



**Family &
Community Services**
Community Services

NSW Food Program

Program Guidelines

**Sector Development
Service System Delivery
May 2014**

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1. Legislative framework

Community Services is a division of Family and Community Services (FACS). The Department delivers services to some of the most disadvantaged individuals, families and communities in NSW. FACS enables or assists vulnerable people to participate fully in social and economic life and build stronger, more sustainable inclusive communities.

Community Services is the largest child protection agency in Australia. It has an important role in keeping children and young people safe from harm, helping families stay together and arranging care for children and young people who cannot live at home. Community Services assists children and young people by providing direct support and care to them, their families and communities. Protecting children is its core work.

It operates within the legal framework set by the [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#), the [Community Welfare Act 1987](#) and the [Adoptions Act 2000](#).

Community Services also works to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and to build stronger families and communities. In particular, Community Services helps those who are vulnerable and most in need. It works closely with other government departments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and community to achieve this.

The current hierarchy of documentation within the NSW Food Program is:

- The [Community Welfare Act 1987](#) provides the authority for Community Services to provide 'assistance and support' to organisations to deliver community welfare or social development programs.
- NSW Food Program Guidelines - outlines the objectives, outcomes, activities and performance measures for the program.
- NSW Food Program Service Specification - outlines in detail the activities and results of individual Community Services funded service providers.
- Performance Monitoring Framework - provides the performance monitoring processes and tools to ensure that service results and ongoing improvements are achieved and supports decisions about continuing to fund service providers.

Although the following provisions are aimed at out-of home care (OOHC) providers, it is recommended that this be applied to any service provider that provides services to vulnerable children, young people and their families.

1.1. Probity requirements for board members, leadership personnel and senior managers of OOHC providers

Board members, leadership personnel and senior managers of OOHC providers are not currently required to undergo a Working with Children Check (WWCC) unless they have physical contact or face-to-face contact with children. Therefore, unless board members, leadership personnel and senior managers of OOHC providers have physical contact or face-to-face contact with children they are unable to apply for a WWCC.

Consideration should be given to:

- Requiring board members of NGO's who provide OOHC to undergo probity checking such as criminal record checks and/or reference checks to ensure that they are a suitable person to be sitting on the Board or undertaking a senior manager role within an OOHC provider.
- Requiring OOHC providers to apply to the Children's Guardian to have positions held by board members, leadership personnel and senior managers that are not currently covered by the WWCC (as the position holder does not have physical contact or face-to-face contact with children) approved as additional child-related

work for the purposes of requiring a WWCC. This is available under section 7 of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 which provides that where a worker is not in child-related work, but has access to confidential records or information about children, an employer may seek the approval of the Children's Guardian to have the position approved as additional child-related work for the purposes of requiring a WWCC.

1.2. Principal Officers as authorised carers

Section 137 (1) of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 currently provides that principal officers of designated agencies are deemed to be authorised carers. This occurs without them having to undergo any of the checks that are associated with becoming an authorised carer (home inspections, referee checks etc). Consideration should be given to prohibiting principal officers from caring for children within their home given the inherent conflicts of interest that arise from this role where the principal officer is likely to be the manager or employer of any case manager of the child or young person.

2. Policy directions and commitments

Community Services is in the process of implementing significant reforms in the delivery of services to children, young people and their families in need. This process, including the expansion of the role of non-government organisations (NGOs) in service delivery, must be driven and supported by a system that is both robust and flexible.

NSW State Plan, NSW 2021

The NSW Government's State Plan, NSW 2021, aims to deliver quality services across the priority areas of child wellbeing, homelessness and disabilities. The focus is on collaboration across portfolio areas and with the NGO sector to design and deliver innovative support services where needed.

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS), under the State Government, is responsible for delivering on two goals contained within NSW 2021. The goals are to:

- better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage; and
- increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential.

Community Services Plan 2012 - 2014

As a division of FACS, and in line with NSW 2021, the Community Services Plan 2012 – 2014 articulates Community Services' responsibilities for achieving outcomes and goals that contribute to FACS' goals and the overall aims of the State Government's plan. For Community Services the aim is to improve children's lives by building a stronger child-focussed system. This includes building a system that is flexible and able to respond to the corrosive effects of intergenerational abuse, drug and alcohol misuse, mental health issues, chronic violence in the home and geographic disadvantage. To build a system able to meet these challenges, Community Services' goals for 2012 – 2014 are:

- fewer children and young people are vulnerable to abuse and neglect;
- children and young people at risk of significant harm are safer;
- children and young people in out-of-home care have a better future;
- a capable organisation and service system.

Transition to the NGO sector

The above goals are to be achieved within the context of transferring responsibility for those services directly provided by government, including out-of-home care services, to the non-government sector, the primary provider of direct services. The transition is informed by the Keep Them Safe (KTS) Action Plan, developed following the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in 2008, and has a strong focus on changing practice and systems to improve outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm. A key element of KTS has been the transition of out-of-home care service provision from government to the NGO sector in an effort to better support the needs of children and young people. In particular, the aim is to better support Aboriginal children and families, where culturally appropriate support and capacity building in the NGO sector is most needed.

To achieve this, there is a need for:

- improved coordination of effort and effective sharing of information;
- a shared understanding and a culture of working together;
- training and culture shift to best support children and families;
- revitalised sector partnership for all parties with responsibility for children.

This process, to build the capacity of the non-government NGO sector, must be driven and supported by a system that is both robust and flexible.

Productivity Commission Report

The Productivity Commission Report on the Contribution of the Not-for-Profit (NFP) Sector was released in 2010. The report notes growth in the sector and the need for increased stimulation of productivity, regulation, governance and changes to the funding relationship between government and the sector.

Following from the Productivity Commission Report, the NSW Government submission to the Inquiry noted several key challenges for the Government in relation to transitioning its services and increasing commensurate capacity in the NGO sector. These included:

- supporting capacity, especially in governance, leadership, management and investment to manage sustainable growth in the NGO sector;
- creating a partnership approach where government and NGOs work together to deliver outcomes;
- building a sustainable workforce, undergoing substantial growth and change;
- shifting to innovative funding approaches which encourage client focussed, improved services and better outcomes for people and communities;
- balancing regulation for strengthened outcome focussed accountability without imposing unnecessary administrative burden and detracting from service delivery.

Localisation

The Department of Family and Community Services is improving services and lives through significant, long term reforms. As part of the reform agenda, the management of FACS service delivery is being devolved to a more localised model, bringing together the current local Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care and Housing NSW client services. The model will continue to support the work of the Aboriginal Housing Office and Office for Women.

Localisation supports the NSW Government's focus on Regional Action Plans, outlined in NSW 2021.

In line with this, fifteen new FACS Districts have been created to enable more localised planning and decision making that better integrates services at a local level and responds to community needs. Community Services regional structures have been replaced with local districts which follow local Health District boundaries.

The changes will foster improved local leadership with a stronger connection to frontline staff, local agencies and non government partners - to help put peoples' support needs first. In addition, clients and local communities will have a stronger role in the planning and delivery of local services.

Each District will have responsibility for its housing, disability and community services performance and service planning and development. A key challenge for FACS through localisation is to enable localised planning whilst maintaining the vision and delivering on the performance of its overarching funding programs.

Over the next two years, Community, Early Intervention and Intensive Programs will be undergoing reform with a focus on local need and outcome measurement. There will be many opportunities for funded organisations to be a part of that reform process.

Program guidelines from 1 July 2014 will require funded organisations to address impacts and connections with changes including:

- child protection reforms, as part of a Safe Home For Life
- homelessness reforms, including Going Home Staying Home
- localisation, including the requirement to participate in district plans
- domestic violence reforms, including It Stops Here
- developments in other programs.

3. Program description

The NSW Food Program provides funding to cover costs of transporting food for distribution throughout NSW to support disadvantaged children, individuals, and families and to strengthen disadvantaged communities.

Community Services has administered the NSW Food Program (the Program) since 1 July 2013.

Within the funded amount provided each year, the following goods may be transported under the Program:

- non-perishable food
- perishable food that can be transported without the need for refrigeration.

Large natural disasters of a magnitude such as Bushfires, will not be handled under the Program, but in consultation with State Government under a separate program.

For-profit organisations and individuals are not eligible to participate in the Program.

To be eligible to participate in the Program, an organisation must be one of the following:

- a registered charity under the provisions of the Charitable Collections Act, 1934;
- a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI);
- an exempt body (mainly religious organisations recognised under Section 26 of the Marriage Act 1961).

Participating service providers monitor their own expenditure and are responsible for processing their own payments to the transport company or companies they use. Service providers are required to keep records of all consignment notes and a breakdown of how the expenditure was calculated, to corroborate the requested service result data sets outlined in part 9 of these Program Guidelines.

The NSW Food Program Program Guidelines will be reviewed and updated in line with any major update or revision of the key documents listed in Section 1 and 2 of the Guidelines.

4. Partnership framework

The NSW Government is committed to strong collaboration with the non-government sector to design and deliver services to individuals, carers, and families (State Plan NSW 2021).

With the shift of direct service delivery from the government to the non-government sector there is even greater reliance on the need to develop partnership and shared program governance arrangements, where both government and NGOs share responsibility for program design and service delivery. Community Services acknowledges the importance of a strong and effective service system for ensuring the right services are provided to clients in need.

Community Services is committed to working with the sector to implement the Food Program in a collaborative manner that contributes to strengthening partnerships within the non-government sector.

5. Program results and outcomes

The NSW Food Program supports children, individuals, families and communities to prevent social breakdown. It is designed to contribute to the costs of internal transport for the movement of food.

The overall outcomes for the NSW Food Program are that:

- disadvantaged children, individuals, families and communities have access to food when needed;
- disadvantaged children, individuals, families and communities are strengthened by charitable food projects and initiatives;
- volunteers are involved in providing welfare services and activities in their community.

6. Evidence base

Community Services is committed to a process of continuous improvement for all our programs and activities and the newly developed Contract Governance Framework is an important component of this process for NGOs.

The Contract Governance Framework is aimed at supporting both service providers and contract managers in achieving performance and strengthening relationships in the contracting environment. The Framework consists of four key elements including:

- performance measurement and management;
- achieving performance through understanding the contract documents;
- achieving performance through relationship building;
- managing conflict through negotiation.

The Framework includes the development of guidelines and supporting tools in achieving performance in the work of both contract managers and service providers in their work with children, young people, families and communities.

We need to improve the way we have been delivering our services to find fresh, innovative and properly evaluated ways of managing performance, which provide cost effective ways to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people.

With regard to evidencing the contribution that the NSW Food Program and its funded organisations make to achieving the outcomes of the program, there is scope for applying the individualised evidence base, measurement of performance measures and service results at Section 8: Performance measures and service results and the performance measures being introduced under the Contract Governance Framework to inform the evidence base for the program.

7. Target Group

Community Services funds or provides services which help make communities more resilient and invests in prevention and early intervention strategies which help families deal with issues before they become crises. In line with this goal, the target group for the Food Program includes:

- disadvantaged children, individuals, families and communities in NSW requiring food, and
- volunteers involved in their community.

8. Service types/activities to be funded

The tables below set out the activities to be delivered under the NSW Food Program.

Activity Components	Service Description	Service Outlet Location/s by LGA
Collection	Food collected from other sources throughout NSW	Metropolitan and Rural NSW
Transportation and Distribution of Food	Food transported to centres for distribution and/or sale throughout NSW.	

9. Performance measures and service results

The table below sets the outcomes/results sought by the NSW Food Program funded organisations and related key performance measures.

Individual service providers will be required to collect and report on data to support the specific performance targets in individually negotiated Program Level Agreements.

Outcomes/Service results	Key Performance Measures	Performance Targets	Data Set	Source
Disadvantaged children, individuals, families and communities have access to food when needed	Proportion of goods transported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan NSW • Rural NSW 		Percentage of goods transported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan NSW = <%> • Rural NSW = <%> 	Individual Service Provider
Disadvantaged children, individuals, families and communities are strengthened by food projects and initiatives	Provide two examples of how communities have been strengthened by food projects and initiatives.		Provide two examples of how communities have been strengthened by food projects and initiatives = <2 examples>	Individual Service Provider
Volunteers are involved in providing welfare services and activities in their community	Number of volunteers involved in provision of Program.		Number of volunteers involved in provision of Program = <number>	Individual Service Provider

10. Identification of data collection strategies

Until an electronic data reporting system is established for the program, data collection will be a manual quarterly data report against the specific outcomes detailed in the organisation's Program Level Agreement.

Data collection requirements will comply with the target from the State Government's NSW 2021 plan to reduce red tape in line with the plan's goal: *To increase the Competitiveness of Doing Business in NSW.*

11. Program Logic

The following results logic diagram places the program results within a goal hierarchy.

