

# Making Decisions in Our Way

**(Delegated Authority  
Support Services)**

**Brokerage Funding  
Guidelines**



Version 1.0

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**Queensland  
Government**



## **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (the department) acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country on which the department operates. We respect the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise their deep cultural, physical and spiritual connections to unceded lands, winds, sky and waters. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and value their ongoing contribution in empowering communities to determine their own futures.



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## 1. Introduction

In line with the strategic intent of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (the department), delegated authority has been designated as a Funding Area to support and guide investment in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations.

These brokerage guidelines (the guidelines) have been developed to promote self-determination and enable flexibility and responsiveness in service delivery aligned to delegated functions and powers of the [Child Protection Act 1999](#) (the CP Act) under section Chapter 4, Part 2A (section 148BB), known as delegated authority.

## 2. Purpose of brokerage funding

The purpose of brokerage funding is to facilitate culturally centred responses for children, young people and their families who are supported through delegated authority arrangements. Brokerage contributes to the achievement of goals and aspirations for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families as aligned to the delegations made to the CEO (prescribed delegate) of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation (funded service).

## 3. Scope

These guidelines relate to brokerage funding provided to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations funded to deliver delegated authority responses under the *Making Decisions in Our Way (Delegated Authority Support Services) Investment Specification*, and should be read in conjunction with that Investment Specification.

## 4. Principles

The use of brokerage funding to support delegated authority arrangements will be guided by the following principles:

- **Culturally appropriate and self-determined** – brokerage funding must respond to and support the cultural needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children or young people and/or their families (service user/s), as identified by the funded service in consultation with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person and/or their family, and as outlined in cultural connection planning;
- **Flexible** – brokerage funding must support user choice and enable flexible approaches to service delivery, which may be applied at any point during the relevant service user/s engagement with the funded service;
- **Case Management** – brokerage funding is used within a case management context to enable the relevant service user/s to access a range of goods, resources, activities and services they may need to achieve the outcomes identified in their case plan. Supports and services purchased with brokerage funding should be:
  - assessed and negotiated in collaboration with the relevant service user/s;

- tailored to the specific needs of the relevant service user/s; and
- a level of assessment and planning should be in place prior to, or concurrently with, the use of brokerage funds.

## 5. Value for money considerations

When deciding to expend brokerage funds, funded services must consider whether the intended expenditure is the best use of resources to meet the identified goals within the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person's case plan.

Prior to using brokerage funds to purchase supports, services or resources, the use of available local, state or federal secondary or universal services should be explored.

Brokerage funds should purchase timely supports, services, activities or resources on a short term or episodic basis that respond to and support the practical and cultural needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children or young people and/or their families, as determined by the funded service in consultation with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person and/or their family, where delegated authority arrangements are in place.

Longer term financial supports to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person may be provided by application of additional care allowances (e.g., High Support Needs or Complex Support Needs Allowances), an Individualised Placement and Support (IPS) Package or supports through other schemes managed outside the department, for example the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The funded service should discuss the need for, and requirements of, other supports, including longer term supports, that may be necessary with the department before making a decision.

## 6. Meeting the needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, young people and/or their families

Brokerage funds should be used to purchase goods, services or activities only when existing services, supports or resources cannot meet the identified needs of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person, or are not readily accessible.

When emergent needs are identified, either because the relevant service user/s are new and a full assessment of their needs is not yet completed or documented, brokerage funding should be used to immediately meet the identified need.

When the need is ongoing, funded services will support the identification of these needs through regular communication with the department and as required between planned meetings. Funded services will contribute information on how any need can or has been met through available brokerage funding.

Funded services and the department should engage in regular communication with each other and with relevant service users to build their understanding of, and the process of applying for, other supports including:

- Reimbursement through Child Related Costs (CRC)
- Additional Carer Allowances such as:



- Establishment Allowance
- Start-up Allowance
- High Support Needs Allowance (HSNA)
- Complex Support Needs Allowance (CSNA)
- Additional Individualised Placement and Support (IPS) packages.

The use of brokerage funds will be considered by each funded service on a case-by-case basis, and will be flexible and tailored to meet the needs of each relevant service user/s, and may include, but is not limited to:

- facilitation of family and kin contact opportunities;
- parenting coaching related to family time;
- cultural enrichment as part of connection responsibilities;
- supporting cultural competency in carers; and/or
- activities related to supporting reunification of children with parents.

As a general rule, any items or assets purchased with brokerage funds for the direct use by a child or young person should remain the property of that child or young person and be 'portable.' The term 'portable' means that if the child or young person should change care arrangements or be reunified with their parent/s, then the item/asset will go with that child or young person. Such goods purchased for children or young people are required to be documented within regular brokerage reporting requirements.

## 7. Limits on brokerage expenditure

It is expected that delegated authority funded services will use brokerage funds to directly pay for goods and services on behalf of relevant service user/s.

Brokerage funds are not to be used:

- to duplicate the provision of one-off financial assistance or any other form of Emergency Relief;
- to reimburse a worker already employed within the funded service;
- for direct cash payments or any other form of reimbursement to service user/s; or
- where it has already been approved to be met by Child Related Costs or included in the assessment of an additional carer allowance (HSNA/CSNA).


## 8. Accountability

The total proportion of funding that may be allocated towards brokerage costs from within a funded service's existing delegated authority contract will be negotiated with each funded service and outlined at **section 6.1 Services** of the relevant Funding Schedule.

The funded service will retain responsibility for assessing the need, use and reporting of brokerage funds on a case-by case basis up to the approved limited outlined at **section 6.1 Services** of the relevant Funding Schedule and in alignment with these guidelines.

The funded service is responsible for:

- quarantining brokerage funds from administration and organisational expenses;

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- covering the outlay of managing brokerage funds within the general administrative costs of the service;
  - developing policies and procedures for managing demand for brokerage funding, including eligibility requirements and assessment processes;
  - reporting brokerage expenditure and outcomes via the identified performance measures within **section 7.1 Performance measures** of the relevant Funding Schedule confirming that funds have been expended for their intended purpose and develop processes to identify, manage and account separately for expenditure via the financial reporting format specified within **section 7.2. Data, statement and reports You are to submit** of the relevant Funding Schedule; and
  - ensuring that brokerage funds provided by the department are used in accordance with these guidelines.