

KINDERGARTEN FUNDING Service Agreement



Contents

Purpose of this guide3
Introduction4
What is in a Service Agreement5
Funded Agency Channel7
Service Agreement Compliance Certification14
Funded Organisation Performance Monitoring Framework18
Resources for service providers24
Training for service providers25



Purpose of this guide

This guide provides information about the Service Agreement entered into once kindergarten funding has been approved, including reporting requirements.

This booklet has been designed to be used in conjunction with the *Kindergarten Funding: What Happens Next* publication. It is available on our website at: https://vic.childcarealliance.org.au/services/kinder-funding-support.

For up-to-date information, refer to the Department's page on kindergarten funding requirements.

For questions and ongoing support about funding requirements, call ACAV on (03) 9532 2017.



Introduction

Once a service has had kindergarten funding approved, service providers are required to read and sign a Service Agreement.

A Service Agreement is a legal contract between a government department (in this case the Department of Education) and a funded organisation (the provider) for delivery of services in the community.

The Service Agreement sets out your obligations in relation to service delivery (i.e. the kindergarten program) and outlines the Department's obligations in relation to the provision of funding. It also establishes the terms and conditions of the agreement and provides organisation-specific information regarding funding and payments.

To enter into a new Service Agreement, an organisation must be a legal entity established under either an Act of Parliament or other relevant legislative frameworks (incorporated).



What is in a Service Agreement?

The Service Agreement covers many requirements that need to be fulfilled by both parties. The topics include:

• Term of agreement

This would include a start and end date – this is usually 4 years.

Service delivery

This covers the high quality and consistent delivery of the service you are providing (in this case the kindergarten program). It includes applying professional standards and industry regulations, and notifying the Department of any changes in service delivery or if it ceases for any reason.

Funding

The main type of kindergarten funding is per capita funding which is allocated to each eligible child attending the funded 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten program. The funding is calculated on a per child basis. Per capita funding is paid in advance, in a monthly payment and goes directly to the service via the Service Agreement Management System (SAMS) for each eligible child. The funding section of the agreement includes a reference to the use of funding and what you can and cannot spend the funds on. It is important to ensure accuracy with the kindergarten enrolments and notify the Department via the Kindergarten Information Management System (KIM) if an enrolment ends, as the Department will recoup funds if required.

Conflict of interest

Service providers must make a full disclosure to the Department of any potential conflicts of interest. If any are not disclosed, the agreement could be terminated.

Recordkeeping, including financial records

The service provider must keep accurate records of any transactions, including receipts and payments. These records must be managed and stored securely.

Assets

Any assets that the service purchases with the funding must support the delivery of services in the kindergarten program. Any asset must be recorded in an asset register and be made available for the Department upon request.

• Reporting, including auditing and performance reviews

There is an annual reporting requirement, which includes submitting the services financial accountability requirements (FAR) and completing the Service Agreement Compliance Certification (SACC). See page 14 for more information.



Dispute resolution

The agreement provides information and processes if dispute resolution is required.

Termination of agreement

This covers the instances where the Service Agreement may be terminated by either party.

Privacy and confidential information

This section outlines the requirements of adhering to relevant privacy guidelines.

Insurance

Organisations funded by the Department to provide services to children must ensure that the insurance coverage obtained includes, for example, public and products liability insurance and that includes liability for child abuse.

Variations

A variation is the term used to make a change to funding, deliverables or other requirements contained in the Service Agreement. This could be a change in the funding amount.

Payment schedule

Schedule 1

Provides information about the Department and the organisation, contract period, contract, contact details and insurance requirements.

Schedule 2

Provides an overview of the funding activities, activity codes and amounts (inclusive of GST) for the period and also provides details of the service plan, along with the data collection requirements.

Schedule 3

Lists program and program requirements.

Schedule 4

Provides an overview of funding information and payment schedule, including GST explanation and annual indexation process if provider is funded for activities eligible for indexation.

Schedule 5

Sets out any additional requirements to the agreement.



Other funding

There are other types of funding that your organisation may receive if your service, children or teachers meet funding eligibility requirements via the Service Agreement Management System including:

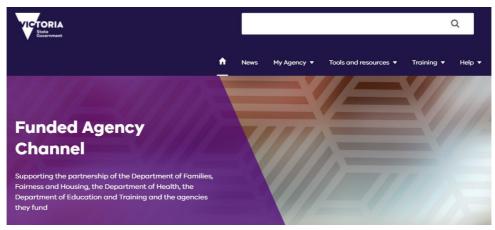
- Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) and Early Start Kindergarten extension grants
- Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) (if applicable)
- Funding for second year of kindergarten (for eligible four-year-old enrolments requiring second year of funded kindergarten)
- Kindergarten Inclusion Support Funding (KIS)
- School Readiness Funding (SRF)
- Early Childhood Languages Program
- Languages program
- Transition Learning and Development Statement funding (TLDS) for Early Childhood Teachers.

For kindergarten programs integrated into the long day care program, this funding is separate from CCS and ACCS, which families will access in the usual way.

You can read detailed information about your responsibilities, policies and obligations under the Service Agreement via the Department's booklet called the <u>Service Agreement requirements</u> - This booklet also provides key budget information necessary for understanding funding.

Funded Agency Channel

The Funded Agency Channel (FAC) is a publicly available website that provides information, news, policies and resources to support the relationship between the Department and the funded organisations. The content is targeted at service providers with a Service Agreement.





The FAC homepage links to a wide variety of information relevant to Service Agreement management, including:

News: the latest news for funded organisations.

My Agency: the secure section of the FAC website, only accessible to registered users.

Tools and resources:

- The <u>Service Agreement Requirements</u> document is designed to provide funded organisations with guidance on complying with their Service Agreement requirements. SAIK also contains the applicable departmental policies that organisations must adhere to.
- Policies and procedures: information about key policies, procedures and guidelines relating to Service Agreements.
- Incident reporting: incident management information for funded organisations.
- Data collection: data collection and reporting tools for funded organisations.
- Systems: information on useful systems for the funded sector, including the Kindergarten IT program.
- Legislation: links to Commonwealth and State legislation sources.
- Useful links: helpful information relevant to Service Agreement management.

Training: education and training resources on subjects such as My Agency.

Help: frequently asked questions, glossary and helpdesk contact details.

My Agency

Service providers must set up an account with <u>My Agency</u> which is the secure section of the Funded Agency Channel website only accessible to registered users.

My Agency provides:

- access to the Service Agreement Module (SAM)
- organisation specific Service Agreement information for the current and previous financial years.
- access to payment schedules, invoices and the progress of Service Agreement variations
- organisation performance reports for funded activities
- links to resources aimed at funded organisations
- a single point of view for information and reporting requirements, as data is gathered from various sources.

Through My Agency, you can access your Service Agreement to change contact details and check payments. It is important to make sure this information is up to date and any changes to management must be added as soon as possible. Communication is sent to you through this avenue via email, including reminders.



Users who are non-DFFH and non-DH staff (i.e. funded kindergarten providers) require an eBusiness portal username and password to gain access to My Agency.

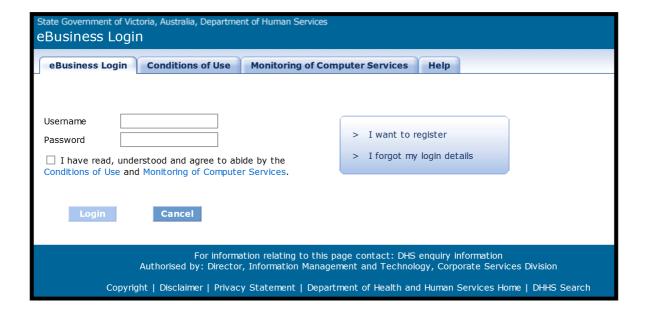


eBusiness login

When you click on the My Agency login, the page you will see is eBusiness Login page.

To register, click on 'I want to register' and complete the details. You should receive your login details within 3 business days.

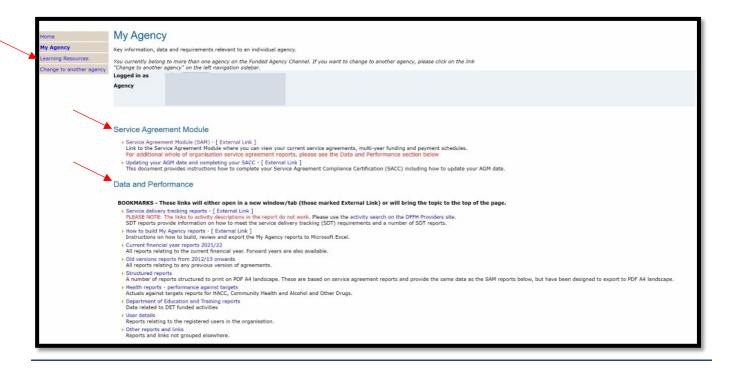
Once you have registered, add your username and password, tick the conditions box and you will be in the My Agency portal.





My Agency portal

After you have logged in, the homepage links to a variety of resources relevant to Service Agreement management.



There are three main areas on the home page that are relevant to service providers:

- Service Agreement Module (SAM)
- Data and Performance
- Learning Resources (on the side panel)



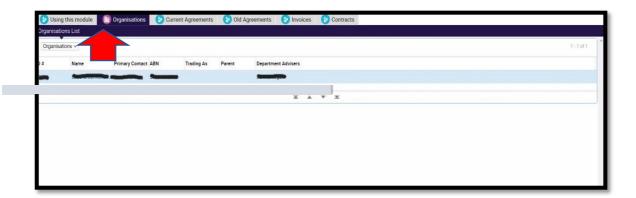
The following pages outline what would be found under each of the above headings.

Service Agreement Module (SAM)

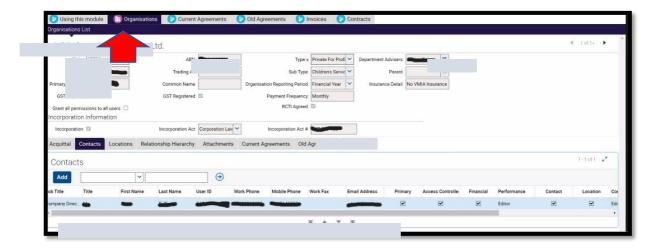
This module provides access to view your organisation's current service agreements, old agreements, invoices, and contracts. You can also accept first time agreements, change contact details and upload compliance information under the various tabs.

Organisations

This page shows the organisations that are under the current Service Agreement. If you have multiple services under the same entity, they will be listed here.



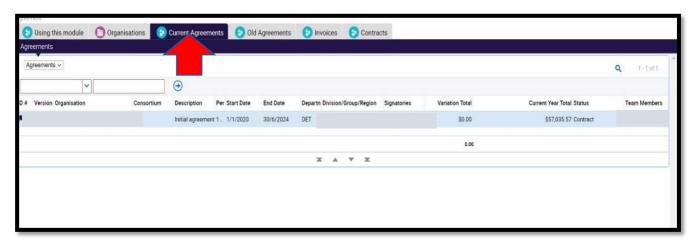
If you select one of the organisations listed, the page goes into more detail regarding the services and contact details.





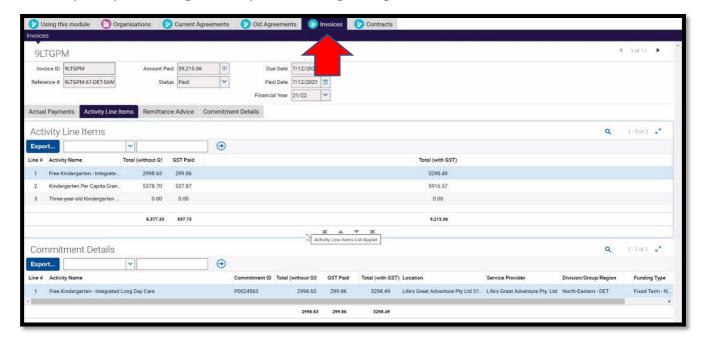
Current Agreement

This section displays the current contract version of your current Service Agreement/s, including start and end date.



Invoices

This section displays all activity line items paid to the organisation during a specific time. This includes per capita funding and Early Start Kindergarten grants.





Data and performance

This section of the My Agency page provides access to a substantial number of reports including current and previous financial year reports and compliance reports. Detailed instructions about how to run these reports are provided in My Agency under the heading 'User guides'.

Learning resources

This section of the My Agency page contains materials designed to assist you to navigate My Agency and the Service Agreement Module.

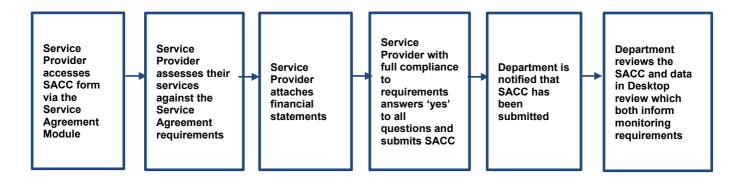
Service Agreement Compliance Certification

<u>Service Agreement Compliance Certification (SACC)</u> forms part of the compliance obligations. All service providers are required to <u>submit</u> an annual SACC to the Department three months after your financial operating period. You can nominate your own reporting period (for example, if you operate a private entity which does not have a reporting period).

The SACC involves answering questions online relating to:

- Financial Management
- Risk Management
- Staff Safety Screening
- Privacy and Data protection.
- Occupational Health and Safety

High level overview of the SACC process:



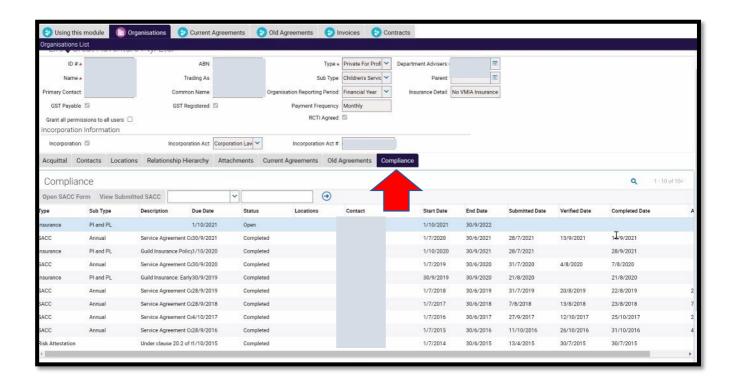


Completing the SACC

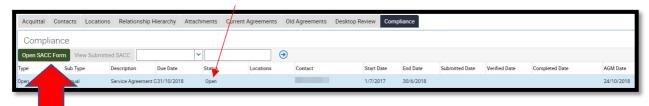
You will receive a reminder email when your SACC is due. You will need to log into My Agency and then follow the below instructions.

To submit your SACC along with supporting compliance documents, follow these steps:

1) Select the Compliance tab.

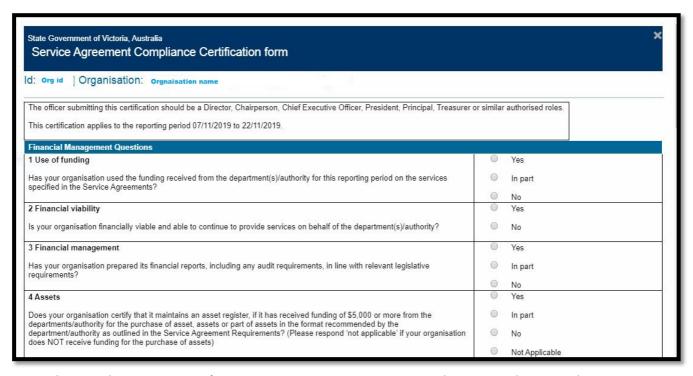


2) Select the SACC record to be completed – it needs to have 'Open' under the heading 'Type'.

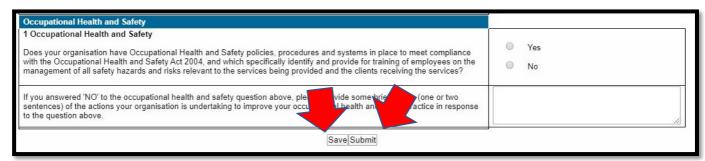


- 3) Select the tab Open SACC form.
- 4) The SACC form will be displayed (see below for example of the first screen).





Depending on the organisation's reporting requirements, you may be required to complete two, three, four or all five sections of the SACC. The system will **only** display the sections you are required to complete.



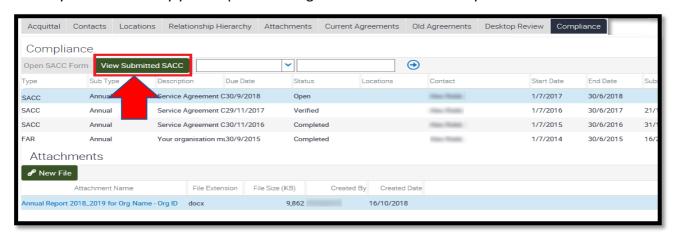
- 5) The SACC form can be saved at any time, and you can return to the form.
- 6) Once the SACC form has been completed, select the Submit button. The SACC should only be submitted by an authorised person.

If you answer 'No' or 'In part' to any of the questions, you will be required to provide brief details of the actions your organisation is taking to improve practices in response to the questions.

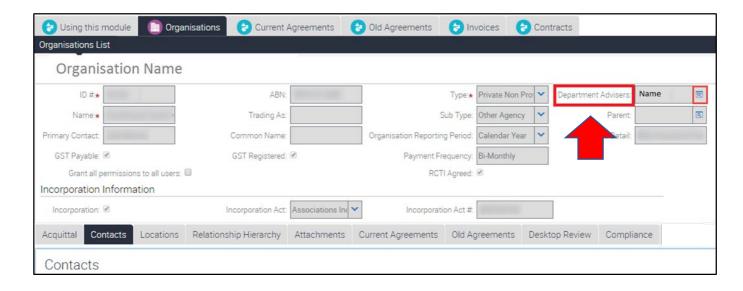
For example, you might answer 'In Part' to the risk management practice question, with the following comment: 'Risk management strategy is being reviewed and is expected to be completed by June 2022'.



You may be contacted by your department regional office to discuss any comments like this.



The submitted SACC form can be viewed by clicking on 'View submitted SACC' but this will be a read only version.



If you need help with your SACC, you can contact your regional office at the Department. The name of the person linked with your Service Agreement will be on this page.



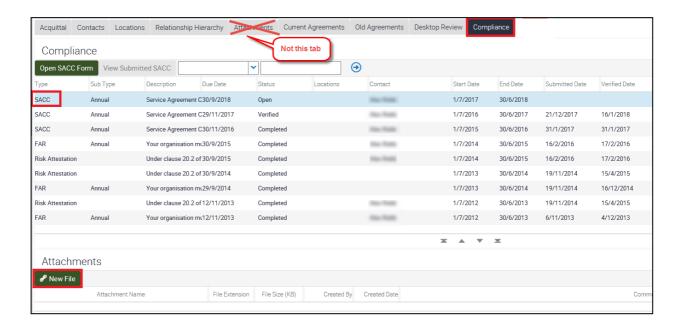
Adding FAR/ACFE BGS documentation to the SACC record

If you are required to provide financial documentation, as part of your FAR, you can:

- add a copy of your annual report containing financial statements or
- add a URL to a publicly accessible website, if your annual report is available online.

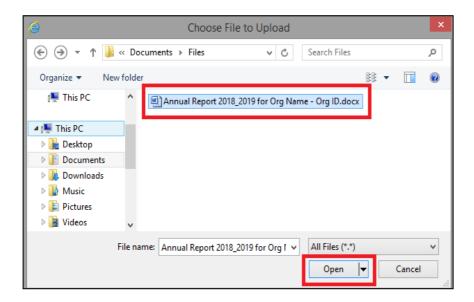
If your agency doesn't produce an annual report, you can complete a financial indicator statement (FIS) or a cash indicators statement (CIS). <u>FIS</u> and <u>CIS</u> templates can be downloaded from the Funded Agency Channel. If you are required to provide ACFE BGS document, as part of ACFE guidelines, you can add a copy of your BGS.

1. On the Compliance tab, select the SACC record to be completed via selecting the word SACC on the far left of the record. The record will be highlighted. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and locate the Attachments section. Select New File.

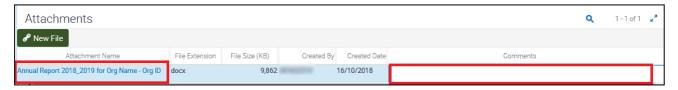


2. The Choose File to Upload pop up box will display. Highlight the document you wish to attach (you can only upload one document at the time) and select Open.





3. This will take you back to the Compliance Attachments section and the document you added will display in the Attachment Name field. If required, you may also add comments (in the Comments field).



A comprehensive guide to completing your SACC can be found here.

Funded Organisation Performance Management Framework

As part of your Service Agreement certain areas of compliance must be met. The Funded Organisation Performance Monitoring Framework (FOPMF) is the audit tool used to monitor service agreement compliance.

This audit tool consists of a series of questions relating to:

- governance
- service delivery
- financial management.



One of the purposes of the monitoring is to allow for early identification of issues and provide the opportunity for more support to you to meet compliance and improve performance. If an issue is identified, Department staff will work with you to assess the risk of that issue and support your organisation to work through any actions.

The monitoring will usually take the form of a meeting with a staff member from your regional Early Childhood Improvement Branch.

You will be given an outline of the requirements beforehand to prepare adequately. It would be advisable to prepare any documentation before your meeting and send it through to the assigned staff member. You will also be required to have the documentation available for the meeting.

The following pages outline the checklist of questions that will be discussed during your meeting.

Organisation Monitoring Checklist

#	Question	Supporting Documentation
1	Can the organisation provide clear documented roles, responsibilities and accountabilities information about the Board/Committee and Chief Executive Officer?	Provide an outline of current roles and responsibilities of the CEO/Owner/Manager.
2	Do the members of the Board/Committee/Owner/Manager have professional and service expertise relevant to the organisation?	A brief description detailing professional and service expertise of current CEO/Owner/Manager
3	Has the Board/Committee/Owner/Manager undertaken governance training and have new members been provided with orientation material?	 Provide the following – An overview of any governance training that has occurred in last 12 months Governance training plan
4	Can the Board/Committee/Owner/Manager	Present a copy of the current 'Quality Improvement Plan'.

demonstrate that it has a current strategic/work plan?

5 Is the Board/Committee and Chief Executive Officer managing its risks about conflict of interest, fraud and legislative compliance? Please provide a copy of the conflict of interest policy and fraud prevention procedures.

- 6 In the previous 12 months, has the organisation submitted its Service Agreement Compliance Certification Form on time?
- 7 Is the organisation financially viable and are there any follow ups required?

Discuss the viability of the service.

8 Does the organisation have a system for tracking police checks and working with children checks?

Consider providing the following –

- A recruitment form documenting that a police check will be undertaken.
- A form tracking police checks and working with children checks.
- Evidence of the recording of kindergarten teachers VIT registration.

9 Does the organisation have a system for referee checks and a recruitment form for disclosure of any formal disciplinary action? Consider providing the following -

- An example of a recruitment form that includes a section for referee checks and a section to enable potential employees to notify the organisation of previous or current formal disciplinary action.
- 10 Does the organisation maintain and use an incident reporting register?

Consider providing the following -

• An example of incident reporting data.



11 Does the organisation undertake analysis of incidents and have

strategies to prevent reoccurrence?

- 12 Does the organisation have systems and processes for records management?
- 13 Does the organisation have evidence that it is active in applying systems and processes as it relates to privacy, protective data security and data quality, and is preparing to be compliant with the Victorian Protective Data Security Standard (VPDSS) by July 2018?
- 14 Does the organisation have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Child Safe Standards?

• A copy of the organisation's incident reporting procedure document.

How are strategies communicated to the whole team?

- A brief description detailing the organisations record management processes
- Large organisations may provide record management procedures.

Refer to website:

https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/protect-your-business/why-cyber-safety-matters-your-business

Provide evidence including policy and practice.

Consider providing the following documentation that demonstrates compliance/implementation of Child Safe Standards –

- Policy/Strategy/Plans
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Training
- Reporting Procedures



Service Monitoring Checklist

#	Question	Supporting Documentation
1	Is the organisation responding to and managing incidents as per department policies?	Please provide a recent 'Incident Report' and discuss processes including any recent reports made to the Department.
2	Does the organisation have accessible information for service users about how to lodge a complaint?	Complaints policy/documentation as provided to service families.
3	Does the organisation have information for staff about how to respond to a complaint?	Complaints policy/documentation as provided to service staff.
4	Does the organisation use information about complaints to improve services?	An explanation of how complaints are used to inform service delivery and improvement.
5	Is the organisation currently compliant with mandatory accreditation requirements?	Discuss QA Rating.
6	Is the organisation meeting its service plan performance measure targets?	Provide a copy of the Enrolment and Fee policy that includes the 'Priority of Access'. Explain how these are being implemented.
7	Are the safety and wellbeing policy requirements for service users being met?	Provide policies that may include access and participation. Provide evidence of policy and practice relating to inclusion.
8	Has the organisation provided the	Question Not Applicable.



fire risk certificates?

9 Does the organisation have a fire risk management strategy in place including an emergency management plan? Local or regional emergency management plan. Present a copy of the 'Emergency Management Plan' including information on drills, evacuation and lockdown procedures.

10 Is the organisation undertaking mandatory staff training?

An overview of mandatory training provided to staff and tracking of mandatory requirements including First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Epipen.

Please provide sample of staff training/professional development planned or completed.

11 Is the organisation managing its financial risk about the impact of internal changes and/or government reforms?

If applicable, a description of any current financial changes likely to impact service delivery.



Resources for service providers

Early Childhood Improvement Branches (ECIB)

Service providers can access support and guidance from the Early Childhood Improvement Branch (ECIB) based in their region which can be contacted here.

Each ECIB consists of Early Childhood Performance and Planning Advisers (ECPAPA), Kindergarten Improvement Advisers (KIA) and Early Childhood Funding Advisers (ECFA) to assist with all aspects of providing a funded kindergarten program.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

This Victorian government department is responsible for child protection, prevention of family violence, housing, disability, multicultural affairs, LGBTIQ+ equality, veterans, and the offices for Women and Youth. It is also where the <u>Funded Agency Channel</u> (FAC) sits. The FAC supports the partnership of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the agencies they fund.

The FAC is where service providers that hold Service Agreements can log in, complete training and find further information about the requirements of their service agreement.

Kindergarten Funding Guide

The <u>Kindergarten Funding Guide</u> was developed by the Department and is designed to assist service providers that already provide kindergarten programs and currently receive kindergarten funding or wish to apply for kindergarten funding. It provides detailed information about the types of kindergarten funding available, the eligibility criteria for the funding, how to apply for the funding and how to comply with operational requirements once the funding has been granted.

You can also find the most up-to-date information about kindergarten funding, eligibility and compliance at www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood.



Training for service providers

Funded Agency Channel

There is training available to support service providers navigating the requirements for their service agreement through the <u>Funded Agency Channel training</u>.

This training covers:

- service agreement structure
- key elements of the FAC website
- ebusiness registration
- accessing My Agency and the role of the Organisation Authority
- running reports in My Agency and understanding funding, targets, invoices and other service agreement data
- key functions in the Service Agreement Module
- updating contact details
- completing the Service Agreement compliance certification (SACC)
- completing Service delivery tracking
- viewing current and old agreements and accessing contracts



Connecting you with Victoria's Early Childhood Education & Care sector.

ACA Victoria

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