

FACT SHEET

Rights of Carers

Carers providing a service to children under the custody or guardianship of the Secretary of the Department of Communities, have the right to be treated with **respect, fairness, and integrity**.

They have the right to know what is happening and to participate in the development of plans that affect them, their family or the child for whom they are providing care.

While the safety, wellbeing and overall best interests of the child for whom they are caring must come first, carers have a right to:

- be provided with information, training and ongoing support sufficient to enable them to understand the legislative and practice frameworks in which they provide care on behalf of the state (through the Department of Communities Tasmania);
- be reimbursed in an equitable manner in accordance with agreed funding arrangements;
- be regarded as a key partner in the shared caring of a child or young person who has entered state care as a result of abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse;
- be fully informed about the purpose of the intervention by Child Safety Service that has brought the child or young person into care;
- understand the safety and risk judgements made by Child Safety Service staff following their risk assessment (conducted in accordance with the Tasmanian Risk Framework) where this does not compromise confidentiality of the child and family;
- be provided with appropriate support in the establishment of a cooperative and collaborative relationship with the child's family wherever this is possible and safe for all concerned;
- be actively included in planning and decision-making processes including Case and Care Planning processes and Family Group Conferences (FGC's) in circumstances where a collaborative relationship has been established with the family and it is considered safe and productive for such involvement to take place;
- privacy and confidentiality in relation to matters of the personal lives of the carer and his or her family which are not related to the care and protection of the child or young person in care;



- proactive training and support to establish an overtly 'child safe' environment within their home and other strategies to reduce the likelihood of allegations of abuse in care being made against them;
- swift, fair and equitable treatment in the event of complaints in care being made against them to rapidly resolve the matter;
- support during any investigation of a complaint in care from the Department and access to any other specialist support, such as through the Foster and Kinship Carers Association Tasmania (FKAT); and
- de-briefing and counselling, at no cost to the carer, as well as appropriate information provision or re-training following the outcome of any allegation and/or investigation if the carer has not been deemed unfit to care and de-registered by Communities Tasmania.