

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Position</b>	Family Services Case Worker
<b>Reports to</b>	Team Leader
<b>Direct Reports</b>	Nil
<b>Status</b>	Ongoing

## BACKGROUND

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is the largest organisation 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 over 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. Through Cultural Therapeutic Ways VACCA is implementing a whole of agency approach to guide VACCA's practices of healing for Aboriginal children, young people, families, community members and carers who come into contact with our services, as well as creating a safe and supportive workplace for staff.

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 plays 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.

## OUR VISION

Aboriginal self-determination - Live, Experience and Be

## OUR PURPOSE

Supporting culturally strong, safe and thriving Aboriginal communities

## PROGRAM AREA

Family Services provides a continuum of services to families from early support to reunification. The service delivery practice model is characterised by on-going professional development inclusive of Cultural and Common Elements and coaching; work towards the establishment of an Aboriginal evidence base utilising a range of tools to measure outcomes; increased collaboration with Child Protection facilitated by a CP Navigator role; case mix and step up/step down to increase flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of families towards improved outcomes; a focus on positive parenting and family interaction to promote children's development and, an emphasis on cultural safety and the connection of families to Culture, Kin, Country and Community.

We provide a positive, culturally safe workplace environment supported by family friendly and culturally sensitive workforce policies, including professional development, continuing education and staff wellbeing.

## POSITION SUMMARY

The Case Manager forms part of a multidisciplinary team of qualified and experienced staff from a range of professional backgrounds. The Case Manager will empower families to share their story their way through the implementation of culturally appropriate and trauma informed engagement, information gathering, planning processes and ensure the active involvement of families in decision making at each phase towards self-determination. In addition, the case manager will act as a key point of contact for the related service network. The Case Manager will provide casework, group work and service coordination facilitating families access to programs, services and activities which promote connection, protection and healing.

The role entails some after hours and weekend work as required.

Note:

1. Service delivery will comply with DFFH Covid-19 restrictions and will be delivered safely in line with VACCA's Covid-19 safe service delivery approach which includes reduced or limited in home support and phone and video conferencing options.
2. All staff employed will be required to participate in learning and development to understand and apply evidence informed practice approaches including Cultural Elements and Common Elements.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

*Internal:* All client support services including Lakidjeka Aboriginal Specialist Support and Advice Service (ACSASS), Aboriginal Children's Healing Team, a range of Family Service programs, Family Violence therapeutic supports (counselling and groups), Playgroups, ALFDM, Emergency Relief, etc.

*External:* Aboriginal families and community, Child Protection and Child Protection Navigator, Aboriginal organisations, Community Service organisations, health and housing

services, child care, kinder, primary and secondary schools, family violence 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 .
- An ability to work in a culturally respectful and competent manner, with Aboriginal young people, their families and communities, to ensure that cultural connections are fostered and maintained.
- Work experience in a relevant field that 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 well-developed understanding of issues that impact on Aboriginal families, children and young people, particularly those who are involved with Child Protection.
- Sound knowledge of and experience with implementing strengths-based interventions.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills and ability to support families, children and young people to set goals and work towards achieving goals.
- Sound organisational of and planning skills including the ability to work independently and within a small team and maintain up to date case notes.
- Ability to develop and maintain relationships with services and support families to access services and supports as required.
- Ability to work out of hours and on weekends as required by the role.

## REQUIREMENTS

- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence, a current employment Working with Children Check card and a National Police Check.
- Current COVID-19 vaccinations

## ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

- Ability to mentor other case workers and experience in supporting parents and their children through complex issues and crises and understanding the evidence informed practice approaches requirements of the program.
- Capacity to assist the Team Leader with duties as directed.

## POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

## CONNECT

- Empower families to share their story their way through the implementation of the Information Gathering Tool engagement process, Footsteps to Our Future and Child and Family Summaries and actively involve families in decision making at each phase.
- Undertake assertive outreach and employ active engagement strategies to support parents to sustain their participation with the program.
- Provide families with information and cultural resources to maximise the opportunities available to participate in Community events and activities to strengthen their cultural connections.
- Provide an opportunity at each visit to increase the families understanding and knowledge of Culture, Country, Community e.g. offer participation in cultural programs, provide Children's books and other resources, support referrals to other local or state-wide Aboriginal services as appropriate.

## PROTECT

- Take time to engage with family's developing trusting relationships over time to create environments where families feel safe.
- Recognise that a family's journey will not necessarily be linear. Work with the family at their pace and be patient, adjusting service intensity, step up/step down as needed.
- Ensure cultural safety and enable healing in spaces that families are most comfortable in – in their homes, on Country and in their local communities.
- Engage and work with children in a trauma informed way incorporate play and cultural activities, model respectful relationships.
- Facilitate access to specialised and/or universal supports and services.
- Gain feedback from families at each visit, respond to emerging need and ensure that the families voice is consistently heard in the delivery of services.
- Provide information to support families to exercise their rights and agency.
- Build on strengths and work with parents to build skills and confidence in antenatal care, child development, parenting, routines, boundary setting, attachment, relationships, home safety, financial literacy, household management, problem solving and independent living. Use a range of methods such as coaching, role modelling, mentoring, observation, feedback and self-reflection techniques.
- Participate in training to understand and apply evidence informed practice approaches including Cultural and Common Elements.
- Convene, lead or participate in care team for families as appropriate, including planning and leading family and care team meetings and monitoring progress against goals set.

- Conduct ongoing assessment of safety, identifying potential for harm and protective factors, and where appropriate, implement safety/wellbeing strategies.
- Ensure a strong understanding of Lakidjeka and Child Protection roles, responsibilities and processes and where required work with Team Leaders to consult with Lakidjeka and/or child protection and report any concerns that may place children's safety at risk.
- Ensure families are informed of concerns and reports provided to Lakidjeka and/or Child Protection.
- Participate in data collection in line with program monitoring and evaluation requirements.

## **HEAL**

- Understand the relationship between family/kinship/Community connections, connection to land/sea/country, access to cultural celebrations and ceremonies, Elders, traditional healing practices and resilience.
- Grow knowledge and understand a family's cultural and spiritual beliefs to safeguard their safety in seeking traditional healing practices.
- When yarning with families link the impact of colonisation, intergenerational trauma, cultural, mental, social, and spiritual wellbeing and a shift towards a place of strength, hope and resilience.
- Build on existing strengths and recognise that Aboriginal people have the knowledge and experience to make the best decisions concerning their children.
- Facilitate or co-facilitate group programs in response to the needs of families.
- Celebrate family achievements.
- Promote culture to build self-esteem, and by extension pride in their Aboriginal identity.
- Promote healthy respectful relationships.
- Share stories of resilience and hope and celebrate the success and achievements of Aboriginal people throughout history and today.

## **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.