

Department of Health & Human Services

Position Description

Senior Child Protection Practitioner, Community Based

In the context of a whole of community approach, Senior Child Protection Practitioners have a specific statutory role in protecting children and young people from harm and promoting their rights and healthy development.

Are you

- Committed to working with children, young people and families?
- Able to effectively engage to provide families with the optimum capacity for change?
- Continually improving your skills and knowledge to further develop your professional practice?

This role may at times be required to operate outside normal office hours (at night and on weekends and public holidays) with relevant overtime or time in lieu provisions applying.

Title	Senior Child Protection Practitioner, (Community Based)
Classification	CPP 5.1
Team, unit	Children, Youth and Families
Branch/area/region Division	Child Protection
Work location	Various (metropolitan and rural locations across Victoria)
Position number	DHHS/CPP5.1
Employment type	Ongoing /Fixed Term - Full time (76 hours per fortnight)
Salary range	Value range 1 from \$93,867.00 – \$103,719.00* (*subject to Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2016 increase)
Position reports to	Team Manager, Support & Safety Hubs
Further information	Email: childprotectionjobs@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Organisational environment

We aspire for all Victorians to be healthy, safe and able to lead a life they value. We deliver policies, programs and services that support and enhance the health and wellbeing of all Victorians.

We are building an inclusive workplace that embraces respect, diversity and difference. All jobs can be worked flexibly and we actively encourage job applications from Aboriginal people, people living with disability, LGBTI and people from varied cultural backgrounds.

The department is committed to the safety of its clients and staff, taking a zero tolerance approach to violence within the workplace, abuse, including child abuse and abuse of people with disability. All staff are required to comply with the Child Safe Standards

The department recognises the rights of all staff to be free from violence and gender- related discrimination. We are proudly working with *White Ribbon* to create a safer workplace.



Purpose and accountability

Purpose *

The Senior Child Protection Practitioner (Community Based) is an outposted child protection position that will work as a part of a team from the Support and Safety Hub (Hubs) in the local area. The position will report to the Team Manager (Support and Safety Hubs). The position will be required to, at times, attend the local Child Protection office for child protection related activities and meetings.

Working within a multi-disciplinary setting, the SPP (Community Based) will provide expert advice, support and consultation to Hubs staff, as well as to Family Services, Specialist Family Violence Services and Men's Services, where there are significant concerns for the wellbeing of children and young people. The position will work collaboratively with the services to support earlier and more effective intervention to vulnerable children, young people and their families and, where required, support the engagement of families with services. Work will include direct involvement with unborn children, when there is a high likelihood of child protection intervention post birth.

The position will also be required to contribute to the development and delivery of community education to agencies regarding child protection statutory processes and responsibilities.

**Support and Safety Hubs will be implemented across Victoria, commencing early 2018. For Senior Child Protection Practitioner (Community Based) positions that are not yet located in a Support and Safety Hub site, the purpose of the role will be as above, but working alongside Child FIRST and Family Services in the local area. Prior to Hub roll out in the local area, this position will not be required to provide advice, support and consultation to Specialist Family Violence Services or Men's Services.*

Accountabilities/Core Capabilities

At this level, the role is developing a reputation as an expert in these capabilities and has consistently demonstrated these capabilities in all settings/ situations. Actively coaches colleagues in the application, theory and practice relating to these capabilities; engages and leads both colleagues and clients in these capabilities.

1. Critical Assessment and Reflection

- 1.1 Risk assessment and analysis - gathers information through a variety of sources and technologies in order to identify, articulate, and plan for the risks relating to each situation. Applies a strong forensic lens, and professional judgement, to analyse the available evidence.
- 1.2 Case planning review and case management - draws insights from assessment and analysis to formulate a meaningful and effective case plan, and reviews case progress and outcomes. Co-ordinates and leads the planning, review, and management of casework within DHHS and across other agencies and services.
- 1.3 Critical enquiry - uses evidence based frameworks to investigate issues, and is able to understand the root cause of each issue as well as the potential implications.
- 1.4 Standardised reporting - uses standardised reporting frameworks when recording case data, and when documenting care solutions provided.
- 1.5 Reflective practice - critically reflects on what they are doing in their role, and uses this reflection to influence their practice.

2. Engaging Others

- 2.1 Child centred and family focused relationship based practice - focuses on the child and incorporates the family and social network, to deliver timely and proactive solutions.
- 2.2 Collaboration - engages, consults, and co-designs solutions with children and their families, other practitioners and teams, agencies, services and the community, in order to deliver the best outcomes for children and their families.
- 2.3 Knowledge sharing - exchanging critical information across the system, both internally and externally, to ensure shared understanding, and timely and appropriate action for clients.

3. Delivering Results

- 3.1 Problem solving - integrates knowledge and internal insight with leading practice and research to address problems.
- 3.2 Culturally informed practice and safety - understands and applies culturally informed practice that is focused on the child in the context of their family, in a way that considers situations, activities, decisions, and outcomes from the perspective of each stakeholder's cultural background.
- 3.3 Business operations - effectively uses business technology, systems, procedures, and financial and political nous, to achieve the best outcome(s) for clients.
- 3.4 Evaluating and delivering program improvements - works with colleagues and key stakeholder to evaluate programs, identify opportunities, develop solutions, and identify and overcome barriers to continuously improve program outcomes.
- 3.5 Packaging of support - is able to effectively plan for the purchasing of services, manage budgets, and allocate finances, to achieve the best outcome(s).

4. Leading and Inspiring

- 4.1 Practice leadership - leads children, families, and stakeholders through child protection assessment and decision making in an open, informed, proactive, and assertive manner.
- 4.2 Collective leadership - demonstrates how to team with colleagues, in order to provide staff with a deeper meaning and value, as well as a strong leadership team.

- 4.3 Developing others - Coaches, guides, and shares knowledge with colleagues to encourage learning and reflection.
- 4.4 System leadership - drives relationships and effective working within DHHS and across other systems, to create a shared purpose, improve standards, and challenge the status quo.

5 Role Specific Accountabilities **

- 5.1 Provide expert advice, support and consultation to staff within Support and Safety Hubs, as well as to Family Services, Specialist Family Violence Services and Men’s Services, where there are significant concerns for the wellbeing of children and young people. Within this, the position will be required to model leadership in a range of areas including knowledge of legislation, policy and procedure, the application of the Best Interest Case Practice Model and the ability to think critically and analytically to achieve best outcomes for children and families.
- 5.2 Work collaboratively with relevant services to support earlier and more effective intervention to vulnerable children, young people and their families and, where required, support the engagement of families with services.
- 5.3 Commensurate with their other duties, the position will carry a caseload, which will generally consist of having direct involvement with unborn children when there is a high likelihood of child protection intervention post birth, or cases transitioning between child protection and Family Services and/or Family Violence Services.

*** Support and Safety Hubs will be implemented across Victoria, commencing early 2018. For Senior Child Protection Practitioner (Community Based) positions that are not yet located in a Support and Safety Hub site, the purpose of the role will be as above, but working alongside Child FIRST and Family Services in the local area. Prior to Hub roll out in the local area, this position will not be required to provide advice, support and consultation to Specialist Family Violence Services or Men’s Services.*

Selection criteria

Knowledge and skills

- 1. Understands child development - Identifies normal developmental stages within a child’s life, and understands attachment and trauma theories as they relate to child protection practice.
- 2. Identifies risks to children – identifies factors that place a child at risk of abuse or neglect and articulates this risk verbally and in writing to a range of stakeholders including parent, children and other professionals.
- 3. Understands the legislative and statutory framework - understands and embeds the Child Youth and Families Act (2005) in practice, including the core responsibilities and principles of the Act.
- 4. Works confidently with families impacted by drug and alcohol abuse - demonstrates an understanding of the legislative, policy, and practice requirements relating to families impacted by drug and/or alcohol abuse, and is able to apply these skills in practice.
- 5. Works confidently with families impacted by family violence – demonstrates an understanding of the legislative, policy, and practice requirements relating to family violence and is able to apply these skills in practice.
- 6. Works confidently with Aboriginal children and families - demonstrates an understanding of the legislative, policy and practice requirements relating to Aboriginal children, families, and communities and the ability to apply case practice and decision-making.
- 7. Operates effectively in a fast-paced and changing environment - operates effectively and delivers results in fast-paced, an ambiguous and changing environment.

8. Confidently prepares for court - initiates, prepares, and presents in Children's Court, or other tribunals.
9. Communicates risk and risk-related concepts verbally - confidently conveys ideas and information in a clear and interesting way. Understands and meets the needs of target audiences (delivers the right information to the right people). Welcomes constructive feedback. Sees things from other's points of view and confirms understanding.
10. Writes professionally and convincingly - 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.

Personal qualities

1. **Adaptable:** Is flexible and adaptable to change, and accepts and integrates new information as a matter of course.
2. **Decisive:** Makes rational and sound decisions based on consideration of the facts and alternatives.
3. **Emotionally regulated:** Regulates emotions in the face of distressing and alarming circumstances, to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for clients.
4. **Resilient:** Responds thoughtfully and reflectively to distressing information, appropriately seeks guidance and support, communicates effectively with others to undertake child centred work in the face of challenging situations.
5. **Open and curious:** Adopts an open and curious approach to child protection work
6. **Takes initiative:** Works proactively in creating solutions and solving problems

Safety screening

- All applicants are subject to a National Police History Check.
- Applicants who have lived overseas for 12 months or longer during the past 10 years are required to provide the results of an international police check.

Qualifications

Mandatory

- A recognised Social Work degree or a similar welfare or behavioural related degree which includes:
 - (a) a primary focus on child development, human behaviour, family dynamics and/or impacts of trauma; and preferably
 - (b) a practical component such as counselling or case work practice

or

- A recognised Diploma of Community Services Work, or similar qualification which is studied over a minimum of two academic years of full-time study (or part time equivalent) and includes:
 - (a) a primary focus on child development, human behaviour, family dynamics and/or impacts of trauma
 - (b) supervised fieldwork placements (ideally completed within the child and family welfare sector) and at least one unit of study in case management, case work practice or counselling

and

- A valid driver's licence.
- A current Working with Children Check (WWCC) card.

Conditions and benefits

People who work for the department must comply with the *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees 2007* and agree to work according to our values of quality, collaborative relationships, responsibility, client focus, professional integrity and respect.

Employees of the Department of Health & Human Services can enjoy a range of generous Victorian Government employment benefits. These include attractive salaries, flexible leave arrangements and training and development opportunities. Please see www.careers.vic.gov.au/why/benefits-conditions

The department promotes diversity and equal opportunity in employment. If you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicant, or if you have a disability, and require advice and support with the recruitment process, please contact our Diversity Unit on DiversityInclusion@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

How and where to apply

The Department of Health & Human Services prefers job applications submitted electronically to best manage administrative and environmental resources. If you are unable to apply online, please follow the instructions below to submit a paper copy.

- Online – existing staff: click through to the job opportunities page from the department's intranet homepage.
- Online – external applicants: visit the job search page at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/childprotectionjobs>
- Paper copy – all applicants: complete a Hard Copy Application for Employment form available via the links above or the contact for further information noted on page 1 of this document. Paper applications should quote the job reference number on the outside of the envelope and be posted to: Recruitment Officer, Department of Health & Human Services, Level 5, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000.
- If you are unable to apply online or having difficulties accessing the information online, email childprotectionjobs@dhhs.vic.gov.au for assistance.

Other relevant information

For other important information about the recruitment process, please read the department's Information for applicants page at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/our-organisation/careers/applying-for-a-job/information-for-applicants or request a copy from the contact for further information listed under the 'Position details' section of this document.