

Position description

Child Protection Principal Practitioner

OFFICIAL

Department:	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) 'About the Department'
Position title:	Child Protection Principal Practitioner
Position number:	
Branch/Division/Team	
Work location:	
Classification:	CPP6.2
Salary range:	\$157,356 - \$180,117 per annum (plus superannuation)
Employment status:	Ongoing / Fixed Term Full-time (76 hours per fortnight) / Part-Time options available
Position reports to:	Area Operations Manager or Director, Child Protection
Position contact:	
Closing Date:	Midnight,

Role

The aim of the Principal Practitioner is to strengthen the skills and knowledge of child protection practitioners and build a child-focussed family-centred practice culture that integrates evidence from research and critical reflection. The Principal Practitioner will undertake specialist assessments and interventions, case reviews, appeals and maintain case records, visit children, their parents, families and carers, and other professionals involved with clients of Child Protection.

The Principal Practitioner will provide high level expertise and offer secondary consultation and live supervision; facilitate staff mentoring and practice development; and provide leadership in the implementation of continuous improvement strategies based on clinical best practice.

The transportation of children is a requirement of this role, as such a valid drivers licence and willingness to travel, including in country regions is essential. There may be the requirement to work overnight and, travel in evenings and early mornings.

You will possess an understanding of Aboriginal culture and demonstrate an understanding of the legislative, policy and practice requirements relating to Aboriginal children, families, and communities, including the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle and the programs and initiatives that support its implementation in child protection practice.

About Child Protection

Being a part of the child protection team means making a real change to the lives of others, keeping families safe and strong. The work of a Child Protection Practitioner is complex, challenging, and rewarding. Practitioners need to have specialist child welfare knowledge and the ability to engage children, young people and their families.

Practitioners work in a statutory environment where they must exercise legal delegations and functions pursuant to the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic). The statutory nature of the work requires working with families and children in the family home or other locations and the transportation and the supervision on contact.

The Act provides the legislative mandate for the department to protect children and young people from abuse and neglect using best interest principles, decision-making principles. This mandate involves:

- receiving reports
- conducting investigations
- intervening if it is assessed that a child needs care and protection
- taking matters before the Children’s Court
- supervising children on child protection orders
- determining case plans (including stability plans, cultural plans and therapeutic treatment plans) for the safety and wellbeing of children, and
- delivering case practice and case management services for children and young people who are either living with family or in out of home care

For more information about Child Protection please visit [Home | Child Protection Jobs - DFFH](#)

Qualifications

Mandatory

- A recognised Social Work degree or a similar welfare or behavioural related degree, OR
- A combination of qualifications and experience that meet the child protection qualification framework requirement. Further information can be found at Child Protection Qualifications Framework assessments and further information on Recognised degrees here (<https://childprotectionjobs.dffh.vic.gov.au/roles/requirements>)
- A valid driver’s licence is required
- A current Employee Working with Children Check (WWCC) card required

Capabilities and accountabilities

Domain of practice	Core Capabilities and accountabilities
Critical assessment and reflection	<p>Risk assessment and analysis: proactively identifies and analyses patterns associated with risk assessment and articulates this expert analysis to support and extends practitioner skills</p> <p>Case planning review and case management: effectively makes decisions in context of review and appeals and analyses case management across the team</p> <p>Critical inquiry: implements strategies for continuous improvement in using evidence-based frameworks across teams, programs and practice; displays broad thinking, drawing on research and literature to support evidence-informed practice</p>

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	<p>Standardised reporting: has expertise in utilising information for the purpose of providing and interpreting standardised reports.</p> <p>Reflective Practice: promotes practice quality and consistency through practical solutions to time-management issues and prioritising reflective practice for practitioners.</p>
Engaging others	<p>Child-centred and family-focused relationship-based practice: provides expert advice on best practice and supervision to drive child-centred and family focused practice.</p> <p>Collaboration: strategically collaborates with internal and external colleagues and stakeholders to improve operational plans and processes</p> <p>Knowledge sharing: proactively seeks out multiple stakeholders to maintain rapport, build trust and create the opportunity for information exchange.</p>
Delivering results	<p>Problem solving: using data to effectively identify trends and provide constructive divisional and statewide perspectives to issue identification and resolution.</p> <p>Culturally informed practice and safety: demonstrates culturally informed practice that is focused on the child in the context of their family and culture.</p>
Leading and Inspiring	<p>Practice Leadership: educates, mentors, coach's and supervises staff on a range of practice topics including case supervision and consultation.</p> <p>Collective leadership: mentors and motivates employees at all levels to broaden their perspective and develop leadership skills. Actively participates in area-based child protection leadership teams</p> <p>Developing others: encourages and models ongoing learning, promoting the need for gaining new knowledge, insights and skills.</p> <p>System leadership: creates a climate of service and practice excellence by challenging and supporting others to deliver outstanding service.</p>
Additional accountabilities	
<p>You will keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's records, information security and privacy policies and requirements.</p> <p>Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for that of others in the workplace by working in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's occupational health and safety (OHS) policies and procedures.</p>	

Key selection criteria

Specialist expertise

- Expert understanding and ability to embed the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) in practice, including the core responsibilities and principles of the Act.
- Works confidently with families and exhibits expert understanding of the legislative, policy, and practice requirements relating to family violence and to families impacted by drug and/or alcohol abuse and is able to apply these skills in practice.

Knowledge and skills

1. **Written communication:** Prepares complex briefs, letters, emails and reports using clear, concise and grammatically correct language; edits written communications to ensure they contain the information necessary to achieve their purpose and meet audience needs; ensures appropriate style and formats are used. Writes professionally and convincingly.
2. **Influence and Negotiation:** Gains agreement to proposals and ideas; builds behind-the-scenes support for ideas to ensure buy-in and ownership; uses chains of indirect influence to achieve outcomes.
3. **Leadership:** Builds team commitment by demonstrating personal conviction; translates organisational strategy into meaningful long-term plans and objectives for own area of responsibility; motivates others to deliver against goals. Use specialist practical and operational knowledge and clinical experience in areas relevant to child protection practice.
4. **Problem solving:** Seeks all relevant information for problem-solving; liaises with stakeholders; analyses issues from different perspectives and draws sound inferences from information available; identifies and proposes workable solutions to problems; implements solutions, evaluates effectiveness and adjusts actions as required.

Personal qualities

5. **Adaptable:** is flexible and adaptable to change and integrates new information as a matter of course.
6. **Decisive:** Takes rational and sound decisions based on a consideration of the facts and alternatives; makes tough decisions, sometimes with incomplete information; evaluates rational and emotional elements of situations; makes quick decisions where required; commits to a definite course of action.
7. **Self-Discipline:** Maintains a consistent and sensible pattern of behaviour under pressure; recognises and restrains inappropriate emotions during a situation or interaction; recognises own limitations and works with others to ensure plans are achieved.
8. **Resilient:** Perseveres to achieve goals, even in the face of obstacles; copes effectively with setbacks and disappointments; remains calm and in control under pressure; accepts constructive criticism in an objective manner, without becoming defensive.

Values and behaviours

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing employees are required to demonstrate commitment to:

The public sector values and behaviours – responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights.

Recordkeeping – The department is committed to good record keeping and requires all staff to routinely create and keep full and accurate records of their work-related activities, transactions and decisions, using authorised systems.

Diversity – The department values an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity and strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal people, people with disability, people from the LGBTQIA+ community, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Important information

The salary range for this position is set out in Schedule B of the *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2024* or its successor. For further information refer to [Department of Treasury and Finance](#).

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Department policy stipulates that salary upon commencement is paid at the base of the salary range for the relevant grade except unless specified under the VPS Agreement. An executive delegate must approve any above base requests. These will be by exception only or where required to match the current salary of a Victorian Public Service staff transferring at-level.

Individuals who have received a Voluntary Departure Package from a Victoria Public Service department/agency are ineligible for re-employment for a minimum of three calendar years from the date of separation.

Individuals who have received an Early Retirement Package (ERP) from a Victoria Public Service department/agency are ineligible for re-employment for a minimum of 12 months from the date of separation.

Individuals who have received an Application Separation Package (ASP) from a Victoria Public Service department/agency are ineligible for re-employment for a minimum of 18 months from the date of separation.

The department is a key emergency management partner and contributes significantly to Victoria's emergency management arrangements. As part of a whole-of-government agreement, employees may be required to undertake training in emergency management and support functions during an emergency and may be redeployed to facilitate this need.

The department provides and maintains a safe working environment that does not risk the health of its employees.

Pre-employment checks

All appointments require reference checks, national criminal records checks and pre-employment misconduct screening. All child protection positions require an employee Working with Children Check clearance with some also requiring screening through the Disability Worker Exclusion List.

Applicants who have, in the last 10 years, lived overseas for 12 months or longer in one country must provide an international police check from the relevant overseas police agency. Further information is available on the Department of Home Affairs website 'character and policy certificate requirements' page. Alternatively, applicants can obtain a check through an organisation providing international police checks via an internet search.

Vaccination Requirements Policy

The department strongly recommends (but does not mandate) that employees maintain their COVID-19 vaccination status in accordance with current ATAGI (Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation) advice, given their individual circumstances. As of June 2023, DFFH does not require evidence of COVID-19 vaccination status.

Further information

For enquiries regarding the position please phone the contact on the position description. If you experience difficulties in applying online, please contact HR Divisional via email at HRDivisional@dffh.vic.gov.au

DFFH values the contribution of all employees and fair and equitable treatment of all people is integral to all activities. As such, the DFFH offers reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities on request at aboriginaldiversityinclusion@dffh.vic.gov.au

For further information visit '[About the Department](http://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/about)' on [Department of Families, Fairness and Housing](http://www.dffh.vic.gov.au)' <www.dffh.vic.gov.au/about>.

To receive this document in another format email HRDivisional@dffh.vic.gov.au

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program, or quotation.