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| Residential care audit program:  Desktop reviews |
| Fact sheet for Community Service Organisations |

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in out of home care.

The Compliance and Quality Audit Team (C&Q) within the Operational, Performance and Quality Group commenced audits of residential care programs in April 2015. Due to the emergence of COVID-19 the onsite audits were suspended in March 2020. This decision was made to reduce the burden on Community Service Organisations (CSOs) while dealing with the current health crisis.

We have now introduced an interim desktop review process. The Desktop review process involves completion of self-assessment tools providing information on how the CSO has addressed core program requirements. Additionally, the desktop review process will assess the requirements outlined in the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Plan for Care Services (Out of Home Care).

## Before the desktop review

Prior to the desktop review, the CSO will receive a notification email asking for a key contact person within the organisation to be nominated who will coordinate provision of evidence for the desktop review. We will ask you to confirm the addresses of the residential units and provide the names, dates of birth and placement date of clients residing at each residential unit. Additionally, copies of the staff roster and the residential unit’s evacuation plan will also be requested.

## Desktop review - audit methodology

The audit comprises five parts:

Part A – ‘virtual’ walk around and inspection of property

Part B – staff questions

Part C – client file self-assessment

Part D – additional documentation

Part E – staff file self-assessment.

In conjunction with the audit staff will be provided information regarding the ‘Your Voice’ application and clients will be offered the opportunity to provide feedback to the auditors via a web-based platform.

#### Part A ‘Virtual’ walk around and inspection of property

In the absence of auditors being on-site, CSO staff will work with auditors to complete a virtual walk around of the property. This can be completed with CSO staff using a laptop/tablet/IPAD while connected to auditors via Microsoft TEAMS or Zoom. Auditors will inspect the property as per an on-site audit inspecting rooms, living areas etc... Approximately 45 minutes is required to complete the property inspection.

#### Part B Staff questions

As per a regular onsite audit, auditors will ask residential care workers a series of questions in line with program requirements. This can be completed with staff via Microsoft TEAMS or Zoom. Approximately one hour is required to complete the staff questions.

#### Part C Client file self-assessment

CSO staff will complete a client file self-assessment tool for the clients at the residential unit. The self-assessment tool comprises standard requirements auditors typically review such as LAC documentation, health assessments, behaviour support/management plans and education status. Copies of client documentation will be requested.

#### Part D Additional documentation

CSO staff will provide documentation auditors typically review at an on-site audit such as copies of medication administration records for clients, fire drill records, Overnight safety plans and restrictive practice documentation.

#### Part E Staff file self-assessment

CSO staff will complete a staff file self-assessment (based on a sample of staff working at the residential unit as selected by auditors). The self-assessment tool covers the standard safety screening, training and pre-employment checks that auditors would review for an on-site audit.

## Desktop review – timelines

The notification letter will have a date specified for the virtual audit and the auditors will organise a time with the nominated contact person to conduct the virtual inspection of the property and complete the staff questions component. CSOs will have five working days from the virtual audit to complete the client and staff self-assessment tools and provide additional documentation.

## After the review

A report will be provided to the CSO within two weeks of the desktop review being completed. The current ratings system will be applied in the desktop review where a CSO is assessed as compliant or non-compliant with each criterion. All CSOs start the audit with the premise of 100 per cent compliance. Where non-compliance is identified, points are deducted. The total score out of 100 is converted to a percentage and awarded a rating (Level 1–4). Where the desktop review identifies non-compliance, the CSO will be asked to submit an Action Plan addressing the non-compliance within two weeks to C&Q. The audit team will review the Action Plan to confirm planned action has been included to address any non-compliance identified via the desktop review process.

The relevant Department Group or Division will be notified of the residential care desktop reviews conducted in their area. A copy of the report and Action Plan will also be shared with the relevant Department group.

## Further information

For any additional information about the foster care program desktop reviews please contact the Compliance and Quality Audit Team.

Please note due to the current remote working arrangements implemented by the department initial contact via email to [candq.audit@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:candq.audit@dhhs.vic.gov.au) is preferred.

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