

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Team Leader –Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response

Reports to Program Manager

Direct Reports: AFPR Practitioners/ Senior Practitioners

Status Full time (38 hrs pw)

Term Ongoing

Location VACCA - Melton

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is the largest organization of its kind in Australia. VACCA is an Aboriginal community-controlled organization that supports and advocates for the Aboriginal community. Our strength lies with our people. Our team is committed to the organisation's vision and values; advocates for our children and other vulnerable community members; and shows respect for, observance and compliance with Aboriginal cultural protocols, practice and ceremony. Our Aboriginality is what distinguishes us from mainstream services and what enables us to deliver the positive outcomes we achieve for our people.

VACCA employs over 600 staff and delivers more than 70 programs across the state. VACCA's experience and expertise in the delivery of therapeutic interventions are underpinned by culture, connection, and healing. VACCA designs, develops and delivers programs with self-determination and an understanding that the intergenerational trauma experienced by our community requires intergenerational and community healing.

Central to VACCA's work is the importance of connection to family, community and culture as essential to Aboriginal children's safety, stability and ensuring that they have an ongoing sense of belonging. As Victoria's largest Aboriginal child welfare agency, VACCA will play a key role in the process of transitioning the care and case management of Aboriginal children from government and non-Aboriginal organisations to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations following the recent decision of the Victorian Government.

VACCA is implementing cultural therapeutic ways which is an agency wide framework that underpins our work with the community, our clients and staff

OUR VISION

Aboriginal self-determination - Live, Experience and Be.

OUR PURPOSE

Supporting culturally strong, safe and thriving Aboriginal communities.

PROGRAM AREA

The Victorian Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response (the Response), co-designed with representatives from the Aboriginal child and family services sector, will be implemented by VACCA in Western Metro, Eastern Metro, Southern Metro, Ovens Murray and Inner Gippsland.

This Response includes an initial intensive intervention phase, delivered through a mobile and integrated approach, followed by a sustained service support phase, aimed at preventing at-risk Aboriginal children entering or re- entering care. This new Response will link to, align with, and build on (and not duplicate) existing child and family services within the broader service system, providing an enhanced continuum of care across the state. It will be evaluated and continuously developed to enhance the Family Preservation and Reunification (FPR) evidence-base for Aboriginal child and family services and programs in Victoria (including Child Protection).

The model is an intensive, integrated, evidence informed approach to supporting families and preventing children and young people's entry to out of home care.

The aim of the Response is strong Aboriginal families – with children who are safe, healthy, resilient and thriving; and Aboriginal parents who are supported to create a safe and nurturing home environment.

The primary objectives of the Response, in partnership with Child Protection, are:

- family preservation – where the objective is to create safety and prevent child removal and placement in care;
- reunification – where the objective is to safely and rapidly return children to their families and communities.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Team Leader of Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response has been created to provide leadership, direction and support to a small team of AFPR practitioners/ senior practitioners (practitioners) employed within the Response program to provide innovative, intensive wrap around outreach family support service to approximately 6 children or young people and engaging and supporting their families and the children themselves via creative strengths-based evidence informed intervention strategies, conducting outreach and home visits, contributing to risk assessments and facilitating referrals to other VACCA programs or external agencies as required.

Responsibilities of the Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response Team Leader include:

- ensuring all staff are provided with regular professional supervision and appropriate

development and training opportunities to enhance their capacity to provide a quality service.

- overseeing the day to day management of the Response team and to guide, supervise and support Aboriginal FPR practitioners in the delivery of the Response service. (Each FPR practitioner will have a case load of 6 families and services will be delivered in the home and community for 12 months).
- play a key role in providing culturally safe support, guidance and mentoring to the Aboriginal FPR practitioners.
- ensure that any actions or decisions made are in the best interests of the child, and that families receive a service that is culturally responsive and strengths based and evidence and trauma informed.
- develop a good understanding of the Response requirements including the use of specific evidence informed approaches and participation in an external program evaluation, and support AFPR team leaders to understand and comply with these requirements.
- Play a key role in ensuring AFPR Practitioners are familiar with and adhere to relevant VACCA policies.
- Liaise with a range of VACCA programs, Child Protection, external service providers and Community Service Organisations within the Western Melbourne and Brimbank/Melton regions) and support AFPR practitioners to develop plans and engage appropriate support for clients.
- Attend case conference allocation meetings
- Participate in Operational Governance arrangements to monitor and improve processes for Aboriginal FPR practitioners
- Provide quality practice leadership and expert and specialist case practice advice in relation to family preservation and reunification and collaborative practice approaches.
- Regularly report on capacity and outcomes of the Aboriginal FPR team
- Leverage partnerships to support children and families to connect into services they require.

Notes:

1. Service delivery will comply with DHHS Covid-19 restrictions and will delivered safely in line with VACCA's Covid-19 safe service delivery approach which includes phone and video conferencing options.
2. All staff employed withing response teams will be required to participate in training to understand and apply evidence informed practice approaches including Aboriginal Practice Modules and Common Elements.
3. The core hours for the Response are 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday. You will work flexi time within this bandwidth, in negotiation with your manager.
4. You will be required to be part of the VACCA Family Services After Hours On Call roster.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: All client support services including; Lakidjeka Aboriginal Specialist Support and Advice Service (ACSASS), Aboriginal Children's Healing Team, Integrated Family Services, Cradle to Kinder Program, FV Therapeutic supports (counselling and groups) programs, Playgroups, ALFDM, Emergency Relief, etc.

External: Aboriginal families and community, Child Protection Navigator, Aboriginal Organisations, Community Service organisations, Western Melbourne and Brimbank / Melton regions to add an examples here) VAHS, Housing Services, Education Institutions (Child care, Kinder, Primary and Secondary schools, TAFE and other alternative schools), Health Services, Early Childhood services, FV services, Counselling services, Emergency Relief Services, Orange Door (Hub), other community service agencies, etc

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, the values that underpin VACCA' vision and purpose and the capacity to take a leadership role in championing these internally and externally
- Demonstrated awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal societies and cultures, and commitment to continually build knowledge of such, along with a high level of awareness of the key issues which impact upon Aboriginal communities
- Significant work experience in a relevant field which supports an understanding of child development and family functioning including theories of attachment, intergenerational and personal trauma as well as relevant risk assessment frameworks, service responses and interventions in working with vulnerable families.
- A proven ability to develop, manage and lead a team in quality casework practice, with a demonstrated capacity to:
 - work successfully with Aboriginal children, young people and their families
 - assess and manage risk for highly vulnerable children and families
 - develop innovative strategies and make decisions in the best interest of the child
 - effectively manage conflict
 - engage and negotiate with key stakeholders
 - assess staff competencies and needs and provide critically reflective supervision
 - critically review service data and outcomes
 - consistently meet programs objectives and service targets.
- Highly developed organizational abilities, interpersonal and communication skills including the capacity to negotiate and work effectively with a range of individuals and agencies so that program objectives are achieved;
- Capacity to support teams members to understand and apply evidence informed practice elements and participate in evaluation processes;
- The successful applicant will be required to hold a tertiary qualification in social work, youth work, psychology or a related discipline and have at least three years' experience in the child and family services system.
- Experience working with children involved in the child protection system.
- A demonstrated ability to manage, supervise and support staff in relation to organisational change.

REQUIREMENTS

- You must have and continue to hold a full Australian Driver's Licence and a current employment working with children check card.

POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Responsible for the overall operations for the Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response for Brimbank/Melton region).
- Work in conjunction with the Program Manager to plan and implement the Response whilst ensuring services are provided in accordance with the departmental standards, program requirements and Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response practice guides and frameworks.
- Provide leadership, case direction and supervision to AFPR Response practitioners / senior practitioners to ensure the needs of children and their families are being met in accordance with their case plan.
- Participate in training to support team members to understand and apply evidence informed practice approaches including Aboriginal Practice Modules and Common Elements, data collection and program evaluation requirements.
- Proactively respond to staff development and wellbeing needs.
- Ensure high standards of service delivery to Aboriginal children, families and communities.
- Ensure that funding targets and compliance requirements are met.
- Work in close collaboration with child protection in the development a positive partnership to effectively respond to client issues. Promote an integrated service system through the development and management of strong relationships with key universal, secondary and tertiary child and family services, including government departments, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, community health services and community service organisations.
- Maintain a strong working knowledge of relevant theoretical, legislative and policy developments.
- Fulfil other duties, as required, commensurate with the capacity, qualifications and experience associated with the position and classification level.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Ensure compliance with the OH&S Act and VACCA policies.
- Contribute positively and proactively to team and organisation wide OH&S activities.

QUALITY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure compliance with legislation, contract and policy requirements in your day to day work in order to meet the organisation's audit, contract and registration obligations.
- Proactively apply your specialist knowledge in the review and maintenance of policies, systems and processes.

- Continue the development of a culturally strong and positive working environment using a continuous improvement approach.

OTHER

- Participate proactively in team project initiatives
- Support other team members in periods of high demand and during periods of absence.
- Participate in project groups and attend events
- Undertake other duties as directed

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and supporting strong, safe, thriving Aboriginal communities and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity, honouring all cultural backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and spiritual beliefs.

VACCA is a child-safe organisation and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with zero tolerance for child abuse. All successful applicants will be required to undertake a National Police Record Check and Working with Children Check prior to commencement of employment and periodically following commencement.

VACCA is an equal opportunity employer and has a smoke-free workplace policy.