



Human Services
Community Services

Supporting Children with Additional Needs (SCAN)

Program Guidelines and Forms

Effective 1 January 2010

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Section One

1. Introduction

The Supporting Children with Additional Needs (SCAN) program aims to improve access to Community Services funded preschool, vacation care and occasional child care services for children with additional support needs.

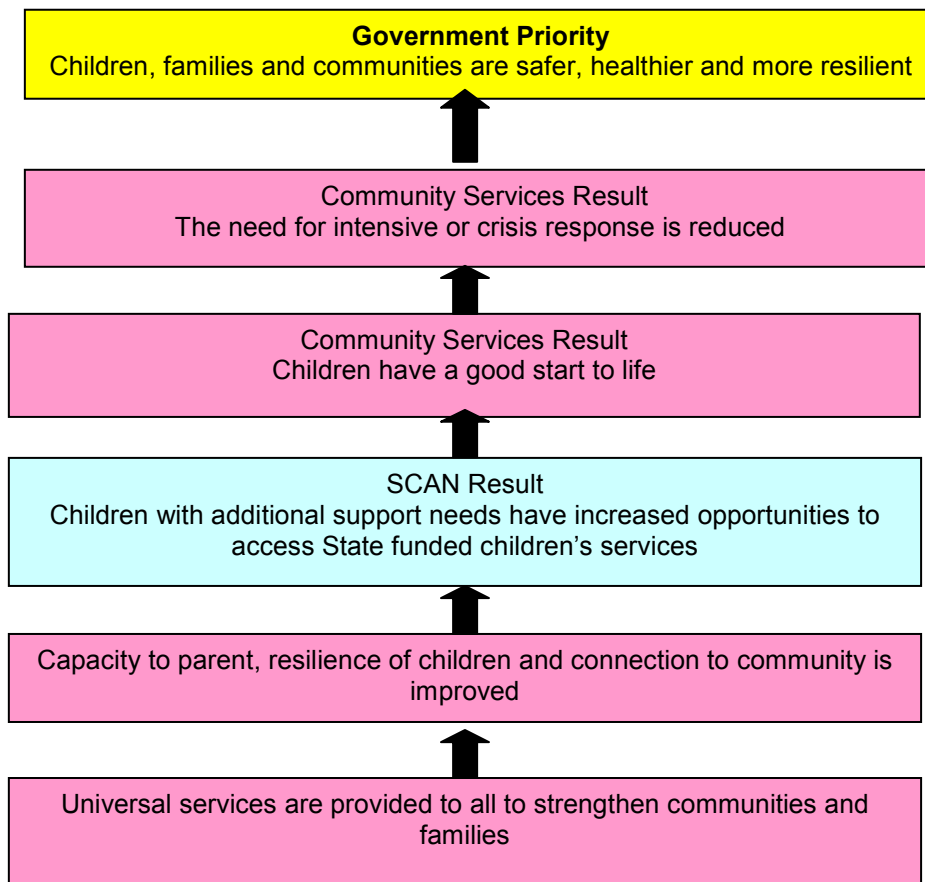
SCAN funding is provided as a contribution and aims to increase the capacity of eligible services to include children with additional needs.

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Assist eligible service providers and SCAN organisations to identify the need for SCAN funding to support a child with additional needs to access a children's service.
- Outline SCAN administrative and accountability processes.

These guidelines replace the guidelines that were issued in 2003. Community Services reserves the right to amend these guidelines by whatever means it may determine at its absolute discretion and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments.

1.1 SCAN Program Result and Objectives



The outcomes for SCAN are:

- Children with additional support needs have increased opportunities to access eligible Community Services funded Children's Services.
- Eligible Community Services funded Children's services are responsive to the needs of children with additional support needs.

1.2 Eligible children's services

Licensed and/or registered preschool, vacation care, occasional child care and multipurpose services funded under the Children's Services Program and are not eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) as an 'Approved' service.

1.3 Target Group

Service providers requiring assistance to support the access and inclusion of children with additional needs enrolled in their service. Additional needs may include:

- Challenging behaviours
- Delayed developmental or diagnosed disabilities
- Severe chronic health conditions
- Moderate to severe language delays

The children in attendance at the eligible services may be between birth and 12 years of age.

Cultural education and consultancy will be provided to support service providers to increase access; build relationships and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities and children from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background. However, funding to support these individual children in these target groups is provided through the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) under the Preschool Investment Reform Plan (PIRP).

1.4 Funding Support

Funding through SCAN may be provided if the support needs of an individual child can not be accommodated within the service without regular adjustments throughout the day to the structure of the environment; programming and staffing of the service.

1.5 Exceptional Circumstances funding

Limited additional funding may be available for services where due to exceptional circumstances the service is absolutely unable to include a child in the service without additional funding. To apply, a detailed and clearly evidenced Exceptional Circumstances application will be required.

NOTE:

- Exceptional Circumstances funding applications will be subject to an assessment process which may involve the SCAN organisation visiting or contacting the service.
- Circumstances that constitute an application for exceptional circumstance may include but are not limited to:
 - Safety of the child and/or those nearby
 - Limited or no support services
 - Location of service
 - Ability to access other sources of funding
- Exceptional Circumstances funding can only be used as a contribution towards the employment of a support worker (additional to licensing requirements)
- Please refer to **Section 7** for a definition of “safety” and some examples.

Section Two

2. Roles and responsibilities

All individuals, groups and families involved in the SCAN program work together to assist the delivery of satisfying, quality early childhood and vacation care experiences to children with additional needs.

2.1 SCAN Organisations

Community Services has funded SCAN organisations to manage the program in each of the Community Services Networks. These organisations are responsible for the management and distribution of funding to eligible children's services to support access opportunities for individual children based on funding applications received.

The SCAN organisations are also responsible for assisting service providers to access the SCAN program and providing training, support and resources to eligible children's services to facilitate the inclusion of all children with additional support needs including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background.

The SCAN organisations are listed in Appendix K.

2.2 Service providers

Service providers are responsible for identifying children attending their service who have additional needs and for determining the support needed by each child to access the service and program.

Service providers must not act outside their area of expertise when determining the level of support need of a child or establishing a program of support for the child.

Service providers are responsible for completing and forwarding funding applications to their SCAN organisation, spending funds in accordance with the applications and fulfilling all accountability requirements.

Services receiving SCAN funding must demonstrate:

- Children with additional support needs have increased opportunities to access the service
- The service is responsive to the needs of children with additional support needs
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds are supported and engaged within the service

2.3 Family of child with additional needs

Parents/carers knowledge of their child's support needs is invaluable and they are invited both to provide information about their child's ongoing support needs and to participate as partners in planning for quality learning experiences.

If additional expertise is required to make accurate determinations of the child's support needs the child's family may arrange contact with support agencies or give permission for service providers or SCAN organisations to contact or gather information about their child from support agencies.

The parents/carers responsible for the child are able to access records, including observations and other records the service has kept on their child.

Section Three

3 Identifying the need for additional support in children's services

3.1 *How to identify the service's need for SCAN funding to support a child's inclusion*

When considering whether an application for funding is required, a service provider needs to consider an individual child's ability to access the service and program in relation to the following key areas:

- Social environment
- The number, skills and experience of staff.
- Specific areas of the program (excursions, routines, individual activities and small group experiences).
- The needs of other children in the service
- Physical environment

Issues for consideration include:

- What, if anything, is preventing this child from participating in all the early childhood or vacation care experiences offered by this service?
- To what extent do these barriers arise from features of this service?
- To what extent can these identified barriers be removed or reduced without additional funding?
- To what extent can these identified barriers be removed or reduced only with additional funding?

The service is asked to address these points in the Application Form

The adjustments required to the service and program will relate to the severity of the challenges and barriers each service faces in meeting the needs of the individual child.

3.2 *How to determine level of support*

To determine the need for SCAN funding, service providers may:

- Observe the child in the early childhood or vacation care setting.
- Work with the child's family to understand the child's specific additional needs.
- Gather information with parental permission from support agencies.

Section Four

4. Funding support through SCAN

Funding support is available under the SCAN program to assist the inclusion of individual children in the service. Funds can be used to support:

- Employment of a support worker (additional to licensing requirements)
- Purchase of specific equipment/resources or specialised aids relevant to the child's need
- Staff training in addition to that provided from the SCAN organisation
- External professional support for staff

SCAN funds cannot be used for:

- Payment of fees
- Employment of therapists for children
- Assessments
- Paediatric accounts
- Capital improvements

4.1 Consultancy

Services may access training, advice, support and resources from SCAN organisations to facilitate the inclusion of children with additional support needs. Training, advice, support and resources from SCAN organisations is also available to support the inclusion of children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.

SCAN organisations are required to provide cultural education and consultancy to support service providers to:

- Increase access and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.
- Build relationships and engagement with families in the local community
- Create environments which are welcoming
- Form networks and relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other cultural community groups
- Use these relationships to develop a culturally appropriate and diverse curriculum

4.2 Funding

SCAN funding is limited to a maximum of two and a half days per week (15 hours) per child, and will be paid on a half day or full day basis.

SCAN organisations are free to make provision for the payment of short term applications (refer to 4.5.1)

The per day rate per place is:

\$45

The per day rate per place for Exceptional Circumstances Funding is an additional:

\$25

Resource allocation will be reviewed in two years time. As part of this review demographical data will be considered for inclusion.

4.3 Funding priorities

Community Services contracts SCAN organisations to provide a number of funded days per year. Capacity to fund applications will be dependent on the funding available to the SCAN organisation and the total number of applications received.

4.4 Individual applications

An individual application is required for a child enrolled in an eligible service who has been identified as requiring additional support to access and be engaged in the service.

SCAN funds need to be applied for on a 6 monthly basis through the continuation of funding form. However, once initial funding for a child has been approved the funding will remain the same for the calendar year unless the child's support needs change or the child leaves the service.

4.5 Funding Process

4.5.1 Application forms

SCAN organisations will make funding determinations based on the information provided through the funding application forms and with reference to the Guidelines. To assist with making a determination, SCAN organisations may seek further information from services if required.

For each individual child eligible services must complete the *individual child application form* including all relevant attachments and supporting documentation when funding for the child is first sought. Applications are approved for a period up to six months (two terms)

In cases of exceptional circumstances where a service is absolutely unable to include a child in the service without additional funding; a service must complete **in addition** to an *individual child application form* a detailed *exceptional circumstances funding application*. This funding can only be used as a contribution towards the employment of a support worker (additional to licensing requirements)

Continuation of funding/funding adjustment forms, are required for children requiring funding in the next funding period or where adjustments are required to the child's current funding. This includes children in receipt of funding who will be returning to the service in the following calendar year.

In cases of short term enrolments or where the family is unable to provide documentation a *short term funding form* may be submitted (maximum of ten weeks). Eligible services should contact their SCAN organisation by telephone to discuss procedures for short term funding applications.

4.5.2 Funding timetable

For individual applications funding will be on a six monthly basis. The main application process will occur in term four, in preparation for funding in the following calendar year.

New funding applications, and applications for continuation of funding, will be called for during term two for funding during the last two terms. A funding calendar is provided at Appendix I.

For late preschool enrolments, or enrolments in vacation care and occasional care services, funding application forms may be submitted as children enrol. Capacity to fund applications will be dependent on the available funding and total number of applications received. Late applications will be funded from the date they are received by the SCAN Organisation.

Applications **MAY** be considered for backdating. Capacity to fund applications will be dependent on the available funding and total number of applications received. Backdating is limited to the Term in which the application was approved.

4.5.3 Funding assessment and approval process

SCAN organisations will assess applications against the eligibility requirements and notify services of the outcome of their applications.

If the SCAN application is approved SCAN organisations will inform the service of:

- The approved amount of funding
- The purpose for which the funding is approved
- The start and end date of the SCAN funding period

4.6 Variations to funding

Services are required to notify SCAN organisations through the *Continuation of funding/funding adjustment form* within two working weeks of the changes to a child's:

- Attendance pattern (including absences of more than five weeks)
- Support need

Where children are absent for less than five weeks services can retain the funding associated for that child to support other children in need. Longer term absence will result in suspension of funding pending the return of the child.

4.7 Purchase of specialised equipment

Funding obtained through individual applications can be used to purchase minor items of specialised equipment. In making the funding determination for the purchase of specialised equipment the SCAN organisation may request further information, supporting documentation or confirmation from a relevant qualified therapist that the specialised equipment is necessary. Services holding specialised equipment which they no longer require should contact their local SCAN organisation.

Section 5

5. Documentation requirements

A copy of the most recent and relevant report, assessment or a letter that states the child's additional needs is required from a relevant professional for all SCAN funding applications. Documentation must be on letterhead and signed by the relevant professional. For electronic documentation the signature block must include the relevant professional qualification. Relevant professionals are listed below:

- University qualified Early Childhood Teacher with an additional qualification ¹ in Special Education not working directly with the child for whom funding is sought (for early childhood services only) or employed by the children's service which the child attends
- Primary Teacher with an additional qualification in Special Education not working directly with the child for whom funding is sought or employed by the children's service which the child attends (for vacation care services only)
- A General Practitioner, case worker or government agency involved with the child and/or family
- Specialists including medical, audiologist, registered psychologist, psychiatrist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and professional qualified to administer psychometric assessments (eg paediatrician)

Where families have difficulty obtaining the relevant paperwork, services should contact their local SCAN organisation for assistance.

SCAN organisations reserve the right to visit the service or seek additional/updated documentation and/or information prior to making a decision. It is expected in these cases the service provider would be contacted.

Section 6

6. Accountability requirements

Prior to the end of term two and term four services receiving SCAN funding are required to complete *accountability forms* for the funding period. Services will not be eligible for further funding until the accountability forms have been received by the relevant SCAN organisation.

Where a service is unable to meet the accountability timeframes, the relevant SCAN organisation must be contacted to discuss the matter.

Funds not spent in accordance with the approved application may need to be returned to the SCAN Organisation.

¹ A four year Early Childhood or Primary Teacher qualification with no less than 12 months study in Special Education is deemed equivalent to an additional qualification.

Section 7

7. Definition of Terms

Children with **Challenging Behaviour** are defined as those children whose behaviour is of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the child or those nearby is put at risk. The behaviour may also limit the child's ability to participate in daily life and be included and engaged in the wider experiences in the daily program.

Children with **disabilities** are defined as those children who have a developmental delay or disability.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children are defined as those children who are recognised by their community as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Children from a **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse** background are defined as those children who were born overseas in a country where English is not the dominant language or culture, or have one or both parents born in such a country, or are being raised in a home environment where English is not the dominant language or culture.

Severe Chronic Health conditions – are long term health conditions which significantly impact the child's ability to access the service and program.

Safety – refers not only to aggressive/ dangerous behaviour but also to the wellbeing of the child. For example, if a child is not mobile, and therefore unable to move out of the way of children/objects their safety would be at risk, or if they are prone to choking.

Specialised Equipment – refers to specialist equipment purchased for the specific use of the child/ren receiving SCAN funding.

Training – refers to staff training that must be relevant to the child's needs

Service Provider – refers to any eligible children service refer to section 1.2

SCAN Organisation – are the organisations responsible for the management and facilitation of the SCAN program

Acronyms

SCAN	Supporting Children with Additional Needs
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CB	Challenging Behaviour
Dis	Disability
RAM	Resource Allocation Model
PIRP	Preschool Investment Reform Plan

Appendices

Appendix A -	Individual Child Application Form
Appendix B -	Parent/Guardian Consent Form
Appendix C -	Exceptional Circumstances Application Form
Appendix D -	Exceptional Circumstances Assessment Form
Appendix E -	Short Term Funding Form
Appendix F -	Service Profile Form
Appendix G -	Continuation of Funding/Funding Adjustment Form
Appendix H -	Accountability Form
Appendix I -	Funding Calendar
Appendix J -	Feedback Form
Appendix K -	SCAN Organisations