

Carer Council

Proudly administered by CF&KC-SA

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W www.cfc-sa.org.au/carers-council/

Freecall 1800 732 272

About the Carer Council Q&A Sheet

What is the Carer Council?

The Carer Council is a ministerial advisory council of foster and kinship carers providing a dedicated platform for the carer voice to be heard by the Minister for Child Protection on issues crucial to improving the child protection system and the rights of carers. As a ministerial advisory council, the Carer Council must comply with rules set out by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for [SA Government boards and committees](#).

The Carer Council was a key recommendation from Dr Fiona Arney's [Independent Inquiry into Foster and Kinship Care](#).

What is a ministerial advisory council?

A government or ministerial advisory council is a body that provides advice and expertise related to a specific group or issue. These bodies are a consultative mechanism, providing perspectives from and representing the views of key stakeholders.

A Minister may determine the structure and functions of the advisory council depending on how the advisory council/body has been established.

The core function of an advisory council is to provide independent advice on key topics. While each council is different, their functions generally include providing feedback on the design of policy and practice and the provision of advice, and it is for the Minister and Government to decide how and if they accept and implement the advice presented. A Minister may also suggest topics of discussion or request advice on certain matters.

These functions do not extend to the provision of individual advocacy or dispute resolution.

How often will the Council meet?

The Carer Council is required to meet a minimum of three times per year. CF&KC-SA will advocate for the Council to meet four times per year given the breadth of information the peak body would like discussed and shared with the Minister.

How can my issues be heard by the Carer Council?

Public consultation sessions will be held for carers to provide their feedback on issues planned for Carer Council discussion. Details of these sessions will be made available on the Carer Council's dedicated [Council Consultation webpage](#).

Through consultation, the Carer Council will hear carers' stories and feedback and listen to experiences of caring to inform its systemic advocacy in providing advice to the Minister. However, as an advisory council, the Carer Council cannot provide assistance with resolving individual carer issues. Carers who are seeking assistance for their individual circumstances may instead contact CF&KC-SA's Carer Advocacy Service for information and individual advocacy on freecall 1800 732 272.

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Why is an administrator needed?

CF&KC-SA was invited to administer the newly formed Carer Council in 2023 by the Honourable Katrine Hildyard, Minister for Child Protection. As administrator, CF&KC-SA supports the Council to gather feedback for the Minister's consideration. CF&KC-SA will ensure the Council meets its obligations when dealing with sensitive and confidential information and report back to the Minister on the progress of the Council's work.

Who will chair the Council?

The Carer Council has chair and deputy chair roles within its membership.

Additionally, an independent facilitator, Dana Shen has been engaged to guide discussions and draw out feedback that is representative of the demographic, rather than based on personal experiences.

Who will oversee the Council?

Lauren Deer is the Project Lead overseeing the Minister-appointed Carer Council.

How many people will be on the Council?

There are 12 positions on the Council, with the aim for the membership to have proportionate representation of the active foster and kinship carer demographic in South Australia, including particularly representation from foster and kinships carers, First Nations carers and carers living in regional South Australia.

Will grandparents who are appointed kinship carers as a result of a court decision be represented on the Council?

The Carer Council is specifically intended to provide a voice for foster and kinship carers who are formally registered under the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* and caring for children under the guardianship of the Chief Executive of DCP. Privately agreed care arrangements and those determined by the Family Law Court fall outside the intended scope of the Council.

Who is eligible to join the Carer Council?

Applicants must be approved carers registered under the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* who are currently caring for children or young people under guardianship of the Chief Executive of DCP, or who have done so within the last 12 months, including those who provide emergency, short, long or respite care.

How are Carer Council Members selected?

CF&KC-SA recruits at the request of the Minister, with expression of interest processes having last been undertaken in late 2023 and mid 2025.

Following a call for expressions of interest, CF&KC-SA undertakes a shortlisting process, with a view to ensure the 12-member council is proportionally representative of the South Australia's foster and kinship carer community.

Rules from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on [Boards and Committees: Remuneration, Governance and Diversity](#) indicate that the Carer Council 'must have diverse membership which is representative of the South Australian community and with the skills that will ensure the [Carer Council] can deliver its functions.'

To fulfill the requirement in selecting Carer Council members, we:

- Ensure adequate balance (based on data supplied by DCP on the current carer demographic) of foster carers/kinship carers, as well as regional residing carers/metropolitan residing carers across positions, including also First Nations representation.
- Consider gender-diversity and the benefit of representing voices from diverse carer communities on the Council.
- Interview potential Carer Council members to ensure a useful balance of skills to enable the Carer Council to provide expert advice and participate in systemic advocacy.

Final selection of members is made by the Minister for Child Protection, who formally appoints carers to the Carer Council.

Can I contact the Carer Council directly?

Carers are encouraged to contact Lauren Deer, Carer Council Project Lead on freecall 1800 723 272 or email: carercouncil@cfc-sa.org.au

How do I find out more?

[Click here](#) to visit our website; email carercouncil@cfc-sa.org.au or phone freecall 1800 732 272 to speak with Lauren Deer, Carer Council Project Lead. You can also sign up to our free Membership to be kept informed of Carer Council updates and other news relating to Foster & Kinship Carers – [click here to join](#)