

# MEDIA RELEASE

19 December 2022



## CCYP Systemic Investigation into Out-of-Home Care

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean has launched an investigation into the allocation of Child Safety Officers for children and young people in Tasmania's Out-of-Home Care system.

"I am undertaking an own motion investigation into the introduction of a new Out-of-Home Care case management model, which has changed the allocation of Child Safety Officers for children and young people in care in Tasmania," Ms McLean said.

"Under the new model, some children and young people in care are no longer allocated to an individual Child Safety Officer.

"Instead, these children and young people are allocated to teams (which include child safety officers) within the Child Safety Service, with communication managed through a generic phone number and email address."

The Commissioner said she has identified this as an emergent systemic issue warranting further investigation through her independent monitoring of the Tasmanian Out-of-Home Care system.

"Through this investigation it is my intention to get a better understanding of the new case management model and any effect it might have on the rights and wellbeing of children in care," Ms McLean said.

"The investigation will be informed by the principles set out in the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* (CCYP Act), as well as relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Charter of Rights for Tasmanian children and young people in out of home care."

Ms McLean said that the Department for Education, Children and Young People has been consulted on the Terms of Reference and is supportive of the investigation in the spirit of collaboration and continuous improvement.

### Investigation Terms of Reference

Ms McLean explained that the main purposes of the investigation are to:

1. Develop a detailed understanding of the new Out-of-Home Care case management model in the context of relevant policy, practice, and legislation.



2. Examine any effect of the new model on the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in care.
3. Report and make recommendations in respect of the introduction of the new model in line with the general functions of the Commissioner as outlined in section 8 of the CCYP Act.

She said that her investigation will be informed by the views and experiences of:

- Children and young people in care with direct or indirect experience of the new model
- Other stakeholders, including carers, providers of Out-of-Home Care services and others who support and/or work with children and young people in care
- The Department for Education, Children and Young People, as system owner of the Child Safety Service and the Out-of-Home Care system

The full Terms of Reference are available at [CCYP investigation into the introduction of a new Out-of-Home Care case management model \(childcomm.tas.gov.au\)](https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/CCYP-investigation-into-the-introduction-of-a-new-Out-of-Home-Care-case-management-model)

The Commissioner invites any person who has experience of the new model to share their views by making a submission to her.

“During the investigation, there will be opportunities for children and young people who have experienced the new model to share their views with me.”

“At the end of my investigation, I will recommend any necessary reform to policy, practice and legislation to promote and protect the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in care.”

### **Call for submissions**

To support people wishing to make submissions to the investigation, the Commissioner has produced a Submission Guide, which provides further information and questions. It is available at [2022-12-13-Inquiry-Submission-Guide.pdf \(childcomm.tas.gov.au\)](https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/2022-12-13-Inquiry-Submission-Guide.pdf)

Children and young people are welcome to make an anonymous or confidential submission. However, there will be specific opportunities for children and young people to share their views with the Commissioner in early 2023.

For further information about making a submission, please contact the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People on (03) 6166 1366 between 9 am and 5 pm on weekdays (excluding public holidays) or email [childcomm@childcomm.tas.gov.au](mailto:childcomm@childcomm.tas.gov.au).

The Commissioner looks forward to receiving comments on this important issue. Submissions close Friday 24 February 2023.

### **Important note**

Concerns about the safety or wellbeing of an individual child or young person should be referred to the Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice & Referral Line on 1800 000 123, or visit <https://www.strongfamiliesafekids.tas.gov.au/>



Qualified counsellors are available at Kids Helpline anytime and for any reason by calling 1800 551 800, or visiting [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

Media Contact: A.Mark Thomas, 0422 006 732