

The Role of PSP Casework Staff in Family Group Conferencing

As Permanency Support Provider (PSP) casework staff, understanding your role in Family Group Conferencing (FGC) is fundamental to success for the family. In FGC, you are a participant in the FGC process which is facilitated by an impartial FGC facilitator.

The table below outlines the roles in FGC:

Role	Responsibility
PSP caseworker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a strength and relationship-based approach • be future focused • understand the FGC process • identify children and families for FGC • explain the FGC process to children and families • seek consent from family to have a FGC • identify family members and support services to participate in FGC • develop clear ‘bottom lines’ (issues that need to be addressed at the FGC) • complete referral form and identify FGC facilitator • continue general case management with the family • meet with the FGC facilitator to discuss the bottom lines, roles and responsibilities and provide information • attend the FGC • sign off on the family plan in consultation with casework manager • support the family to implement their family plan • organise and attend the FGC review (unless you have requested the FGC facilitator to do this).
PSP casework manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a strength and relationship-based approach • be future focused • understand the FGC process • identify children and families for FGC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support casework staff to talk with children and families about FGC • check and approve the referral form • participate in FGC preparation • attend the FGC • approve and sign off on the family plan • attend the FGC review.
FGC facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consult with and prepare all FGC participants during the preparation stage • explain confidentiality • ensure participants understand the FGC process and purpose; their role in the FGC; and how they can participate • work with the family to identify further family members and support services to participate in FGC • work with the family to ensure they understand the concerns to be addressed • ensure the views of the child/children are included in the process • refer all case management enquiries or concerns to the caseworker • address any participant worries • negotiate with family about a venue and time for the FGC (this may be arranged by the agency once FGC facilitator provides information) • explore the needs of participants including travel details, childcare requirements, catering, assessments and reports. Seek approval from PSP Service Provider where funding is required • facilitate the FGC • type up the family plan for send to all parties. <p>If FGC facilitator is required to coordinate and facilitate the FGC review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact all FGC participants for FGC Review • facilitate the FGC Review.

Other service providers

- collate agency information that may be able to support the child and or family
- attend the FGC and present information to family

Who Can Attend an FGC?

As listed in the above table, there are many parties who are able to participate in FGC. The participants in the FGC are not determined by the agency. As FGC works to shift the power to the family, they decide with the FGC facilitator who should participate. FGCs are not intended to be casework as usual; rather, it is about bringing together extended family, people with a significant role in the child’s life and significant community members or service providers to develop solutions to challenges.

Participants in FGC may include, but are not limited to:

Child or young person	Mother and father
Siblings	Grandparents (maternal and paternal)
Aunts and uncles (maternal and paternal)	Cousins
Family friends	Carers (current and previous)
Elders and community representatives	Community agency support workers
A support person if needed	

It is best practice that children attend the FGC. This will depend on their age, maturity and what needs to be discussed. If they are unable to attend or do not wish to attend, the FGC facilitator will work with them to ensure their voice is heard.

FGC and Casework Planning

FGC aims to build upon children, young people and family’s strengths to overcome challenges. By fully engaging in FGC you support the family to be a part of the decision making. The family plan developed during the FGC is owned by the family and not the PSP service provider or the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), therefore you must seek permission from all participants to use the plan in legal proceedings.

It is the caseworker's responsibility that any plan developed as part of casework aligns with the family plan. If the family plan is developed after a case plan, ensure that goals from the family plan are added to the case plan.

Confidentiality in FGC

FGC comes under Section 244C of the [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998 No 157](#). The section sets out the legal requirement of confidentiality of information obtained in connection with Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Anything said or done or any admission made by any participant including yourself during the FGC process must be held in confidence and not disclosed to any other person.

There are some exceptions to when confidential information can be disclosed. The disclosure of confidential information is based on your role within FGC.

The FGC facilitator may disclose information:

- when the person who provided the information consents to you disclosing this. You must be clear about how you intend to use the information when gaining consent
- if you receive information during the FGC process which gives you reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm
- when you have reasonable grounds to believe that disclosing the information is required to prevent or minimise the danger of injury or damage to property
- when the law requires you to disclose the information.

Any participant in FGC may disclose information when:

- you have reasonable grounds to believe that disclosing the information is required to prevent or minimise the danger of injury or damage to property
- the FGC facilitator or a legal practitioner participating in FGC is being referred for professional misconduct.

It is key that PSP casework staff understand that FGC is not a case planning meeting so you are unable to take minutes or notes during the FGC.

For further information see: [Foundations of Family Group Conferencing](#) and [Family Group Conference Process](#).