

Referrals Acceptance Policy

1. Purpose

This policy provides the framework for how Inala Community House (ICH) Family Intervention Services (FIS) receives and accepts referrals.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees, contractors, students and volunteers within ICH FIS. For the purpose of this procedure, these persons shall be referred to as workers.

3. Definitions

Child is an individual under 18 years (*Child Protection Act 1999*).

The Department refers to the Queensland Government Department responsible for Family Services programs and/or Child Protection or Child Safety.

Service User is any parents or family, or carer named in the referral for whom services will be provided, including children.

The Act refers to the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*

CSSC refers to Child Safety Service Centre/s

Family preservation is the goal of keeping children and or young people at home with their families in a safe and supportive environment, rather than in out-of-home care. Family preservation services are short-term, intensive family-focused services designed to assist families in crisis by improving parenting and family functioning while keeping children safe.

Reunification is the safe return of a child or young person to the care of their family.

Active reunification refers to the case plan goal for a child or young person to be returned to the care of their family, within 12 months.

Intervention with Parental Agreement (IPA) allows ICH FIS to work intensively with a family to meet the protection and care needs of a child/children with the parent's agreement. Child/children will usually remain in the family home for all or most of this type of intervention, though they may be placed in out-of-home care for all or part of the agreement with the consent of the parents.

4. Policy

4.1 Referral source

ICH FIS receives referrals from the Department to provide tertiary support and work with families to help achieve family preservation or reunification. ICH FIS is funded to receive referrals from the Inala and Forest Lake Child Safety Service Centres (CSSCs). There are some circumstances where referrals from other CSSCs may be considered:

- Where case work is undertaken by Inala and Forest Lake CSSC

- If there are no other viable options for the family to receive FIS (permission must be sought from Contracts within the Department).
- Fee for service basis.

4.2 Eligibility criteria

The referral must meet the following criteria to be eligible for ICH FIS services:

- A child has been deemed to be in need of protection and is subject to an Intervention with Parental Agreement (IPA) and one or both parents have consented to the referral.
- A child has been deemed to be in need of protection, is subject to an Interim or Short-Term Child Protection Order and one or both parents have consented to the referral, including reunification planned within 12 months.
- A child is subject to Long Term Guardianship (LTG) and the Department has determined that reunification will now be the goal for the case plan.
- An unborn child has been deemed to be in need of protection after birth; the pregnant woman is subject to a Support Service Case (SSC), and has consented to the referral.
- A discussion has occurred with the service user about ICH Family Intervention Service (FIS), the need to engage intensively with the service and consent has been obtained.

ICH FIS may also be requested to work with families who are not on an IPA or in active reunification. These are regarded as exceptional circumstances and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the ICH FIS Manager. These cases may be accepted on a fee-for-service arrangement dependent upon service capacity.

4.1 Referral acceptance

ICH FIS provides equal service to all people regardless of race, linguistic and cultural background, religion, age, gender, identity, sexuality, abilities, disabilities, or other discriminatory grounds. Referrals shall not be accepted or rejected based on these grounds.

ICH FIS retains the right to accept or decline a referral in alignment with contractual obligations with the Department. A potential service user may be declined on the basis of FIS eligibility criteria or risk profile of the family.

In order to undertake any case work a valid referral must first be received, be deemed to meet the eligibility criteria, and be accepted by ICH FIS Manager.

Refer to the ICH FIS Referral Acceptance Procedure for detail about the referral process.

5. Review

This policy shall be reviewed every three years.

This policy remains in effect unless otherwise determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

6. Related Documents

Policies

ICH Human Rights Policy

ICH Risk Management Policy

ICH Service User Protection Policy

ICH FIS Case Management Policy
ICH FIS Philosophy Statement

Procedures

ICH FIS Referral Acceptance Procedure

Other documents

Department Families Investment Specification

References

Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
Human Rights Act, 2019 (Qld)