



JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE OF POSITION	Foster Care Case Worker
CLASSIFICATION LEVEL	LC Level 4 (<i>Salary Packaging available</i>)
PROGRAM	Foster Care Services, Specialist Care Team

OVERVIEW

Lutheran Care provides community services on behalf of the Lutheran Church in South Australia and Northern Territory through a range of programs. We support communities through responding to the needs of individuals and families, community development, learning opportunities, accommodation and support. Current programs include emergency relief, financial counselling, family support and education, foster care, housing and family shelter and refugee services.

Our Foster Care Service (FCS) is funded through the Department for Child Protection (DCP) to provide family based foster care services in the SA Metropolitan North, South, West, and East, the Adelaide Hills, the Barossa and the Murray/Mallee regions. Our Specialist Care Program offers trauma and attachment informed specialist family-based care to children and young people with complex needs, who require a higher level of care than generalist foster care. This includes children living with complex medical conditions, disability, learning and communication difficulties, and/or pervasive emotional and behaviour regulation challenges. Through comprehensive training, assessment and intensive support tailored to the child's care needs, our Specialist Care Program equips carer families with the knowledge and skills needed to care for children with complex needs, alongside maintaining their own wellbeing.

ROLE SUMMARY

Foster Care Case Workers practice from a trauma informed, therapeutic framework to provide assessment, training, support and advocacy to foster care households, with the safety and wellbeing of children in care at the centre. LC is dedicated to stable placements for children and providing quality carer supports to equip and support families to not only meet the needs of the children and young people in their care but to facilitate environments in which they can thrive.

The Foster Care Case Worker role in the Specialist Care Team involves providing intensive case work support to a caseload of Specialist Care Households. Skills and ability to work remotely with limited supervision, undertake travel for regular home visits with foster carers and to other locations for intra and interagency meetings is required, as well as working outside normal office hours.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Foster Care Case Worker reports to the Team Leader.

CORE BEHAVIOURS/RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE:	LC STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:
Lutheran Care Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model ethical behaviour and practice consistent with the Christian ethos of Lutheran Care as outlined in the Code of Conduct and stated values. ▪ Adhere to and support LC's policies and procedures.
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to maintaining a supportive team environment by communicating with team members, staff and volunteers in a positive and encouraging manner. ▪ Support LC's senior management team's decisions and ensure that instructions are carried out. ▪ Alert the site manager to any emerging issues or critical incidents that may impact upon the growth, stability and sustainability of the relevant program/work area(s). ▪ Attend and actively participate in regular team meetings and forums as required. ▪ Report to the supervisor as required.
Work Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a safe and healthy workplace, identify and act upon potential workplace hazards and identify and implement procedures to manage and minimise risks within your team environment. ▪ Promote and adhere to LC's Work Health and Safety Guidelines.
Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage resources and risks efficiently and effectively. ▪ Work within established or negotiated financial and time constraints
Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to the delivery of high quality services. Understand and support continuous quality improvement in Lutheran Care.

CORE BEHAVIOURS/RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE:	RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES SPECIFIC TO THE ROLE:
Case management of carer applicants and/or approved carer households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage a case load of carer households. ▪ Provide case work through assessment, training, support, placement and advocacy. ▪ Maintain regular contact via phone, e-mail, video conferencing and home visits as per agency guidelines. ▪ Maintain required records and up-to-date case notes for quality assurance and data reporting. ▪ Monitor and maintain carer household compliance with mandatory checks, reviews and training.
Supporting Foster Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assist with planning and facilitating of special events and support groups for carers and families. ▪ Conduct annual foster care household reviews and annual reviews. • Participate in the afterhours on-call rostered support of foster carers. • Provide input into case planning with DCP, members of the care team and foster carers. • Support carers to develop and enhance their reflective skills. • Support carers to advocate for their needs and the needs of children in care. • Work collaboratively with families and members of the care team to ensure access to appropriate information, training and services for children in care.
Placement of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the placement co-ordinators with the process of matching and placement of children with approved foster carers as required. • Maintain the required records for children in placement with LC foster carers. • Respond appropriately to DCP's processes for placements. • Liaise with DCP and other members of the care team to ensure the needs of children in care are met. • In collaboration with the child's care team, provide information and support to carers in recognising and therapeutically responding to children's complex care needs, including managing challenging behaviours.
Assessment of foster care applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct thorough, competency-based foster carer assessment reports using the Step By Step assessment tool or an alternative approved assessment tool as directed. • Consult and liaise with internal and external stakeholders as required in the foster care approval process.
Training of foster carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to foster carers on training requirements and schedules. • Support carers to identify, source and participate in advanced training specific to children's needs, including complex medical, disability, learning and/or behavioural needs. • Assist with the development and delivery of high standard competency-based foster carer training. • Facilitate ongoing self-reflection for carers and support to apply learnings to their parenting practices.
Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with facilitating FCS promotional activities. • Assist with development and implementation of foster carer retention initiatives.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND ABILITIES

- Relevant degree, other qualifications or specialist skills to perform at this level.
- Advanced skills in case management, assessment and referral.
- Excellent skills in time management, priority setting, planning and organising own work with limited supervision, to achieve goals.
- Knowledge and understanding of foster care services and the issues facing foster carers.
- A sound knowledge of trauma-informed practice, including the effects of trauma and abuse, attachment issues and complex behaviours in relation to children in care.
- High level of interpersonal skills, including ability to communicate effectively and respectfully in both oral and written communications.
- Strong team work focus with an ability to work independently and demonstrate initiative.
- Ability to analyse information from a range of sources and present information succinctly and effectively.
- Competence in using a personal computer, internet and electronic communications.
- Familiarity with Shared Lives Foster Carer training.
- Ability to follow and comply with agency policies, operating procedures and guidelines.

ATTRIBUTES THAT ARE DESIRABLE, BUT NOT ESSENTIAL:

- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.
- An appreciation of the Lutheran Church values and ethos.
- Experience working with people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
- Knowledge and experience of the NDIS framework and working with children living with a disability.
- Skill and experience in preparing and presenting information for training groups and for reporting to meetings.
- Completion of Step-By-Step assessment familiarisation training and accreditation.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

The successful applicant will be required to complete and maintain a Department for Human Services Working with Children Check Assessment prior to being employed. Further conditions of employment are as follows:

- Have the flexibility to work occasional evenings and weekends.
- Undertake some intra-state and interstate travel.
- Have the skills and ability to work remotely with limited supervision.
- Hold a current Provide First Aid certificate.
- Hold a current Safe Environments for Children and Young People (formerly Child Safe Environments) certificate.
- Hold a current South Australian Driver's Licence.
- Possess a registered roadworthy vehicle available for work use (employees reimbursed for work travel).

Employee: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____