

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE OF POSITION	Foster Care Case Worker – Specialist
CLASSIFICATION LEVEL	Lutheran Care Level 4
PROGRAM	Foster Care Specialist Services

OVERVIEW

Lutheran Care (LC) provides community services 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 disability support. Current programs include emergency relief, financial counselling, family support and education, foster care, homelessness and housing and, NDIS disability services. Lutheran Care is committed to reducing barriers encouraging inclusion and participation in the community of people all ages, genders, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI), Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and those with a disability.

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, East, Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Fleurieu Peninsula and 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.

ROLE SUMMARY

Foster Care Case Workers practice from a trauma informed, therapeutic framework to provide assessment, training, support and advocacy for foster carers to achieve highly successful placements and maximise the well-being 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 in the Specialist Care Team provides intensive 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 Specialist Support Team Leader - Foster Care Services.

CORE BEHAVIOURS/ RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE:	LC STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:
LC Culture	• Model ethical behaviour and practice consistent with the Christian ethos of LC as outlined in the Code of Conduct and stated values. • Adhere to and support LC's policies and procedures. • Comply with professional codes of conduct.
Teamwork	• 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 program 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	• 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	• Meet budgetary requirements. • Maintain records of activities as required for accountability purposes. • Manage resources and risks efficiently and effectively. • Work within established or negotiated financial and time constraints
Continuous Improvement	• Contribute to the delivery of high-quality services. • Understand and support continuous quality improvement in LC.

CORE BEHAVIOURS/RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES SPECIFIC TO THE ROLE:
Case management	• Manage a case load of carer households (1:10). • 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 and contractual 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	• Assist with planning and facilitating of special events and support groups for carers and families. • Conduct foster care household reviews. • Participate in the after-hours 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	• 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.
Training of foster carers	• 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	• 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

- A degree level qualification in Social Work which gives eligibility for full membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers.
- 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 teamwork 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.
- Familiarity with Shared Stories/Shared Lives Foster Carer training.
- Accreditation to facilitate Safe Environments for Children & Young People training.
- Accreditation to facilitate Shared Lives Training
- Experience working with people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Indigenous backgrounds.
- children living with a disability.
- Skill and experience in preparing and presenting information for training groups and for reporting to meetings.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Any offer of employment is subject to;

- A current and satisfactory Department of Human Services Working With Children Check
- A current and satisfactory NDIS Worker Check
- A current and unrestricted Australian Driver's Licence and the ability and willingness to regularly drive in the course of your employment
- Possession of a registered and roadworthy vehicle available for work use (employees reimbursed for work travel)
- Travel throughout the region and/or interstate as required
- Have the flexibility to work occasional evenings and weekends
- Current First Aid certificate
- Safe Environments for Children and Young People certification

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Staff will be consulted over major changes to their position descriptions, however, duties and responsibilities may vary from time to time to maintain "Best Practice" standards of service delivery. You may be assigned other duties as reasonably requested within your level of skills and qualifications.

I have received, reviewed and fully understood the job description. I further understand that I am responsible for the satisfactory execution of the essential functions described therein, under any and all conditions as described.

Employee: _____ Witness: _____ Date: _____