information must be managed carefully. In these instances, the Carers Register will direct the new agency to contact the OCG for further advice before taking any other action.

Information about household members

- Details of any current or previous household members, including relationship to the carer applicant and length and frequency of stay.
- Details of any other people that frequently attend the carer applicant's home.
- Details of probity checks.
- Information about the conduct of the household member, including any concerns or risks the person may pose to children and young people.

Information about placements

- Details of any current placements of children and young people.
- History of the carer applicant's provision of care to children and young people such as the types of placements the carer applicant has provided, their skills and experience in caring for children and young people, and any history of placement breakdowns.

Other relevant information

- Cultural or religious background of the carer applicant.
- Geographical considerations.
- Personal circumstances of the carer applicant or their household members that may require support.

We provide templates on our website to help agencies exchange information.

- [Carers Register templates.](#)

Obtaining consent before exchanging information with the new agency

Information shared as part of an authorisation process is permissible by law and therefore the consent of the carer applicant is not required for agencies to exchange information. But when it is practical and appropriate, it is best practice to inform the carer applicant or their household members that information will be shared with the new agency.

Designated agencies should inform carer applicants that information about them will be entered onto the Carers Register and that they have the right to access information held by the designated agency or entered onto the Carers Register.

Using information obtained under the ‘other designated agency check’

The new agency may use the results and outcomes of checks completed by a previous designated agency, when deciding whether to re-authorise a carer. However, the new agency must review the outcome of these previous checks and make its own decision about the carer’s suitability. The new agency should keep a copy of the information received from other designated agencies about the carer and carer household, and document how it has used this information in making a decision whether to re-authorise the carer.

Each agency will have its own policies and procedures for deciding whether to re-authorise a carer transitioning from another designated agency. The approach the agency takes will depend on the quality of information it receives under the “other designated agency check”.

For example, in reviewing information from the transferring agency, the new agency may decide not to undertake a formal carer assessment, but rather meet with the carer and carer household to update information from the ‘other designated agency check’ and discuss the carer household’s current circumstances.

Issues to consider when reviewing information obtained under the ‘other designated agency check’

The new agency must come to its own decision about whether an applicant is suitable to be authorised as a carer. The new agency can decide when it will rely on information provided by the transferring agency, and what fresh assessments or checks should be undertaken.

When relying on information provided by another designated agency, the new agency should consider the following:

- how current the information is — does it provide the new agency with enough information about the carer applicant’s current circumstances and the circumstances of the household, including any risks? What information may need to be updated?
- how recently the carer applicant received training — would the carer applicant benefit from attending refresher training?
- whether all people in the household who are required to have a WWCC do have a current WWCC clearance or an application for a clearance
- how recently a National Police Check was undertaken by another designated agency and the outcome of the check. National Police Checks are point-in-time checks and each agency will have its own policies around how regularly National Police Checks should be renewed
- how current the information provided under the Community Services Check is and whether it includes all household members who are 16 years and older. Community Services Checks are a review of information about an individual held by the Department of Communities and Justice.

When the new agency decides to re-authorise the carer, refuse to re-authorise the carer or impose conditions on the carer’s authorisation, the agency should clearly document what information it has relied on, what fresh assessments and checks it has done, and the reasons for the decision.

- [More resources and guidance about the carer authorisation requirements](#)

Contact us for more information

The approach the new agency will take to decide whether to re-authorise carers transferring from another designated agency will depend on the agency's own policies and procedures, as well as the individual circumstances of each carer and carer household.

If you require more information or advice about the requirements for re-authorising carers transitioning from other designated agencies, please contact the Registration Systems Team on (02) 8219 3600 or email <mailto:carers-register@ocg.nsw.gov.au>

Office of the Children's Guardian

www.ocg.nsw.gov.au

Switchboard: (02) 8219 3600

Locked Bag 5100
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012