

# NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care

## What's changed

### About the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG)

The OCG is an independent, statutory authority committed to delivering better outcomes for children and young people living in statutory out-of-home care (SOOHC). The OCG is a regulator – not a provider of care services.

We accredit and monitor the performance of agencies that arrange statutory and supported OOHC and adoption services. The OCG also administers the Carer's Register for the purpose of authorising individuals to provide statutory and supported OOHC. We also register and monitor agencies that provide, arrange, or supervise voluntary OOHC.

### The NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care 2015 replace the Statutory Out-of-Home Care Standards and the Adoption Standards and are effective from 1 December 2015

The out-of-home care and adoption standards have been merged to create one set of standards which support a dual accreditation process for agencies choosing to provide both SOOHC and Adoption services. The Standards have been updated to provide a greater focus on achieving permanency for children and young people. This focus supports the NSW Government's Safe Home for Life Child Protection Reforms. Amendments to the *Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act 1998* introduced a hierarchy for planning for permanency.

The following options must be considered for all placement decisions for children and young people in care

- Restoration
- Guardianship
- Adoption
- PR to the Minister under long-term orders

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, PR to the Minister under long term orders comes before Adoption in the hierarchy

### Other changes in the Standards

- Case plans to include a permanent placement plan for each child and young person
- Staff and carers to receive training on child protection and child safety
- Agencies to set clear expectations regarding the behaviour and conduct of staff and carers
- Placements of children under 12 years of age in residential care require a documented rationale, aligned with the child's permanent placement plan
- Agencies are to have a clear protocol for the involvement of police as a response to children and young people's behaviour
- Placement reviews to be conducted where a carer refuses respite or other supports, where the agency has deemed respite or other supports necessary

- Staff and carers to have an understanding of the effects of past experiences on children and young people's behaviour
- Agencies to have a process for dual authorisation of carers for foster care and adoption (where relevant)
- Staff in the care environment are to be allocated in a manner that supports continuity of care and relationships
- Governing authorities to have access to OOHC and/or adoption expertise
- Governing authorities to undertake an assessment of capacity before expanding service provision
- Agencies to have appropriate spaces for confidential discussions
- Safety assessments of care environments to be ongoing and include swimming pools and outdoor areas
- Agencies to have clear processes for responding to WWCC bars for all relevant roles within the organisation

### **Where to get the Standards**

Copies of the *NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care 2015* are available on the Office of the Children's Guardian's website [www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au)

Copies of the previous standards, the *Statutory Out-of-Home Care Standards 2010* and the *Adoption Standards* are available by emailing the Accreditation Team on [accreditation@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au](mailto:accreditation@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au)