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| **Position description** |
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| Position title: | Therapeutic Support Officer |
| Branch/Division/Team: | Community Operations and Practice Leadership| Statewide Disability and Housing Operations | Forensic Disability Services |
| Work location: | **Multiple locations**:  100 Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield = Intensive Residential Treatment Program  7 Henderson Court, Bundoora = Long Term Residential Program  10 River Drive, Bundoora = Disability Justice Interim Accommodation  1 Scartree Court, Bundoora = Kookaburra House  56 Poplar Rd, Parkville = Disability Justice Interim Accommodation |
| Classification: | DDSO-1 / DDSO-1Q |
| Salary: | DDSO-1: $54,029 - $59,751 (plus superannuation)  DDSO-1Q: $60,306 - $66,154 (plus superannuation) |
| Position reports to | Unit Manager, Forensic Residential Services |

# Role purpose

Therapeutic Support Officers provide secure treatment and care to people with an intellectual disability who have come to a Forensic Residential Service through the criminal justice system. Therapeutic Support Officers aim to support residents develop life skills, so that once exited, they can make a pro-social, independent and constructive contribution to the community. Therapeutic Support Officer provide residents with leadership, advice, support and guidance. Therapeutic Support Officers also serve as a positive role model, demonstrating how to act and interact

Being a Therapeutic Support Officer provides a great sense of purpose. You're doing two important things for the community: you are supporting vulnerable people and keeping the community safe. You are helping residents unpack those underlying issues that are resulting in them coming into the justice system, and you are helping people who have engaged in offending behaviour to take the first steps to becoming more positive contributors to society.

Therapeutic Support Officers are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of residents in a secure environment while also maintaining good order and the security of the facility. This is achieved through strict supervision of residents in residential and community settings. The work includes escort duties, observing and assessing resident behaviour, supporting residents implement treatment tasks, operating security equipment and effectively responding to incidents. The role also involves collating and providing information, writing case files, being part of a care team and preparing a variety of reports.

Therapeutic Support Officers are also responsible for contributing to resident’s rehabilitation, encouraging residents to establish goals for themselves and to engage in positive behavioural change.

## Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has a dedicated focus on the community wellbeing and the social recovery of Victoria.  The Department is working to deliver important work started before the pandemic, while building on opportunities it has presented to lead bold and innovative reform. We work to create equal opportunities for all Victorians to live safe, respected and valued lives. We lead policies and services dedicated to community wellbeing by empowering communities to build a fairer and safer Victoria. The Department includes Child Protection, Prevention of Family Violence, Family Safety Victoria, Homes Victoria, Housing and Disability and Seniors and Carers. The Department is also responsible for the key portfolios of Multicultural Affairs, LGBTIQA+ communities, Equality, Veterans and of offices of Women and Youth, enhancing the alignment with policy areas and portfolios focusing on the recovery and growth of our diverse communities. The Department also supports Victorian Disability Workers Commission and Respect Victoria. We are building an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity and difference. All jobs can be worked flexibly, and we actively encourage job applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with disability, LGBTIQA+, veterans and people from varied cultural backgrounds.

## Forensic Disability Services

Forensic Disability Services within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing operates under the *Disability Act 2006* and supports people with cognitive disability involved in the criminal justice system, who require specialist support and adapted intervention to address criminogenic needs.

The program operates alongside the broader justice and disability service system and other mainstream services, to address disability specific factors contributing to a person’s risk of offending.

The primary objective of forensic disability services is:

* enhance community safety by reducing the risk of reoffending among clients.
* foster clients’ independent living and enable them to achieve personal goals by improving their adaptive functioning skills and quality of life.

 The services that make up the Forensic Disability Program are:

* Forensic Disability Statewide Access Services
* Disability Justice Coordination
* Forensic Residential Services
* Forensic Disability Clinical Services
* Youth Forensic Disability Clinical Services

## Forensic Residential Services (FRS)

Forensic Residential Services operate under Forensic Disability Services and are responsible for providing accommodation to those with an intellectual disability engaged in the criminal justice system.

Forensic Residential Services operates the only two disability Residential Treatment Facilities (RTF) in Victoria; RTF Fairfield and RTF Bundoora. Section 151(3) of the Disability Act 2006 states that the purpose of a residential treatment facility is ‘to provide compulsory treatment to persons with an intellectual disability admitted to the residential treatment facility’.

Kookaburra House is a specialist disability accommodation in the community to individuals to assist them in gradually reintegrating into the community. Kookaburra House is supported by the broader Forensic Residential Services program and provides highly structured and supervised support to residents to assist them in continuing to work towards treatment goals and practice relapse intervention strategies.

Disability Interim Justice Accommodation Service (DIJAS) are two short term accommodation services aimed to support forensic disability clients on bail and are incorporated under the same operational management at Forensic Residential Services.

# Key accountabilities

**Operating at DDSO1 level, you will:**

1. Directly support client wellbeing, including support with daily household activities, preparation and assistance with meals, personal care, and social, recreational and community experiences that enhance quality of life, based on support plan goals.

2. Manage and assist as part of a team incidents related to challenging behaviours and implementing behaviour support strategies and positive behaviour support plans according to legislative requirements

3. Understand client needs, preferences and interests and respond to clients and their families and others in their lives.

4. Under general direction, implement a range of client support plans, including behaviour support plans.

## 5. Provide information, feedback and reports, including recording charts and completing routine tasks utilising departmental systems including computer software applications.

## 6. Provide information to colleagues on routine matters relating to client needs and general house matters.

## 7. Keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's records, information security and privacy policies and requirements.

## 8. Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for that of others in the workplace by working in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's occupational health and safety (OHS) policies and procedures.

## 9. Demonstrate how the actions and outcomes of this role and work unit impact clients and the department’s ability to deliver, or facilitate the delivery of, effective support and services.

**Operating at DDSO1Q level, you will perform all the above together with increasing involvement to:**

1. Contribute to the day-to-day running of the group home and help maintain service accounts.

2. Utilise well-developed communication skills to identify client needs, liaise with other service providers, stakeholders and significant others.

3. Administer medication treatments and therapies according to prescribed protocols or otherwise, seek appropriate medical assistance

4. Develop, implement, monitor and review a range of client support plans, with oversight from senior staff, using knowledge of client need, preferences and interests.

5. Develop planned activities in line with departmental policies and guidelines.

6. Advocate on behalf of clients for increased access to, and inclusion in, community and recreational services.

7. Work towards establishing links with community resources, facilitating inclusions of clients into the community.

8. Contribute to developing programs for clients and to longer-term house development plans in consultation with more senior staff.

9. Share observations relating to work process improvements with supervisor or more senior staff.

10. Liaise with family members, medical services, departmental services and external community services to help meet client needs.

# Key selection criteria

## Knowledge and skills

1. Stakeholder management: responds to clients’ needs; keeps the client or stakeholder up to date with issues and developments; promptly follows through on inquiries, requests and complaints; takes responsibility for correcting problems promptly and without becoming defensive.

2. Verbal communication: clearly explains information and listens to feedback; speaks clearly and concisely and keeps people interested when speaking; uses a polite and considerate manner when dealing with others.

3. Interpersonal skills: polite and considerate in dealing with others; aware of people’s moods and temperament.

4. Self-management: accepts responsibilities for own actions; focuses on the most important goals; has a realistic and balanced view of own strengths and weaknesses; recognises own feelings and personal prejudices and understands why they occur.

## Personal qualities

5. Customer/client focus: listens to customers; actively seeks to meet customer needs; seeks ways to improve services; committed to delivering high quality outcomes for clients.

6. Integrity: committed to the public interest; operates in a manner that is consistent with the organisations code of conduct; inspires trust by treating all individuals fairly.

7. Initiative and accountability: proactive and self-starting; seizes opportunities and acts upon them; takes responsibility for own actions.

8. Teamwork: cooperates and works well with others in pursuit of team goals, collaborates and shares information, shows consideration, concern and respect for other feelings and ideas, accommodates and works well with the different working styles of others, encourages resolution of conflict within the group.

## Qualifications

• A Level 2 First Aid Certificate is required.

• A current Employee Working with Children Check (WWCC) card is required and will need to be provided prior to commencement of employment by the applicant. Currency will need to be maintained by the employee for the period of employment.

• A full driver’s licence is required as some positions and shifts may be required to drive clients to appointments and other locations.

• All new starters are required to complete a mandatory induction program prior to commencement of duties. This relates to both DDSO1/DDSO1Q.

**DDSO1**

* Unqualified staff will be enabled access to on the job learning as a part of the traineeship scheme.
* Automatic progression from DDSO level 1 to DDSO level 1Q will occur on the attainment of Certificate IV in Disability Work or the Advanced Certificate in Residential and Community Services (or equivalent qualification).

**DDSO1Q**

• A Certificate IV in Disability Work or the Advanced Certificate in Residential and Community Services or other tertiary qualifications recognised within departmental guidelines as being equivalent is required and a copy must be provided with your application.

## Specialist expertise

**DDSO1**

• An ability to apply contemporary approaches to supporting people with a disability consistent with the overall service program would be expected.

• Ability to use departmental systems such information technology systems, would be advantageous.

**DDSO1Q**

• Ability to participate in support planning and other support strategies, including working to establish links with community resources and promoting, facilitating or advocating increased access to inclusion in the community.

# Values and behaviours

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing employees are required to demonstrate commitment to:

**The public sector values and behaviours** – responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights.

**Recordkeeping** – The department is committed to good record keeping and requires all staff to routinely create and keep full and accurate records of their work-related activities, transactions and decisions, using authorised systems.

**Diversity** – The department values an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity and strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal people, people with disability, people from the LGBTQI+ community, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

# Important information

The salary range for this position is set out in Schedule C of the *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement* 2020. For further information refer to [Department of Treasury and Finance](https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/home) <https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/home>).

Department policy stipules that salary upon commencement is paid at the base of the salary range for the relevant grade. An executive delegate must approve any above base requests. These will be by exception only or where required to match the current salary of a Victorian Public Service staff transferring at-level.

Individuals who have received a Voluntary Departure Package from a Victoria Public Service department/agency are ineligible for re-employment for a minimum of three calendar years from the date of separation.

Individuals who have received an Early Retirement Package (ERP) from a Victoria Public Service department/agency are ineligible for re-employment for a minimum of 12 months from the date of separation.

The department is a key emergency management partner and contributes significantly to Victoria’s emergency management arrangements. As part of a whole-of-government agreement, employees may be required to undertake training in emergency management and support functions during an emergency and may be redeployed to facilitate this need.

The department provides and maintains a safe working environment that does not risk the health of its employees.

# Pre-employment checks

All appointments require reference checks, national criminal records checks and pre-employment misconduct screening. Some positions also require a Working with Children Check and screening through the Disability Worker Screening List.

Applicants who have lived overseas in one country for 12 months or longer in the last ten years must provide an international police check from the relevant overseas police agency. Applicants can obtain a check through an organisation providing international police checks via an internet search.

Pre-employment checks may include checking whether an applicant’s name is on the Disability Worker Screening List. This incorporates:

* the Disability Worker Exclusion List which includes names of persons unsuitable for employment as a disability support worker in a disability residential service provided, funded or registered by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
* the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission which has compliance and enforcement actions, including banning orders
* the Victorian Disability Worker Commission prohibition orders.

# COVID-19 Vaccination

The department strongly recommends (but does not mandate) that employees maintain their COVID-19 vaccination status in accordance with current [**ATAGI (Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation) advice**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/dffhinternalcomms.cmail20.com/t/y-l-pykfdk-idikkrlhur-y/__;!!C5rN6bSF!H6CXxDfLBvqg9rEgbXDpYWA3WTHZn2OnDJhKeq0kxH-ACrRChd8KszaSeb1LyWwAcRzC24ygBFEglV9-MxD2nlA3BC5C4uEEwWgG6qpjPw$), given their individual circumstances. As of June 2023, DFFH does not require evidence of COVID-19 vaccination status.

# Further information

For enquiries regarding the position please phone the contact on the position description. If you experience difficulties in applying online, please contact Workforce Services via email at [COPLWorkforceServices@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:COPLWorkforceServices@dffh.vic.gov.au)

DFFH values the contribution of all employees and fair and equitable treatment of all people is integral to all activities. As such, the DFFH offers reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities on request at [aboriginaldiversityinclusion@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:aboriginaldiversityinclusion@dffh.vic.gov.au)

For further information visit [‘About the Department’ on Department of Families, Fairness and Housing’](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/about) <www.dffh.vic.gov.au/about>.

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