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| Child protection after-hours service 31162 |
| Volume 3: Human services policy and funding plan 2015–19, update 2018–19  Chapter 4: Activity descriptions |

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# Activity information

**Service delivery tracking**

**Service delivery tracking activity? No**

## Output group

Child protection and family services

## Output

Statutory child protection services

# Objective

To provide an after-hours emergency response to children and young people at risk of harm from abuse or neglect, or at risk of exploitation or remand.

# Description of the service

The Central after-hours service (CAHS) includes the After-hours child protection emergency service (AHCPES), the Central after-hours placement service, the Streetwork outreach service (SOS), and the Central after-hours assessment and bail placement service (CAHABPS).

AHCPES is a statewide 24-hour service that operates after business hours and is responsible for matters where a child may be in need of a child protection response and the matter cannot safely be left until the next working day. The AHCPES receives new reports and calls regarding existing clients from the public, professionals and other services. The AHCPES responds only to emergencies, either through direct intervention or coordination by telephone of a response from other community service organisations, services or individuals.

Where it is determined by AHCPES that the child or young person is at significant and immediate risk of harm and that direct intervention is necessary, AHCPES will attend as soon as practicable and assume responsibility for the child protection aspects of the situation. If AHCPES decides that an urgent response is not required, it will forward information to the appropriate divisional child protection office for a response the next working day.

Streetwork outreach service (SOS) provides a child protection service after-hours to young people in the inner city and St Kilda areas who are engaged in high risk activities. The service is based on an assertive, proactive and mobile outreach model provided in areas where young people are known to congregate or where high risk activities are likely to occur. The service activity identifies young people involved with child protection, undertakes risk assessments, and works collaboratively with operational divisional child protection staff and agencies to address the presenting risks. The service also initiates legal intervention when immediate risk of significant harm is identified.

Central after-hours assessment and bail placement service (CAHABPS) undertakes youth justice assessments in relation to bail placement suitability and facilitates bail placements.

The central after-hours placement service (CAHPS) is responsible for after-hours placements in all metropolitan areas. It responds to requests for metropolitan placements from AHCPES, operational divisional child protection (outside business hours), Streetwork outreach service, and the central after-hours assessment and bail placement service.

The CAHS is managed by the Eastern Division. The SOS, CAHABPS and AHCPES metropolitan outreach response occurs from this base. Rural after-hours outreach response capacity is available through each of the rural areas and is coordinated by AHCPES.

# Client group

Children and young people under 17 years at risk of significant and immediate harm as a result of abuse or neglect within the family unit. Children and young people under 18 years subject to protection order. Young people up to the age of 18 years who are at risk of street based exploitation or remand.

Service delivery

Department of Health and Human Services

# Service redevelopment

The department will continue to monitor service provision and, where necessary, may amend service specifications or funding allocations based on community needs or in response to changes to government policy and priorities.

# Monitoring and review

## Service Agreement

The Department of Health and Human Services monitors and reviews the organisation’s compliance with the Service Agreement’s requirements set out in the terms and conditions and schedules including the applicable departmental policies. The Service Agreement is used to manage funding provided through the department for services delivered by community service organisations and local government authorities.

The Service Agreement includes two applicable departmental policies:

* *Department of Health and Human Services policy and funding guidelines*
  + [*Service agreement information kit*](https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/service-agreement-information-kit)<https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/service-agreement-information-kit>.

The *Service agreement information kit* provides information on the Service Agreement terms and conditions (chapter 3) and applicable departmental policies (chapter 4). The *Service agreement information kit* must be read in conjunction with the *Department of Health and Human Services policy and funding guidelines*.

## Human Services Standards

Organisations funded to provide services to clients are required through the Service Agreement to meet the gazetted Department of Health and Human Services Standards (Human Services Standards) and can be monitored in relation to their compliance with these standards.

Organisations funded through this activity are subject to independent review and accreditation requirements under the Human Services Standards, except where exempted by the department.

## Monitoring performance

All internally provided services are monitored monthly by operational staff and senior management.

# Performance measures

## Key performance measure 1: Number of calls to after-hours child protection services

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| **Definition** | This performance measure provides information about the number of calls received. |
| **Aim/objective** | The number of calls received provides a measure of the level of demand and sets the context for performance against other measures. |
| **Target** | Internal service |
| **Type of count** | Cumulative |
| **Counting rule** | Count the total number of calls within the reporting period.  Ensure that Streetwork reports are also included in the count. |
| **Monitoring frequency** | Monthly |
| **Data source(s) collection** | Q-Master source data |
| **Definition of terms** | Child protection services refers to the department’s service that provides child centred, family focussed services to protect children and young people from significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect within the family unit and ensure that clients have access to services to assist them to deal with the impact of abuse or neglect on their wellbeing and development and to address significant concerns about their wellbeing.  After-hours child protection emergency service (AHCPES) refers to the provision of the department’s statewide service (currently operating from the department’s Eastern Division) to receive and respond to reports and to receive and respond to calls regarding existing clients outside of normal working hours. |

## Performance measure 2: Number of calls to be answered within 90 seconds

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| **Definition** | This measure provides information regarding the number of calls answered within a specified time period and is an indicator of the responsiveness of the service. |
| **Aim/objective** | The service must be responsive. |
| **Target** | 80 per cent of calls to be answered within 90 seconds |
| **Type of count** | Not applicable |
| **Counting rule** | Count the number of calls answered and the time taken to answer these calls. Count the number of calls that were answered within 90 seconds. Divide the number of calls answered within 90 seconds by the total number of calls. |
| **Monitoring frequency** | Monthly |
| **Data source(s) collection** | Q-Master source data |
| **Definition of terms** | Child protection services refers to the department’s service that provides child centred, family focussed services to protect children and young people from significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect within the family unit and ensure that clients have access to services to assist them to deal with the impact of abuse or neglect on their wellbeing and development and to address significant concerns about their wellbeing.  After-hours child protection emergency service (AHCPES) refers to the provision of the department’s statewide service (currently operating from department’s Eastern Division) to receive and respond to reports and to receive and respond to calls regarding existing clients outside of normal working hours. |

## Performance measure 3: Percentage of calls answered in 10 minutes

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| --- | --- |
| **Definition** | This measure provides information regarding the number of calls answered within a specified time period and is an indicator of the responsiveness of the service. |
| **Aim/objective** | The service must be responsive. |
| **Target** | 98 per cent of calls to be answered within 10 minutes. |
| **Type of count** | Not applicable |
| **Counting rule** | Count the number of calls answered and the time taken to answer these calls. Count the number of calls that were answered within 10 minutes. Divide the number of calls answered within 10 minutes by the total number of calls. |
| **Monitoring frequency** | Monthly |
| **Data source(s) collection** | Q-Master |
| **Definition of terms** | Child protection services refers to the department’s service that provides child centred, family focussed services to protect children and young people from significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect within the family unit and ensure that clients have access to services to assist them to deal with the impact of abuse or neglect on their wellbeing and development and to address significant concerns about their wellbeing.  After-hours child protection emergency service (AHCPES) refers to the provision of the department’s statewide service (currently operating from department’s Eastern Division) to receive and respond to reports and to receive and respond to calls regarding existing clients outside of normal working hours. |

Data collection information

Data collections comprise data management systems and data sets.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data collection name | Data management system | Data set | Reporting cycle |
| Child protection after-hours service | Q-Master source data | Q-Master source data | Monthly |

# Key documents

## Mandatory

[Child Protection Practice Manual](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au)

<http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au>

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