

AOD treatment service for family reunification

Fact sheet for child protection practitioners

What is the AOD treatment service for family reunification?

The aim of the family reunification service is to enable timely alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment for parents who are required to undergo AOD treatment as part of their child's Family Reunification Order (FRO). Service providers may also support parents of children who are subject to an Interim Accommodation Order (IAO) that places them out of parental care, where they have the capacity to do so. This facilitates access to treatment as soon as possible after their involvement with Child Protection to maximise the opportunity for family reunification.

The providers funded to deliver services in each AOD catchment are listed in the table below. Intake is delivered by the existing catchment-based AOD intake providers.

Who is this service for?

This service targets parents who must meet a court-ordered condition to undergo AOD treatment relating to their child's FRO, or where children are placed on an IAO that places them out of parental care.

The provision of funding for this target cohort reflects Victoria's AOD Program Guidelines, which provide that parents who require AOD treatment to achieve reunification with their children are one of a select group of clients who must be given priority access to treatment as per the AOD program guidelines:

[Alcohol and other drug service standards and guidelines](#).

What do I need to do?

How do I make a referral?

Following the issuing of a FRO or IAO that places the child in care with an associated AOD condition for the parent, child protection practitioners will make a direct referral to the relevant catchment-based AOD intake provider. This referral should be made as soon as possible after court or, at the most, within seven days after the order is issued. Child protection practitioners must make this referral irrespective of whether the parent chooses to self-refer to intake (this will provide a safety net to ensure the parent connects with the treatment system).

Referral is to be made via telephone to the AOD intake provider servicing the local government area in which the parent resides (please see area-based contact list below). The AOD intake provider may request a copy of the court order and conditions, which can be sent as a [secure email](#) (also refer to [Information security](#)) in the Child Protection manual).

It is important to document the referral process on CRIS in the 'Referral' tab. The child protection practitioner must also provide the AOD intake provider with their contact details.

How will I engage the parent in making the referral to the AOD provider?

To enable AOD service providers to contact parents to begin treatment, child protection practitioners must:

- discuss this service with parents
 - during the course of Child Protection intervention
 - immediately prior to the FRO or IAO that places the child in care being made at court
- alert parents their information will be provided to the AOD intake provider (including their name, address and AOD-related conditions) for the AOD intake provider to be able to identify, and refer the information to, the appropriate service provider
- include parental agreement in the AOD condition attached to the order; for example, with wording to the following effect:

“*[Insert parent's name]* must agree to a referral being made by the department to an AOD service and participate in assessment and treatment for AOD dependence as directed by the department and must allow reports to be given to the department”.

What happens after I refer a parent to an AOD provider?

Following a referral by Child Protection, the AOD intake provider will:

- refer the parent's information onward to the appropriate AOD family reunification treatment service provider
- contact the parent if more information is required before providing the parent's details to the service provider
- advise Child Protection of the allocated AOD service provider details, or if they have been unable to contact the parent (in order to obtain further information) after a 'reasonable' effort to do so. What constitutes a 'reasonable' effort is left to clinical judgement as there is no formal guidance. The department's consultations in developing this service suggest that, at a minimum, the first call to the parent should be made within 48 hours of receiving a referral, and at least three attempts should be made to contact the parent by phone in the first ten business days.

The service provider will initiate contact with the parent to commence the assessment and course of treatment. The service provider will advise the allocated child protection practitioner about the outcomes of this process; whether that is to advise about the assessment and treatment plan for the parent, or if they have been unable to contact a parent after a reasonable effort to do so. Service providers will also be expected to notify Child Protection if significant problems arise regarding the parent's treatment progress.

AOD intake and service providers will provide bridging support as required for parents as they would ordinarily do whilst a parent is waiting for assessment or treatment to commence. Child protection practitioners should seek information about this and document it on CRIS, in the child's case plan and court reports as required.

Who can I contact with any questions?

Child protection practitioners should discuss referrals to the family reunification service with their manager. General enquiries about the family reunification service can also be directed to the Department of Health via email aod.enquiries@health.vic.gov.au (please make sure to include 'family reunification' in the email subject line).

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Table: AOD treatment service for family reunification – key intake provider and service providers’ details

Local government area (DH area/s in brackets)	AOD catchment	Intake provider	Intake contact number/s	Funded Treatment Provider (Assessment, Care and Recovery Coordination, Counselling)
Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, Stonnington, (Bayside Peninsula)	Bayside	Bayside Integrated Services	1800 229 263 9690 9778	Bayside Alcohol and Other Drug Partnership (Windana)
Frankston, Mornington Peninsula, (Bayside Peninsula)	Frankston Mornington Peninsula	Frankston and Mornington Drug and Alcohol Services (FaMDAS)	1300 665 781	Windana
Cardinia, Casey, Greater Dandenong, (Southern Melbourne)	South East Melbourne	South Eastern Consortium of AOD Agencies (SECADA)	1800 142 536	SURE (EACH)
Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse, (Inner Eastern Melbourne)	Inner East	Eastern Health Turning Point AOD Consortium	1800 778 278	SURE (EACH)
Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges, (Outer Eastern Melbourne)	Eastern Melbourne	EACH SURE Consortium	1300 007 873	SURE (EACH)
Melbourne, Moonee Valley, (Western Melbourne) Merri-bek, (Hume Merri-bek); Yarra (North Eastern Melbourne)	Inner North	Uniting Care ReGen and Odyssey House Victoria	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Uniting VIC TAS)
Whittlesea, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik, (North Eastern Melbourne)	North Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Uniting VIC TAS)
Bass Coast, Baw Baw, LaTrobe, South Gippsland, (Inner Gippsland) East Gippsland, Wellington, (Outer Gippsland)	Gippsland	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (Uniting VIC TAS)

Local government area (DH area/s in brackets)	AOD catchment	Intake provider	Intake contact number/s	Funded Treatment Provider (Assessment, Care and Recovery Coordination, Counselling)
Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees, (Central Highlands) Hindmarsh, Horsham, North Grampians, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack, (Western District)	Grampians	ACSO	1300-022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (Uniting VIC TAS)
Brimbank, Melton, (Brimbank Melton) Hume, (Hume Merri-bek) Maribyrnong, (Western Melbourne)	North West Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and other Drugs Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey Victoria)
Hobsons Bay, Wyndham, (Western Melbourne)	South West Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and other Drugs Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey Victoria)
Colac Otway, Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast, (Barwon)	Barwon	Barwon AOD Consortium	1300 094 187 Colac Area 1300 763 254	Odyssey Victoria
Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, (Ovens Murray)	Hume	ACSO	1300 022 760	Gateway Health
Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, (Goulburn)	Goulburn Valley	ACSO	1300 022 760	Primary Care Connect
Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander, (Loddon) Buloke, Gannawarra, Mildura, Swan Hill, (Mallee)	Loddon – Mallee	ACSO	1300 022 760	Northern Victoria Alcohol and Other Drug Services (The Salvation Army)

Local government area (DH area/s in brackets)	AOD catchment	Intake provider	Intake contact number/s	Funded Treatment Provider (Assessment, Care and Recovery Coordination, Counselling)
Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool, (Western District)	Great South Coast	ACSO	1300 022 760	Great South Coast Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services Consortium (Western Region Alcohol and Drugs Inc)