

Chain-of-Custody Policy

For Supervised Contact and Changeover Services

1. Purpose

This policy establishes strict chain-of-custody procedures to ensure that every child attending the service is transferred, supervised, and returned in a controlled, documented, and verifiable manner.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, supervisors, contractors, and families utilising the service, including supervised visits, supervised changeovers, and community-based contact.

3. Guiding Principles

- Child safety is the highest priority.
- Staff maintain neutrality and do not take sides.
- Every transfer of care is documented.
- No informal handovers occur between parents.
- Procedures are applied consistently to all families.
- Records must withstand legal and professional scrutiny.

4. Arrival Procedures

Parents attend at staggered times. The delivering parent signs the attendance register and transfers the child directly to staff. Parents do not interact unless expressly authorised.

5. Transfer of Custody to Service

Staff assume duty of care immediately upon receiving the child. The time of transfer, responsible staff member, and any belongings are recorded.

6. Supervision During Contact

Children remain within line-of-sight supervision at all times. Only authorised individuals participate. Staff record objective observations and do not provide opinions or therapeutic assessments.

7. Changeover / Collection

The visiting parent departs prior to the arrival of the collecting parent where required. Staff physically hand the child to the authorised person and record the departure time.

8. Documentation Standards

Each session produces a contemporaneous record including arrival/departure times, custody transfers, and any incidents. Records are completed the same day and are not retrospectively altered.

9. Confidentiality

All records are stored securely and accessed only by authorised personnel. Information is released only with written consent or when legally required.

10. Incident Management

If safety concerns arise, the service may suspend or terminate the session. An incident report is completed and management notified immediately.

11. Review

This policy is reviewed annually or following legislative change, incident review, or service audit.

Approved By: _____

Date: _____