

Department of Health & Human Services

Position Description

Principal Child Protection Practitioner (Expert 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. Rural employees may be required to participate in an on call roster.

Title	Principal Child Protection Practitioner (Expert Practice)
Classification	CPP 6
Team, unit	Children, Youth & Families
Branch/area/region Division	Child Protection
Work location	Various (metropolitan and rural locations across Victoria)
Position number	DHHS/CPP6
Employment type	Ongoing. Full-time (76 hours per fortnight) / part-time available
Salary range	Value range 1: \$116,863 - \$136,626 plus superannuation Value range 2: \$136,627 - \$156,389 plus superannuation
Position reports to	Director, Child Protection
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 Principal Child Protection Principal Practitioner has a primary aim to strengthen the skills and knowledge of child protection practitioners and build a child focussed family centred practice culture that integrates evidence from research and critical reflection.

Accountabilities/Core Capabilities

At this level, the role has significant and deep experience applying this capability, and is recognised around the state as an expert in applying this capability with both colleagues and external stakeholders. Strategically plans for how colleagues/staff can continue to develop in this area, and successfully operationalise these plans.

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.

Role Specific Accountabilities

5. Provide practice leadership, undertake specialist assessments, case reviews and interventions, visit children, their parents, families and carers and other professionals involved with clients of Child Protection.
6. Offer secondary consultation and live supervision; maintain case records.
7. Support child protection practitioners, facilitate staff mentoring and practice development and provide leadership in the implementation of continuous improvement strategies based on clinical best practice.

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 competitive applicants are subject to a satisfactory National Police History Check as part of the recruitment assessment process.
- 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. Applicants should contact the relevant overseas police force to obtain this and submit as part of their application. Details of overseas police agencies are available on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website (www.immi.gov.au) and search under 'Character and Police Certificate Requirements – How do I obtain a police certificate?'.
- Safety screening will include checking whether your name is on the Disability Worker Exclusion List (DWEL) maintained by the Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme Unit (DWESU). The DWEL includes names of persons unsuitable for employment as a disability support worker in a disability residential service provided, funded or registered by the Department of Health & Human Services.

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 Employee Working with Children Check (WWCC) card is required and will need to be provided prior to commencement of employment by the applicant. Currency will need to be maintained by the employee for the period of employment.

Desirable

- Significant operational knowledge and a strong understanding of child protection practice and Victorian child protection legislation and policy.
- Specialist practice knowledge of and clinical experience in areas relevant to child protection work such as child development and the impact of trauma, clinical work with children, young people and families, mental health, drug and alcohol, family violence, sexual assault, and disability.
- Post graduate qualification in child adolescent and family practice, family therapy or working towards completion of such a qualification.

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@dhs.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.