

Question on Notice

No. 169

Asked on 26 February 2019

MR T NICHOLLS asked the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (HON D FARMER)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister detail every form of training that child safety officers are required to undertake, including the time in which they must undertake this training and how often refresher courses are required?

ANSWER

Child Safety Officer (CSO) positions have mandatory Bachelor-level qualifications with most CSO staff holding psychology, social work or human services qualifications which bring theoretical and research-based knowledge and engagement, assessment, planning and process skills, all of which are essential for the role.

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women is a learning organisation and makes a suite of e-Learning and face-to-face training programs available to support the ongoing professional development and growth of staff.

Professional development is prioritised through Achievement and Capability Plans completed by staff and their supervisors and reviewed over a 12-month period.

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women provides a comprehensive training program called GRO. It has a primary focus on CSOs but is also available to other staff. Core components are mandatory for all CSOs, while others are dependent on their particular role and skill set.

The GRO program is a suite of e-Learning and face-to-face sessions for CSOs. It familiarises them with the public service, legal, policy, procedural, technology, assessment, intervention, skills and case planning requirements of their role. Mandatory training must be completed within the first 12 months of employment. Details of the training are outlined below:

The G, 'getting ready' or induction component of the GRO program must be completed within the first month of employment, and offers eLearning on topics such as:

- Workplace health and safety –including building emergency procedures
- Legislation
- Ethical decision-making
- Record keeping
- Security and confidentiality
- Delegations
- The framework for practice
- Child safety practice manual
- Phases of the child protection continuum
- Structured decision-making
- Critical thinking
- Reflective practice
- Internal and external partners.

The R, 'readiness' part of the training is to be completed within the first 12 months of employment, and includes topics such as:

- Worker safety
- Understanding substance use and working with families
- Domestic and family violence
- Working with parents who have a mental illness
- Physical indicators of abuse
- Water safety awareness
- Legislation - delegated and authorised powers and responsibilities
- Writing for court
- Intake
- Investigation and assessment
- Intervention with parental agreement
- placement services
- Engagement and participation-effective communication, free narrative, solution-focused interviewing
- Case management
- Foundation studies in culture
- Historical abuse network - understanding impacts of past practices
- Framework for practice tools
- Assessing safety, risk, strengths and belonging.

The O, 'ongoing' practice development suite of learning is designed to assist all CSOs, not just new staff, to further develop knowledge, skills and expertise, and includes topics such as:

- Maintaining Family Connection
- Evidence Fundamentals
- Domestic And Family Violence
- Postnatal Depression
- Non-Suicidal Self-Injury
- Parenting And Attachment
- Child Development
- Crystal Methamphetamine
- Palliative Care For Children And Young People
- Queensland Civil And Administrative Tribunal
- Sibling Sexual Abuse
- Working With Intellectual Disability
- Case Note Taking
- Cumulative Harm
- Icare- Interviewing Children And Recording Evidence
- Family Reunification
- Motivational Interviewing
- Safety Assessment And Immediate Safety Planning

- Working with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Risk assessment – working with unborn children and high-risk infants
- Working with young people
- Working with young people: understanding suicide
- Sexual abuse.

While training refresher courses are not prescribed at a state-wide level, staff participate in regular supervision sessions with their Senior Team Leader supervisor to reflect on and develop their practice with children, young people and families. Senior Team Leaders may identify knowledge and skills that require further development and will develop strategies, including training and coaching, to meet these needs.

Mandatory Integrated Client Management System training must be undertaken before access to the department's client information system is granted. While not part of GRO training, staff generally undertake this training within two weeks of joining the department. Staff must also complete the iDOCS Essentials (Record Keeping) course. A number of optional IT courses exist to assist staff with use of applications such as Kicbox, genoware, CS express, Carer Connect.

As an organisation committed to learning and cultural responsiveness, the department offers all staff access to e-Learning sessions to develop knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and customs and offers sessions on multicultural awareness.

When legislation is amended or there are significant policy and practice changes, training for staff is deemed mandatory dependant on the role. Changes to the *Child Protection Act 1999* which occurred in October 2018 and the implementation of the Framework for Practice involved mandatory training for CSOs, Senior Team Leaders and Managers.