

Department of Human Services

a career in child protection



The Department of Human Services offers jobs that make a difference to the lives of young Victorians.

Child protection practitioners are responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Child protection work is challenging, but it has many rewards.

It offers opportunities to specialise in a range of areas: working with infants, adolescents, indigenous children and families, as well as culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

A career in child protection means working to achieve the best outcomes for children and families.

About child protection

Victoria is recognised as a national leader in the child protection field and recent reforms have delivered positive and powerful changes including:

- a focus on the best interests of every child
- stronger community partnerships
- specialist practice roles to support practitioners
- a holistic, whole-of-life approach to improving the lives of vulnerable children
- earlier intervention to support families
- evidence-based approaches to create real and lasting change
- better support for child protection staff in the Children's Court
- multidisciplinary approaches that include collaboration with families.

more choice professional development

great prospects secure employment

work with great people responsibility

socially responsible jobs appreciation team work

job variety jobs to suit my lifestyle

What does the work involve?

'There is no such thing as a typical day. This is what makes the job so challenging and interesting – you never know what's around the corner!'

Child protection practitioners are based in regional and metropolitan offices throughout Victoria and work as part of a team of practitioners, supported by a team leader and other senior experienced staff. Child protection practitioners:

- provide advice and consultation to people who report concerns about children and young people
- assess children and families where it is believed a child is at risk of significant harm
- engage and work with children and families to promote safety, stability and development of the child, and to strengthen family capacity.

More than one job, child protection practitioners can work in a number of roles and there are great opportunities for promotion. Staff in entry level roles may be located in:

- an intake team assessing callers' concerns about children
- a response team making initial visits to families to assess a child's wellbeing
- a long term case management team looking after the best interests of children.

Our staff build skills in working with particular groups such as infants, children and adolescents as some regions have specialist roles that focus on each of these groups.

'I have been able to work in just about all areas of child protection. All have been enriching experiences and my knowledge grows with every new role.'

Whichever area of child protection you choose to work in, one thing you can be sure of is that your job makes a difference.

Jobs that make a difference

What are we looking for?

Personal attributes

Successful candidates will be strong team members who demonstrate leadership qualities and appropriate levels of autonomy. We need people who are committed, resilient and who want to make a positive change to people's lives.

Qualifications

To work in child protection you need one of the following:

- Bachelor of Social Work
- Diploma of Community Welfare
- a similar welfare-related tertiary qualification which:
 - is at least diploma level or higher
 - is at minimum a two-year full-time course
 - included at least one applied unit of study in case management, case work practice or counselling
 - included a supervised practical work placement.

Your local child protection office can advise if your qualification is suitable.

What do we offer?

Professional development

The Child Protection and Youth Justice Professional Development Unit offers a calendar of professional development programs tailored to child protection practitioners covering topics such as:

- Child and adolescent development
- Adolescents and mental health
- Children and trauma
- Orientation to the alcohol and other drugs sector
- Working with Indigenous children and families

We also offer:

- opportunities to move into management and leadership positions
- opportunities to develop leadership skills through mentoring students and newer child protection workers

Support

'I speak to my team leader if I'm a bit upset or challenged about any aspect of my work.'

Child protection work can be challenging and stressful. The department works hard to promote staff wellbeing by providing:

- regular, supportive supervision
- professional debriefing to staff involved in workplace incidents
- access to confidential counselling for any personal or work related issue affecting work performance
- support staff to develop good self-care skills and to maintain a healthy work life balance
- career and lifestyle options in metropolitan or regional locations

Want to know more?

Vacancies are immediately available for child protection practitioners. For more information about careers in child protection:

Visit the Department of Human Services careers website:

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/careers

Or the Victorian Government careers website:

www.careers.vic.gov.au

For enquiries about entry level (CPW2) positions call DFP Recruitment on (03) 8632 9900 or contact your nearest regional office and ask for the child protection recruitment coordinator:

Metropolitan regions:

Eastern Metropolitan	(03) 9843 6000
North and West Metropolitan	(03) 9275 7000
Southern Metropolitan	(03) 9213 2111

Rural regions:

Barwon-South Western	(03) 5226 4540
Gippsland	(03) 5136 2400
Grampians	(03) 5333 6669
Hume	(03) 5722 0555
Loddon Mallee	(03) 5434 5555

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