

June 30, 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

New DFFH Birth Registration Processes

The FCAV welcomes the new process for birth registration for children in care, developed and implemented by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The changes commence on 30 June 2021.

The new, streamlined processes have been developed following advocacy by the FCAV and its members who provided DFFH with many case studies of a child or young person whose birth had not been registered with consequences including lack of access to childcare and Medicare. The FCAV would like to thank all the carers who assisted the FCAV by providing first hand experiences of the further disadvantage these children face without a registered birth or birth certificate which formed evidence for the campaign.

Key aspects of the new process include:

- DFFH now has the power to register the birth of all children in care regardless of any court orders;
- Child protection will automatically request a copy of a birth certificate for all children who have been in care for longer than 21 days;
- Births, Deaths and Marriages will provide a birth certificate within 30 days;
- Where a birth has not been registered DFFH will work with parents to register a birth; and
- Where parental cooperation is not provided DFFH will proceed independently to register the birth.

The FCAV recognises the significant work that has been undertaken by the DFFH to change birth registration processes and to respond to carer frustrations and concerns. The changes recognise that access to identity documents such as a birth certificate is essential for children and young people in care and their carers to ensure they can engage in the provisions of 21st century society including:

- tax file number
- Centrelink payments
- Medicare
- passports
- driver's license
- bank account
- credit card
- mobile phone

The changes are detailed in the child protection manual which can be accessed at: [Registering a child's birth - procedure | Child Protection Manual \(cpmanual.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au)

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