# Policy Guide and Checklist

This front page is to guide users in developing their Service Access and Exit Policy and Procedures. To help you complete these, you will find that:

* Basic instructions and choices between specific terms are indicated by yellow highlighting.
* Sections requiring detail are indicated by green highlighting.

Before submitting this document for approval, check that you have completed the following:

Read the current[[1]](#footnote-2) HSQF Framework Version.

Read the current HSQF User guide – Certification or HSQF User Guide – Self-Assessable (as appropriate to your service agreement and organisation).

Checked the most recent HSQF Version Control Register and Log of Changes and included any relevant changes in your policy draft.

Included the document code/version number in accordance with your organisation’s version control procedure.

Replaced all reference to organisation with your organisation name.

Customised or deleted (as appropriate) all yellow highlighted sections.

Drafted content for or deleted (as appropriate) all green highlighted sections.

Customised the Relevant Legislation and Standards, Related Policies and Procedures and Supporting Documents lists (where relevant).

Updated the header and footer to reflect the document name, version and other relevant details for your organisation.

Added a review date.

Logged any changes to policies/procedures in your organisation’s Policies and Procedures Register.

Deleted all footnotes.

Removed QCOSS branding and replaced it with your organisation’s branding.

**Delete** this page once your Service Access and Exit Policy and Procedures has been approved and finalised.

Service Access and Exit  
Policy and Procedures

#### Document Code / Version Number

# Policy Statement

Organisation makes eligibility for our services and processes for accessing them fair and straightforward. We work to identify and reduce barriers to access, treat all clients/people who access our services with respect, and provide person-centred supports. Where we cannot provide support, we facilitate appropriate referrals. We uphold personal choices and human rights while providing services and during and after service exit.

## Scope

This policy and associated procedures apply to Organisation as a whole.

# HSQF Related Standards

* Human Services Quality Standards Indicator 2.1
* Human Services Quality Standards Indicator 2.2
* Human Services Quality Standards Indicator 2.3

and aspects of

* Human Services Quality Standards Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5

# Relevant Legislation and Standards

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Common** | [*Human Rights Act* *2019*](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2019-005)  Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services [Language Services Policy](https://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/multicultural-affairs/policy-governance/language-services-policy) |
| **Child Protection Placement Services[[2]](#footnote-3)**  Remove row and/or stream(s) if not required  *Service Stream:* Child and Family  Department: DCSSDS  and/or  **Child Protection Support Services**  *Service Stream:* Child and Family  Department: DCSSDS  and/or  **Families**  *Service Stream:* Child and Family  Department: DCSSDS | [*Child Protection Act 1999*](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-010) (particularly sections [75 Transition to Independence](https://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/consol_act/cpa1999177/s75.html) and [122 Statement of Standards](https://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/consol_act/cpa1999177/s122.html))  Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services [Service Agreement – Funding and Service Details (Child Safety and Youth)](https://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/funding-grants/agreements/funding-service-details.pdf)  Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak Limited (QATSICPP) [Practice Standards](https://www.qatsicpp.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/QATSICPP_Practice_Standards.pdf)  Queensland Government [Child Safety Practice Manual](https://cspm.csyw.qld.gov.au/procedures/support-a-child-in-care)  Queensland Government [Domestic and Family Violence: Common Risk and Safety Framework](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/c927ea9b-6973-4912-966e-dc11d1d46a67/common-risk-safety-framework-2022.pdf?ETag=70793b6943532f9f1f2c9f038704f600) |
| Delete row if not required  **Domestic and Family Violence**  *Service Stream:* Women’s Safety and Violence Prevention Services  Services Department: DJAG | [*Child Protection Act 1999*](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-010)  [*Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2012-005)  Queensland Government [Domestic and Family Violence: Common Risk and Safety Framework](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/c927ea9b-6973-4912-966e-dc11d1d46a67/common-risk-safety-framework-2022.pdf?ETag=70793b6943532f9f1f2c9f038704f600)  Queensland Government [Domestic and Family Violence Services: Practice Principles, Standards and Guidance](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/366f94a8-1122-42ff-9c19-d968fd21c173/dfv-services-practice-principles-standards-and-guidance.pdf?ETag=8465906b55ef511a2a2db9721f74b69a)  Queensland Government [Domestic and Family Violence Services Regulatory Framework](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/16d7913c-96d6-42bd-aed2-f31f24315407/resource/692b099f-a1e3-4a9d-aa30-d1ebdedae510/download/dfv-services-regulatory-framework.pdf)  Queensland Government [Domestic and Family Violence Support Services Investment Specification](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/c96539aa-1351-4971-8f5b-7515fb3c121c/investment-spec-dfvss.pdf?ETag=7157f7e289154a97190c02d3058167a8) |
| Delete row if not required  **Sexual Violence and Women’s Support**  *Service Stream:* Women’s Safety and Violence Prevention Services  Department: DJAG | Queensland Government [Sexual Violence and Women’s Support Services Investment Specification](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/68b6223c-6f48-4dd6-bb2a-cf967d344e8f/investment-spec-svwss.pdf?ETag=330b007816dc4d2714c00f7f2c03d979)  Queensland Government[Queensland GovernmentInteragency Guidelinesfor Responding to People who have Experienced Sexual Assault](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/924faa15-d282-48f0-a8e8-739521e2b0b1/interagency-guidelines-responding-sexual-assault-child-sexual-abuse.pdf?ETag=8273e87f1f8e6a4cc860ecdf3e556030)  National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence [Standards of Practice Manual for Services Against Sexual Violence (3rd ed)](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fa0db2b7ce66d7cda3bbe00/t/613583e1573d0042b238fd9b/1630897132183/Standards+of+Practice+Manual+for+Services+Against+Sexual+Violence+3rd+Edition.PDF) (particularly standard 6.4) |
| Delete row if not required  **Disability Services**  Department: DCSSDS | [*Disability Services Act 2006*](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-012&ved=2ahUKEwj3nceu9pOGAxVXyDgGHZkgCLUQFnoECBYQAQ&usg=AOvVaw0h9KWWj-a1iqPl2NHE0Yfs)  [*Disability Services Regulation 2017*](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2017-0099) |

# Definitions

Add definitions relevant to your organisation’s approach.

# Principles

Add/adapt as appropriate.

The principles that support organisation’s Service Access and Exit Policy and Procedures, and associated practices, are:

* **Accessibility:** Servicesare designed and provided in ways that promote access and we proactively identify and reduce barriers to access
* **Autonomy/Self-determination:** The right of each person to make decisions about the services they receive is respected and self-determination is promoted
* **Equity and fairness:** We make decisions about service provision based on the needs of the people seeking our services; we recognise that we may need to provide different types or levels of service to different people, reflecting different levels of need; our decision-making in unbiased
* **Respect:** We recognise and uphold the inherent dignity of each person accessing our services and their values, beliefs and rights; we operate in ways that demonstrate inclusiveness and respect for diversity
* **Transparency:** Information about eligibility for our services and service delivery is clearly communicated

# Procedures

## Access and Referral Pathways

Outline your access and referral pathways, including (as appropriate):

Self-referral – how people can arrange to access services themselves/for their families.

Referral processes for other services professionals, including required information and preferred formats, e.g., emailing a completed referral form to a particular, secure email address; calling prior to referral to discuss suitability; etc.

Where varied programs/services involve different processes, detail each or refer to a document where this information can be found for each program/service.

Where a service type has particular requirements (e.g., only receives referrals from a particular authority or through a specific process) detail those with reference to relevant documents (e.g., service agreements, service standards). E.g. For Child Protection Placement Services, processes for receiving and processing referrals and related information (e.g., statutory requirements, case plans, transition care arrangements) from DCSSDS.

Describe the process for communicating with referrers, including:

Notifying a referrer that a referral has been received.

Responding to a self-referrer with information about next steps.

Timeframes and responsibilities for decisions/responses.

Outline any particular processes in place to facilitate/reduce barriers to access not addressed elsewhere in this document.

## Determining Eligibility

Organisation provides services to list groups, in accordance with outline basis for this, e.g., contractual arrangements, services agreement, organisational purpose, expertise, etc. Include reference to relevant documents, e.g., investment specifications, relevant standards. See Appendix 1 for an example.

If you have multiple service/program types, outline the eligibility for each or refer to documents where each program’s eligibility information is presented.

Prospective clients/People potentially seeking to access our services are informed of eligibility requirements by outline your process, including how you provide accessible information (e.g., presenting information in varied/flexible forms, using plain language resources, etc.).

To establish whether a person or family is eligible for our services, we outline your process, e.g., review of referrals, initial appointment/phone call, case meeting, etc. Where services/programs conduct intake/eligibility interviews, provide detailed guidance in the sub-section below (Eligibility/Intake Interviews).

To make these processes as supported and effective as we can, we detail processes, e.g.:

Processes for the involvement of family members, advocates and/or support people.

How the organisation engages interpreters/community language speakers where appropriate.

Where there are more eligible people than we have capacity to support, we determine who receives support by outline your process, e.g.:

Relative levels of need as determined by ….

Groups prioritised by our funding, i.e. ….

Prioritising people at higher risk as determined by ….

Where a person is ineligible or we do not have capacity to provide services to them, outline how you communicate the outcome. We provide support by describe your processes, e.g.:

Providing information about or referrals to other appropriate services.

Providing short term support/brief interventions to meet priority needs.

Where a service type has particular requirements (e.g., must provide decision and justifications to a statutory authority) detail those with reference to relevant documents. E.g. If you need to provide an update to a referring authority regarding a referred person’s/family’s engagement.

### Eligibility/Intake Interviews

To safely and effectively gather essential information for eligibility and/or intake, we describe your process for scheduling and conducting interview, including:

Modes of interview (e.g., individual/family, in-person/online/phone); note where joint interviewing may not be appropriate (e.g., where DFV may be present).

Safety protocols, including protection of workers, potential clients, victim/survivors of violence, etc.; in particular, detail where work is conducted with perpetrators of DFV; include reference to relevant standards (e.g., Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Act 2012/DFV Investment Specification) and the need for risk assessment, safety planning, etc..

Availability of interpreters or preferred language speakers.

Accessibility and use of assistive technologies.

Inclusivity practices (e.g., enquiring about identity/preferred language; avoiding gendered language; providing information in community languages).

Trauma-informed practices (e.g., sensitively enquiring about trauma experiences and needs).

Practices to support members of relevant groups, e.g., interview processes for children.

#### Engaging and Working with Interpreters

We support people who use Auslan or have preferred languages other than English by describe how you assess for the appropriateness of and engage with interpreters, e.g.:

Questions/screening processes used to identify when using an interpreter may be appropriate.

Processes for booking/accessing appropriate interpreters, including:

* + Accessing qualified translators, e.g., through Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National).
  + Avoiding use of translators known to/who may be able to identify the client.
  + Using informal translators only where risk levels indicate need for immediate translation and no appropriate professional translator can be accessed.

Providing translated material.

To work effectively with translators, we provide guidance to staff on practicalities of working with translators, e.g., speaking in short sentences, leaving time for translation, speaking directly to the client (not the translator), etc.

## Allocation and Prioritisation

If you have multiple services/program types, determine how allocation to services/programs is determined.

Where decisions are made regarding allocation of particular workers given client/family needs, demographics, priorities, etc., outline how these decisions are taken and who is responsible for them.

Where the access of incoming clients/families must be prioritised (e.g., where demand is beyond capacity), outline how priority access is determined and how fairness/equity principles are upheld in this process.

## Exiting Services

A client/family may exit a program or service we provide by their own choice or where they outline potential reasons for exit, e.g.:

Are no longer eligible for services.

Have not been contactable/Have not engaged/attended appointments for period.

Have behaved in ways that mean we can no longer safely provide services.

We aim to support clients in exiting our services by outline processes, e.g.:

Discussing exit throughout service provision and actively planning for exit over period (as appropriate).

Framing service/program exit positively (e.g., as achieving a goal/aim, evidence of independence or skill growth, etc.).

Collaboratively developing personal support plans/recovery plans/progress plans that the person can use post-exit.

Discussing referral options and facilitating referrals where appropriate.

Establishing relationships with alternative services or supports the person will/may use post-exit.

Arranging check in or follow up support (where appropriate).

Where we must make a determination about ceasing a service where the client/family wishes to continue, we outline your processes, including,

Who is responsible for making these decisions.

What information should be considered.

How the person/family can appeal the decision.

How the determination and their right to complain/appeal is communicated to the client.

# Related Policies and Procedures

List all relevant/related policies and procedures, including any that discuss particular relevant responsibilities and all those referred to in the body of this document.

List all service delivery-focused policies and procedures

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

# Supporting Documents

List all relevant/related documents that are not policies and procedures, including registers, agreements, and guidelines and all supporting documents referred to in the body of this document. This should include any documents/templates used to collect/record referral/intake information.

# Review

This document was last reviewed on date.

This document will be reviewed by date.

# Appendix 1 – Key Service Standards and Requirements

Consider copying in key standards and requirements for specialist service types. These are often found in investment specifications or service/practice guidelines, such as this example from the DFVSS Investment Specification.

## *Extracts from* General Information for All Services[[3]](#footnote-4)

Services funded under the Domestic and Family Violence funding area must comply with the relevant statements under ‘Requirements’ as specified in the Service Agreement. Services should also have regard to the relevant best practice statements and guidance under the heading ‘Considerations’.

Requirements for all services are outlined in Section 5.1.1. Service delivery requirements for specific Service Users and service types are outlined in sections 6 and 7 below.

### 5.1.1 Requirements for all services excluding services delivering service types: Access – Events (T102) and System Support – Research (T442)

Services must comply with the [*Domestic and family violence services Practice principles, standards and guidance*](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/domestic-and-family-violence-resources/resource/e75875e0-50a9-4fa2-acde-121dc4a3a804?truncate=30&inner_span=True). The practice standards outline the everyday practice expectations for people working in Queensland’s domestic and family violence service system. The key objectives of the practice standards and guidance are:

to provide guidance for people working in domestic and family violence services in Queensland to deliver quality responses to their clients including victims of domestic and family violence, their families and perpetrators

to support workers in the domestic and family violence sector to be culturally appropriate, collaborative, and to have the skills and capabilities to work effectively with a broad range of clients

to promote greater consistency, transparency and integration of services around client needs.

Services must comply with the [*Domestic and Family Violence Regulatory Framework*](https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/about-us/services/women-violence-prevention/violence-prevention/service-providers/domestic-and-family-violence-services-regulatory-framework). The Regulatory Framework aims to ensure ongoing compliance of departmentally funded domestic and family violence services with the *Domestic and family violence services Practice principles, standard and guidance*. The Regulatory Framework is operationalised through the [*Human Services Quality Framework*](https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/industry-partners/funding-grants/human-services-quality-framework). The ongoing monitoring of compliance will promote greater consistency, transparency, integration of services as well as promote continuous improvement across the sector. The Regulatory Framework achieves this by highlighting good practice, identifying areas for improvement through an audit process and providing an early warning of any potential issues.

#### 5.1.2 Requirements for all services

All funded services regardless of the service type/s for which they are funded, must prioritise safety of Service Users who are experiencing domestic and family violence over all other activities of the service.

All funded services must operate with low or no entry requirements for Service Users, for example:

* + access and level of service must not be affected by the Service User’s ability to pay a service charge
  + rather than excluding Service Users with challenging behaviours, services must develop processes for managing these Service Users (within a risk management framework) and
  + be flexible, responsive, culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs, safety, dignity and privacy of individual clients and the target group through the design and delivery of services (operating hours, practices and rules).

All services must operate as part of a broader service system that includes police, courts, child protection and non-government organisations to deliver a timely coordinated and client focussed response to support victim safety and wellbeing, particularly those in high risk situations.

All services must work with government and non-government partners to establish suitable client information sharing and referral arrangements to support a coordinated system response.

Where an organisation is unable to provide services to a person, due to ineligibility or lack of capacity, processes must be in place to proactively refer the person to an appropriate alternative service.

Service delivery staff must be competent in risk assessment and safety planning and hold professional qualifications and/or experience working with people affected by domestic and family violence.

Staff are appropriately trained, are culturally and professionally diverse and have the appropriate skills to meet the complex needs of the target group.

Services must provide support that is proactive, persistent, reliable, practical and comprehensive.

Mechanisms must be in place to allow meaningful Service User participation in service planning, design and evaluation.

Strategies are implemented to determine effectiveness and appropriateness of the service delivery model. […]

#### 5.1.3 Considerations for all services

The safety needs of people who experience domestic and family violence are prioritised.

Services operate from an understanding of domestic and family violence as the abuse of power and control in a relationship and acknowledge that domestic and family violence is a gendered issue in that it has unequal impact on women.

Opportunities to link and network with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers are maximised with the aim of building capacity of the service to provide culturally appropriate support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by domestic and family violence.

#### 5.1.4 Considerations for temporary supported accommodation services

It is expected that service delivery will be underpinned by the following approaches:

Housing first

A housing first approach transitions a person or household, wherever possible, straight from homelessness into stable, sustainable housing, with support provided where necessary to sustain the tenancy. This approach minimises vulnerable people having to be moved through multiple short-term, temporary living situations which can be unsettling and prevent their stabilisation.

While the primary concern for women escaping domestic and family violence, who access temporary supported accommodation, is safety, the principles of housing first also apply.

These principles include:

accessing housing as quickly as possible, with ongoing support provided (where needed) to establish and consolidate any new tenancy

minimising moves between multiple short-term accommodation arrangements

providing tenancy sustainment support to keep people safe and housed

working with other service providers to deliver coordinated services once housed

connecting clients with mainstream or specialist services to provide ongoing support directed at helping them to stay safe and to sustain their tenancy

facilitating connections to local community and social supports to build community connectedness and reduce social isolation.

Duration of need

A duration of need approach means providing accommodation and/or support for as long as the client requires to remain safe and to obtain and maintain sustainable housing. It is based on a person’s assessed risk and need rather than an arbitrary time limit. Ongoing assessment determines a client’s changing risks and needs and, once housed, clients should be connected with other services to provide ongoing support directed at helping them to stay safe and sustain their tenancy.

The principles supporting a duration of need approach include:

stays in supported accommodation are as short as possible, with transition to longer term housing as the goal (in line with a housing first approach)

a focus on addressing client risks and needs in the context of case management

regular and ongoing assessment of risk and need

supporting the client to find, establish and be able to sustain safe, independent housing

ensuring that the client has the community, social and agency support needed to sustain them in independent housing

encouraging clients to be self-reliant by providing them with the skills and knowledge necessary to obtain the services they require and to avoid dependency on homelessness services.

1. At time of writing, the current Quality Framework is V9.0. For the latest version of the Quality Framework and associated User Guides, contact Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services 1800 034 022, [hsqf@qld.gov.au](mailto:hsqf@qld.gov.au) or [www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/human-services-quality-framework](http://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/human-services-quality-framework). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Depending on service types provided, additional DCCSDS policies may apply. See program descriptions and Child Safety Practice Manual for guidance on additional inclusions. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [Domestic and Family Violence Support Services Investment Specification](https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/ckan-publications-attachments-prod/resources/c96539aa-1351-4971-8f5b-7515fb3c121c/investment-spec-dfvss.pdf?ETag=7157f7e289154a97190c02d3058167a8), pp. 11-12 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)