

SP_3.2_SERVICE PACKAGE FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES_2027/28-2029/30

1. INTRODUCTION

Designated Child Protection Organizations (DCPOs) play a key role in rendering child protection services to children and families. In accordance with the Children's Act 38 of 2005, all DCPOs providing designated child protection services must comply with the prescribed national norms and standards and other applicable legislative requirements.

2. PURPOSE OF DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION ORGANISATION

This service package serves to guide organizations that provide services to children and families.

3. PRINCIPLES

- Respect, protect, promote and fulfil the child's rights set out in the Bill of Rights, the best interests of the child standard set out in section 7 and the rights and principles set out in this Act, subject to any lawful limitation;
- Preservation and strengthening of families
- Promotion of family care or parental care or alternative care for children removed from their family environment.
- If it is in the best interests of the child, the child's family must be given the opportunity to express their views in any matter concerning the child.
- Removal of child from family environment be used as last resort
- Protection of children from maltreatment, neglect, abuse and degradation.
- Treat families fairly and equitably;
- Protect the child from unfair discrimination on any ground, including on the grounds of the health status or disability of the child or a family member of the child;
- Recognise a child's need for development and to engage in play and other recreational activities appropriate to the child's age; and
- Child participation
- Confidentiality
- Respect for human dignity
- Cultural sensitivity and diversity
- Accountability and ethical practice
- Holistic developmental approach

4. VALUES

- Responsiveness
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Honesty and Integrity
- Fairness and Equity
- Respect and Dignity

- Teamwork and Partnership
- Openness and Transparency
- Innovation
- Quality services
- Child participation

5. **DEFINITIONS**

5.1. 'abandoned', in relation to a child, means a child who-

- (a) has been deserted by a parent, guardian or caregiver,
- (b) for no apparent reason, had no contact with the parent, guardian or care-giver for a period of at least three months; or (c) has, if applicable, no knowledge as to the whereabouts of the parent, guardian or care-giver and such information cannot be ascertained by the relevant authorities;"

5.2. Abuse, in relation to a child, means any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child, and includes-

- assaulting a child or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury to a child;
- sexually abusing a child or allowing a child to be sexually abused;
- bullying by another child;
- a labour practice that exploits a child; or
- exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that may harm the child psychologically or emotionally;

5.3. Adoption service includes-

- counselling of the parent of the child and, where applicable, the child;
- an assessment of a child by an adoption social worker in terms of section 230 (2) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005
- an assessment of a prospective adoptive parent by an adoption social worker in terms of section 231 (2) of the Act
- the gathering of information for proposed adoptions as contemplated in section 237; and
- a report contemplated in section 239 (1) (b) of the Act

5.4. Adoption Social Worker means

- (a) a social worker in private practice
 - (i) who has a speciality in adoption services and is registered in terms of Social Service Professions Act, 1978 (Act 110 of 1978); and
 - (ii) who is accredited in terms of section 251 to provide adoption services;
- (b) a social worker in the employ of a child protection organization which is accredited in terms of section 251 to provide adoption services; or
- (c) a social worker in the employ of the Department or a provincial department of social development including a social worker employed as such on a part - time or contract basis, who has a speciality in an adoption services and is registered in terms of the Social Service Professions Act, 1978(Act 110 of 1978.

5.5. Alternative care

A child is in alternative care if the child has been placed-

- in foster care;
- in the care of a child and youth care centre following an order of a court in terms of this Act or
- the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act 51 of 1977); or in temporary safe care. *

5.6. Assessment of a child means a process of investigating the developmental needs of a child, including his or her family

environment or any other circumstances that may have a bearing on the child's need for protection and therapeutic services.

5.8 Care-giver means any person other than a parent or guardian, who factually cares for a child and includes -

- a foster parent;
- a person who cares for a child with the implied or express consent of a parent or guardian of the child;
- a person who cares for a child whilst the child is in temporary safe care;
- the person at the head of a child and youth care centre where a child has been placed;
- the person at the head of a shelter;
- a child and youth care worker who cares for a child who is without appropriate family care in the community; and
- the child at the head of a child-headed household

5.9 Child means a person under the age of 18 years; *

5.10. Children's court means a children's court referred to in section 42 of the Act;

5.11. Designated child protection organisation means an organisation designated in terms of section 107 of the Act to perform designated child protection services;

5.12. Designated child protection service means a child protection service referred to in section 105 of the Act.

5.13. Designated social worker a social worker in the service of

- (a) the Department or Provincial Department of Social Development
- (b) a designated child protection organisation or
- (c) municipality

5.14. Early intervention programme means a programme referred to in section 143 (2) of the Act.

5.15. Family: a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, adoption or cohabitation, characterized by a common residence or not interacting and communicating with one another in their respective family roles, maintaining a common culture and governed by family roles.

5.16. Family member, in relation to a child, means-

- a parent of the child;
- any other person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of the child;
- a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or cousin of the child; or
- any other person with whom the child has developed a significant relationship, based on psychological or emotional attachment, which resembles a family relationship;

5.17. Foster care means care of a child as described in section 180 (1) of the Act and includes foster care in a registered cluster foster care scheme.

5.18. Family a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood, adoption or cohabitation characterised by a common-by-common residence/household or not, interacting and communicating with one another in their respective family roles, maintaining a common culture and governed by family rules

5.19. 'Family member', in relation to a child, means-

- a parent of the child;
- any other person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of the child;
- a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or cousin of the child; or

- any other person with whom the child has developed a significant relationship, based on psychological or emotional attachment, which resembles a family relationship;

5.20. Guardian means a parent or other person who has guardianship of a child.

5.21. Parent, in relation to a child, includes the adoptive parent of a child, but excludes-

- the biological father of a child conceived through the rape of or incest with the child's mother;
- any person who is biologically related to a child by reason only of being a gamete donor for purposes of artificial fertilisation; and
- a parent whose parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child have been terminated;

5.22. Reunification services refer to planned and structured interventions provided to children, parents, caregivers, and families to facilitate the safe reintegration of a child into the family environment after separation or placement in alternative care. These services seek to strengthen family functioning, address protective concerns, promote permanency, and ensure that the reunification process is in the best interests of the child

5.23. Social worker a person registered or deemed to be registered as a social worker in terms of the Social Service Profession Act, 1978 (Act 110 Of 1978)

5.24. Temporary safe care', in relation to a child, means care of a child in an approved child and youth care centre, shelter or private home or any other place, where the child can safely be accommodated pending a decision or court order concerning the placement of the child but excludes care of a child in a prison or police cell

6. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1979) (UNCRC)
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)
- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- The Children's Act No. 38 of 2005
- Norms, Standard and Practice Guidelines for the Children's Act, 2010
- Information Guide on the Management of Statutory Services in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005.
- Practice Guidelines on National Adoption
- Practice Guidelines on International Adoptions
- Psychosocial Support Intervention Guidelines for Vulnerable Children and Youth
- Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021
- Guideline Family Preservation
- National Child Care and Protection Policy, 2019
- Marriage Preparation and Enrichment policy
- Fatherhood Strategy
- Guideline on Mediation
- Guideline on Re-Unification Services
- Guideline on Active Parenting of Teenagers
- Guideline on Positive values and moral re-generation
- Guidelines on Unaccompanied and Separated Migrant Children in South Africa and Southern Africa children in distress in other countries

7. SERVICES RENDERED BY DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS Check the guideline and the children's Act

All the following or any specific designated child protection services may be provided by a DCPO: The services includes:

- (a) Prevention services
 - Life Skills Programmes for children, parents, and caregivers.
 - 365 Days of Child Protection Campaigns and Awareness Programmes aimed at promoting children's rights and protection throughout the year.
 - Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programmes, including education, awareness, and support initiatives.
 - Community awareness programmes on child abuse, neglect, exploitation, and children's rights.
- (b) Early intervention services.
 - Assessment of children's circumstances and needs.
 - Family preservation and support programmes.
 - Parenting guidance and counselling.
 - Referral to appropriate social, health, educational, and community support services
- (c) Statutory services
 - Investigation of allegations of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, or abandonment.
 - Child protection assessments and reports.
 - Removal of children to safe care when necessary.
 - Court-related services and participation in Children's Court proceedings.
 - Implementation of court orders
 - Supervision and monitoring of children subject to statutory interventions.
 - Placement of children in alternative care (temporary safe care, foster care, child and youth care centres)
 - Developing, implementation and monitoring of Individual Developmental Plan
 - Conducting developmental assessment
 - National and inter-country adoptions
- (d) Reunification services
 - Preparation of children and families for reunification.
 - Family mediation and counselling.
 - Monitoring and support following reunification.
 - Follow-up assessments to ensure the child's ongoing safety, well-being, and stability within the family environment.
- (e) Counselling
 - individual
 - Debriefing and trauma counselling
 - Grief counselling
 - Group counselling
 - Family counselling
- (f) Referral to other professionals
- (g) Parenting programmes including programmes for teen parents
- (h) Family preservation services including mediation services
- (i) After care services
 - Providing after care services conducting sessions with family members.
 - Supervision of children placed in foster care and
 - Supervision of children discharged from CYCC.
 - Review the court order of the child and extensions
 - Render after care services for beneficiaries from treatment centres -
 - Render after care services for beneficiaries diversion programmes

8. DESIGNATION OF CHILD PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations rendering services to children and families must be designated in terms of section 107(1), (2) by the Head of the Department of Social Development, on written application, provided that the organisation complies with the prescribed norms and standards.

Designated Child Protection Organizations must be accredited to render adoption services in terms of section 251 of the Children's Act.

9. SCREENING OF EMPLOYEES

All personnel employed by the Designated Child Protection Organization must be screened against Part B of the National Child Protection Register and National Register for Sex Offenders.

10. BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries of service are children and families.

11. REPORTING

ACTIVITY	INDICATOR
✓ Family preservation services	✓ Number of family members participating in Family Preservation services
✓ Reunification services	✓ Number of family members re-united with their families.
✓ Parenting programmes	✓ Number of family members participating in parenting programmes.
✓ Child protection services	✓ Number of reported cases of child abuse
✓ Child protection services	✓ Number of children with valid foster care orders.
✓ Alternative care services	✓ Number of children placed in foster care.
	✓ Number of children placed in temporary safe care with private persons
	✓ Number of children placed in Child and Youth Care Centers.
✓ Reunification of children	✓ Number of children in CYCCs re-unified with their families
✓ After care	✓ Number of family members receiving after care services
✓ Mediation services	✓ Number of family members receiving mediation services
✓ Community outreach services	✓ Number of people reached through community awareness