

# Handover Procedure

## 1. Purpose

This procedure provides guidance around the information that should be shared with all relevant stakeholders when an Inala Community House (ICH) Family Intervention Service (FIS) worker hands over a case due to them leaving the service/organisation, taking leave for more than a week or when there is a change in allocated primary worker.

## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all ICH FIS case workers who hold a current case load and workers who are assigned a supporting role for a family in the case worker's absence.

## 3. Definitions

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

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

**Case Worker:** is the allocated FIS worker for the family who under regular circumstances holds responsibility for the development, implementation and review of case plans and associated case work.

**Supporting Worker:** is the case worker who holds temporary case work and assists the family whilst the Case Worker is on leave.

**Planned Leave:** is leave taken by a Case Worker which has a firm start and end date, and which approved by the FIS Manager.

**Unplanned Leave:** is leave taken by a Case Worker which is unexpected and likely to be for longer than 1 week.

## 4. Procedure

### 4.1 Circumstances requiring a case handover

ICH is committed to ensuring effective case handovers that promote consistency of care for service users while minimising the risk for workers who are relieving or taking over from a primary worker.

Generally, there are three scenarios that trigger a planned case handover:

#### **When a primary worker is leaving the organisation**

There are organisational policies and procedures that guide the end of employment process for employees. Refer to the ICH Ending Employment Policy.

Complimentary to this guidance, Case Workers are also required to handover cases wherever possible during their notice period and subject to consultation with the FIS Manager.

#### **When the service user's allocated Case Worker changes**

From time to time, there will be circumstances where the Case Worker for a service user changes, resulting in the need to handover a case. This could be at the request of the service user, at the request of the Case Worker, or when there are organisational or staffing changes implemented by the FIS Manager. It can also occur when the case is identified as a 'low intensity case' and the FIS Manager has determined that the family will be supported by the Family Support Worker.

#### **When a primary worker is expected to be on leave for more than a week**

When the Case Worker is taking leave for more than one week, case coverage should be planned with the FIS Manager and FIS team members who will be in the office. A Supporting Worker will be allocated to assist a family whilst their Case Worker is away. Where possible, the Supporting Worker will already be known to the family. An estimation of how intensively the worker will need to support the service user should be provided to ensure the Supporting Worker has capacity and understands the needs of the family.

For leave that spans less than a week and anticipated support needs are low, the Case Worker can advise the family that they are on leave and provide the ICH office phone number to call if they need support. The Case Worker must ensure that any commitments to support the family in the week they are away (e.g. transport, home visits, supporting family time etc) are either cancelled or picked up by another worker (either Child Safety or ICH-FIS).

In the event that a Case Worker goes on unplanned leave, the FIS Manager will determine how the service user will be supported. This will be dependent on the expected duration of the Case Workers absence and the service users support needs.

## 4.2 Handover process

### 4.2.1 *Informing Child Safety of case coverage*

For temporary handovers, the Case Worker should email the Child Safety Officer and Senior Team Leader the dates they will be away and include the Supporting Worker and FIS Manager in this email so that Child Safety has the necessary contact information. The Case Worker must communicate with Child Safety if the Supporting Worker will be facilitating any integral tasks such as family time or transporting to appointments. For example, if there are to be any changes to the expected level of support for the service user in their absence such as a change in transport or family time support will need to occur.

For permanent handovers when the Case Worker is leaving the organisation or the primary worker case allocation is changing, the ICH FIS Manager will determine the most appropriate staff member to communicate the new changes to Child Safety.

### 4.2.2 *Informing the family of case coverage*

For temporary handovers to cover leave, the Case Worker shall inform the service user of the dates they will be away for and the name and mobile phone number for their Supporting Worker. The family should be informed of the support they will be provided during the time their Case Worker will be away. They should also be provided with the ICH office contact number.

For permanent handovers i.e. when the Case Worker is leaving the organisation or case allocation is changing, the ICH FIS Manager will determine the most appropriate staff member to communicate the new changes to the service user.

### 4.2.3 *Updating SRS family details and documentation*

The Case Worker must ensure all details on SRS are correct so the Supporting or new Case Worker has the right information to be able to support the family. This includes the current contact details, the home address, the current contact details for the Child Safety Officer and Senior Team Leader and any risks/alerts which may be current for the family. The Case Worker must ensure that their case notes are up to date and that all current documentation is saved on the service users SRS file. The Case Worker must also ensure that Word versions of current documents (e.g. Family Action Plan, last Progress Report) are saved in their Teams folder so they can be accessed by the subsequent worker.

#### *4.2.4 Handover email*

For planned handovers, the Case Worker must ensure they send an email to the Supporting Worker (and include the Manager in this email) detailing the relevant information needed to support the family. This includes:

- A brief description of the client and how they normally present. It is important to note any risks to worker safety including any aggressive behaviours, domestic violence or drug use.
- An overview of the family composition - the names and ages of the children and whether they are in the parent's care or in out of home care.
- Any current risks to the family's safety should be detailed and if relevant, a safety plan should be attached to inform how the family/services will respond to the risk.
- Detailed description of what coverage/support is required. This can include phone check-ins, home visits, supporting family time and transporting for appointments.
- An overview of the child protection concerns and the priority goals/actions that need to be completed should be included for permanent handovers and temporary handovers where the primary worker is away for two weeks or more.
- For temporary handovers, the Primary Worker should confirm the date they will return from leave and assistance will no longer be required from the Supporting Worker.

This email handover must be recorded on SRS.

A verbal handover for complex cases should also be arranged with the new worker.

#### *4.2.5 Providing updates to primary worker for temporary handovers*

Upon the Case Worker's return, the Case Worker should brief the Primary Worker about the of the occurrences, engagement and progress whilst the Case Worker has been on leave. Any client/case work completed by the Supporting Worker should be documented in SRS which will provide the Case Worker with a written account of what will be contained in the briefing. In the event that a verbal briefing is not possible, an email handover to the Case Worker copying in the FIS Manager is required.

## **5. Review**

This procedure shall be reviewed every three years.

## 6. Related Documents

### **Policies**

ICH End of Employment Policy  
ICH Risk Management Policy  
ICH FIS Case Management Policy  
ICH FIS Incident Management & Reporting Policy