

VOOHC Case Planning

Voluntary out-of-home care (VOOHC) providing agencies must have sufficient information and planning to meet the immediate day to day care needs of children, young people and their families. For children and young people in VOOHC for 180 days or more in any 12-month period, this planning must be documented in a formal case plan

The role of a case plan

Children and young people spending longer periods of time in VOOHC require opportunities for skill development as well as respite. The role of the case plan is to ensure service provision addresses:

- the child or young person's likes, dislikes and aspirations
- the child or young person's health, nutrition and any physical support needs
- the child or young person's emotional and behavioural support needs
- the child or young person's social, recreational and leisure needs and aspirations
- the child or young person's education and vocational needs and aspirations
- the child or young person's spiritual, religious and cultural support needs
- the needs and aspirations of the parent/s and family
- any risk associated with the child or young person's care
- the involvement of family to the greatest extent possible
- any impending key transition stages in a child or young person's life (such as transition to high school, moving to adulthood, returning to care of their parents)

Case planning is a collaborative process facilitated by the agency providing VOOHC that involves the participation of the child or young person (to the extent of their capacity), their parent/s (and other relevant family members), agencies that provide care or other support (such as schools, coordinators of support or health professionals) and the designated supervising agency (where relevant).

Case plan requirements

In addition to the above areas, the case plan must:

- be developed, approved and lodged on the VOOHC Register **before** a child or young person has been in care for 180 days in a 12-month period.
- be developed as a result of a formal case conference
- record the views of the child or young person and their parent/s and how they participated.
- be signed by the parties involved in its development
- be lodged within 5 days of the case plan (or case plan review) being finalised.
- be reviewed as required and at least annually
- be kept by the VOOHC agency until a child or young person has turned 18 years.

VOOHC agencies must notify the Office of the Children's Guardian if they identify that a child has been in VOOHC for more than 180 days in a 12-month period without a case plan.