

Family Preservation Recommissioning Frequently Asked Questions

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This document covers frequently asked questions (FAQs) related to Family Preservation (FP) including the recommissioning and program management. Unless specifically mentioned, these FAQs apply to, and are relevant for, all service providers delivering FP services. These services are listed [here](#).

These FAQs will be updated regularly.

For information (including FAQs) about infoShare, please click [here](#).

Family Preservation recommissioning

1. What is Family Preservation recommissioning?

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Family Preservation (FP) system is being redesigned. FP recommissioning will consolidate disparate services into an integrated service model design which has the flexibility to support children, young people and their families.

The three areas of focus for recommissioning include:

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- **Building and using the evidence** to understand need, effectiveness and inform decision-making
- **Building collaborative partnerships and practice** to enhance practice of both DCJ and service provider practitioners and improve access pathways for families
- **Meeting the cultural needs of families** to ensure service providers are equipped and able to deliver culturally responsive and family-focused services

To improve service quality and consistency, and enhance wellbeing and safety outcomes of children, young people and their families, DCJ is recommissioning family preservation services through a partnership approach involving family preservation service providers and other stakeholders.

In November 2022 the FP team held 14 stakeholder engagement workshops with a range of staff from DCJ districts and FP providers. The workshops were part of the co-design process for FP recommissioning gathering stakeholder' feedback about challenges and pain-points in the current system, examples of good practice, and ideas about how the service system could be improved. The [workshops report](#) is on the DCJ website.

2. Why is the recommissioning process taking place?

Recommissioning helps us to make decisions about how to design, fund, resource, deliver, manage and evaluate ongoing service delivery. It also considers programs and systems, to achieve the best outcomes with the available resources. Recommissioning supports DCJ understand the needs and aspirations of children, young people, their families and communities and the service providers we work with.

3. What is the recommissioning plan?

There are three streams of work driving the recommissioning of FP services:

Policy and program design

DCJ is undertaking a robust analysis of best evidence to design an accessible and effective service model to address need across varying cohorts and enable better outcomes for children, young people and their families. To do this, DCJ is examining a range of information sources (including feedback from co-design workshops; program and administrative data; program evaluations; and research and evidence checks) to:

- develop a program logic – a document that outlines the steps between FP activity and desired change

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- inform the new service model design
- identify family preservation core components and flexible activities
- develop the FP data and evidence plan – a framework to drive robust data management and outcome monitoring
- examine enabling systems and processes to embed successful program implementation
- undertake unit costing

Communications and Engagement

DCJ is developing communication tools and approaches to achieve broad stakeholder engagement in the recommissioning change process. Some examples include:

- regularly updating Frequently Asked Questions and the Family Preservation [microsite](#)
- undertake stakeholder surveys
- coordinate and facilitate co-design workshops
- develop and disseminate targeted communications
- coordinate and facilitate monthly sector forums

Market and Supply

DCJ is developing a detailed understanding of the market (including drivers, demand and supply, capacity and capability and development requirements) to inform and support service providers through procurement and contract management of FP services. This includes:

- Market analysis
- Market shaping and readiness
- Broader service system mapping
- Resource allocation

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4. What do terms like ‘market,’ ‘market shaping and readiness’ and ‘market analysis’ mean?

A **market** is a forum or construct by which buyers and sellers can transact for goods or services. Service provider markets play an essential role in delivering the FP program and achieving outcomes for children, young people and their families.

DCJ purchases services from service providers (often using a formal procurement process) and contracts them to deliver FP services. In this case the FP service provider is the seller, and DCJ is the buyer on behalf of service users. DCJ has responsibility to purchase the best possible FP services.

Doing a **market analysis** gives a picture of the FP market (and other similar markets) and involves gathering and reviewing information to develop a strong understanding of the current capacity and capability of the FP market (and other similar markets) to deliver services.

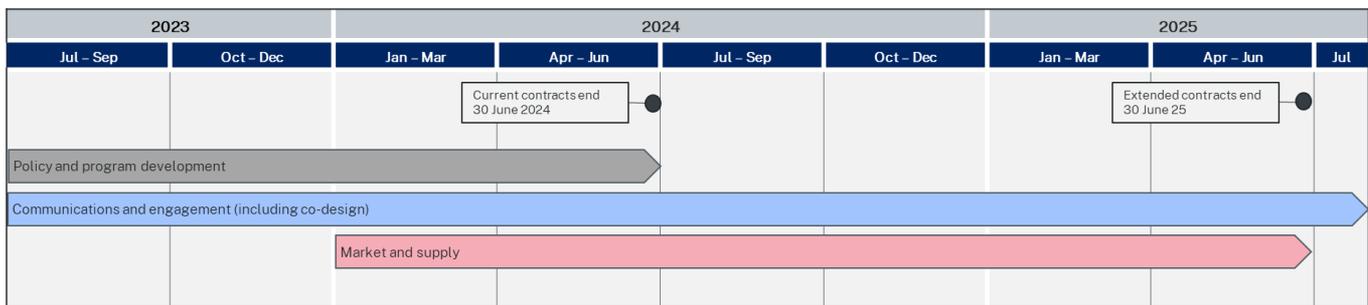
Gathering market information allows DCJ to use the commissioning process to:

- Respond to emerging client need
- Understand which providers have the capacity and community trust to deliver services
- Understand state-wide services compared to bespoke, niche and local services
- Understand established services compared to new services that require innovation
- Understand established, mature settled markets compared to uncertain markets that may be new and require better understanding.

Once there is a better understanding of the FP market, there is an opportunity for **market shaping and readiness** which involves undertaking a range of activities to support the FP market and providers to ensure they have the capacity and capability to respond to client needs and ensure the quality and quantity of services can be delivered. It also ensures that the market is ready for procurement.

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5. What is the current recommissioning timeframe?



6. What programs are in scope for recommissioning?

Programs currently in scope for recommissioning include:

- Family Preservation (formerly Brighter Futures (including SafeCare) and Youth Hope)
- Intensive Family Preservation (IFP)
- Intensive Family Based Services (IFBS)
- Resilient Families
- Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST- CAN®)
- Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare (FFT-CW®)
- Permanency Support Program – Family Preservation (PSP-FP)
- Nabu

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Contracting

7. What is the contract period for Family Preservation contracts?

FP contracts came into effect on 1 July 2021 with an end date of 30 June 2024, however most FP contracts will be extended for an additional period of 12 months. This means that most contract extensions will take the current end date from 30 June 2024, to 30 June 2025.

8. Why are the contracts being extended?

The extension will allow time for further research and analysis and for additional co-design and testing of the future recommissioned FP program design.

9. Does this mean the end of the new contract term aligns to Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) and Family Connect and Support (FCS) commissioning in 2025?

Yes. The extension of FP contracts to 30 June 2025, means the commissioning timeline for TEI, FCS and FP align. We are currently assessing the opportunities this may present in terms of our objectives, streamlined processes and communication.

10. Which providers will not have their contracts extended?

As there is a transition process currently underway, contracts delivering the PSP-FP will be reviewed in early 2024. The following scenarios will then apply to PSP-FP contracts:

ACCOs

1. extend to June 2025 (this will be the case for most ACCO PSP-FP providers), or

Non-ACCOs

2. end on or before 30 June 2024 (where referrals and service delivery have ended), or
3. extend for a period of a number of months, where needed (e.g. where there is continued PSP-FP service delivery or a client/s almost at the end of the service period, or where the clients are transitioning to a new service).

11. When will PSP- FP providers know if their contracts are being extended or ended?

PSP-FP contract volumes and transition plans will be further reviewed in early 2024. Once this has occurred, DCJ will be in a better position to determine which contracts will need to be extended to 30 June 2025 or end on 30 June 2024 (or earlier).

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12. Will the contract extensions change the 30 June 2024 date for the transition of PSP -FP contracts from non-ACCO providers to ACCO providers?

No, the date for the transition remains unchanged.

13. Will the \$ value of the contracts change for the extension?

The dollar value for the contract extensions will not change.

In the Agreement for Funding of Services Standard Terms there is a provision in clause 9.7 that states that DCJ may pay indexation on contracts. Indexation applied in 2023/24 will be reflected in the contract extension documents.

14. Will providers receive a Letter of Variation from DCJ?

Yes, providers will receive a Letter of Variation that will include a change to the contract end date from 30 June 2024 to 30 June 2025. DCJ central office is currently working with DCJ district Commissioning & Planning teams. Providers will receive a Letter of Variation via the DCJ Commissioning & Planning contract manager, and any questions can be directed to the DCJ contract manager.

15. Will the extension be made under the Human Services Agreement (HSA)?

Where applicable, all providers (except for PSP-FP providers) will continue to be extended under their current HSA.

PSP-FP providers, where applicable, will continue to be extended under their existing Program Level Agreement (PLA).

16. What if a provider is not interested in renewing their contract?

Any provider that does not wish to continue to deliver FP services should contact their district's Commissioning & Planning officer as soon as possible. Any discontinuation of service must consider and address the impact for service users.

17. How will the 12-month extension impact on the annual acquittal process?

The extension to June 2025 will not impact the annual acquittal process.

Service Provision Guidelines (SPGs)

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18. What is happening with the new interim SPGs for Family Preservation (former Brighter Futures and Youth Hope)?

In the time since the SPGs were released (July 2023), DCJ received a lot of feedback and questions specifically in regards to the updated eligibility criteria. As a result, the SPGs for Family Preservation (former Brighter Futures and Youth Hope) **have been withdrawn**.

DCJ is taking some time to consider feedback and review the SPG document. Once we have considered this feedback we will communicate next steps.

In the meantime, providers and districts should continue to apply eligibility criteria described in the [DCJ Program Interim Program Service Specifications 2021](#) as well as the *Brighter Futures Service Provision Guidelines 2017* and *Youth Hope Service Provision Guidelines*.

19. Will there be new interim service provision guidelines for Intensive Family Preservation (IFP)?

No further service provision guidelines will be developed before completion of the recommissioning process.

IFP providers should continue to utilise the *IFP Service Provision Guidelines, September 2016* supplemented by the [DCJ Program Interim Program Service Specifications 2021](#).

20. What is the current program documentation required for each program?

Program	Documents
Family Preservation (former Brighter Futures and Youth Hope)	DCJ Family Preservation Interim Program Specifications 2021 alongside <i>Brighter Futures Service Provision Guidelines 2017</i> and <i>Youth Hope Service Provision Guidelines</i>
IFP	DCJ Family Preservation Interim Program Specifications 2021 alongside IFP Service Provision Guidelines, September 2016
IFBS	DCJ Family Preservation Interim Program Specifications 2021 alongside <i>NGO IFBS Service</i>

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	Provision Guidelines (Part-1), 2013 NGO IFBS Service Provision Guidelines (Part 2) 2013
FFT-CW	FFT-CW Program Guidelines
MST-CAN	MST-CAN Program Guidelines
Resilient Families	DCJ Family Preservation Interim Program Specifications 2021 alongside Resilient Families Operations Manual 2022
Nabu	DCJ Family Preservation Interim Program Specifications 2021 alongside NABU Service Provision Guidelines 2019
PSP-FP	Business Rules: Permanency Support Program (PSP) Family Preservation Program - July 2020 Permanency Support Program (PSP) Family Preservation Program Framework 2019

Further information - email familypreservation@dcj.nsw.gov.au