

# Family Finding for COVID-19

## Factsheet for referrers

### What is Family Finding?

For single parent families, or families where both parents require hospitalisation due to COVID-19, there is sometimes no one available or willing to care for their children – noting their children are almost always COVID-19 positive or suspected COVID-19 positive (SCOVID).

Family Finding is a service that can support parent(s)/guardian(s) plan alternative care arrangements for their children with family or friends in the event they require hospitalisation due to COVID-19.

The role of Family Finding is to:

- Support parent(s)/guardian(s) who are diagnosed with COVID-19 to identify suitable carers to help provide care for their children in the event they require hospitalisation.
- Engage with parent(s)/guardian(s) and identified carers to develop a care plan.
- Work with the COVID Positive Care Pathways team to ensure carers are aware of:
  - the clinical risks of caring for children who are COVID positive or SCOVID
  - supports available to provide ongoing clinical care and oversight for the carer and the children.
- Oversee and monitor the care plan once it is activated as a result of the parent/s being hospitalised. This includes the provision of support and relief to the carer and the child/ren for the duration of the care arrangement.
- Support the return of the child to the care of the parent(s)/guardian(s) once they are well.

Where parent(s)/guardian(s) become unwell from COVID-19 however do not require hospitalisation, Family Finding can also provide support to help maintain care arrangements.

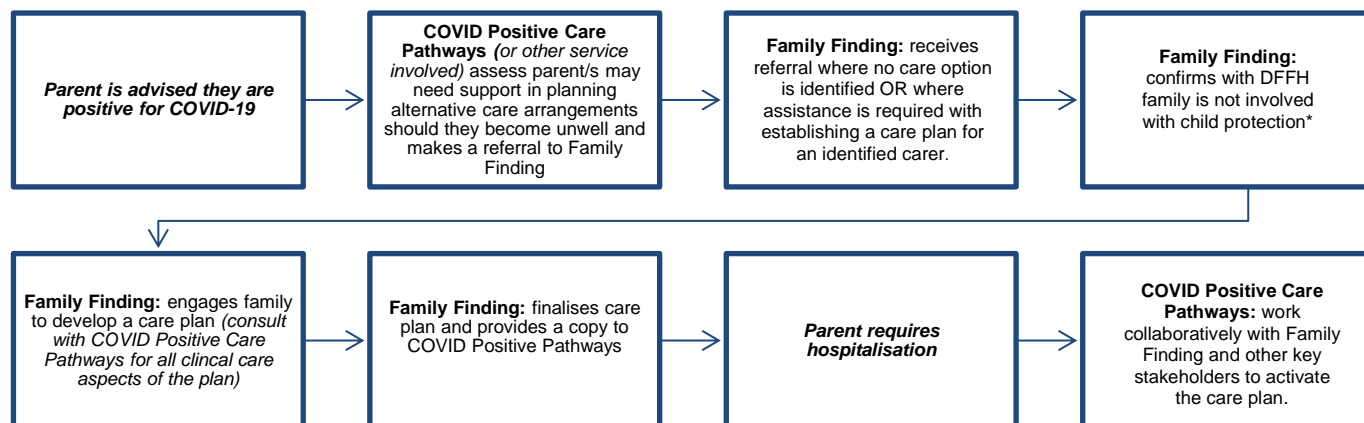
### Objectives

Key objectives of the Family Finding program include:

- Children have a safe place to isolate when their parent(s)/carer(s) is in the health/hospital system due to COVID-19.
- All options to ensure children can remain in their home with vaccinated family/friends or relocate to the homes of vaccinated family/friends are explored and put into place early.
- Reduction of public health risk by ensuring that children and young people who are SCOVID or COVID-19 positive are not unnecessarily isolating in hospital settings.

## How does Family Finding operate?

Referrals for Family Finding will predominantly come from COVID-19 Positive Care Pathways and health services, however other COVID relief and support services may refer to Family Finding where a parent(s)/guardian(s) requires support to plan alternative care for their children in the event they may require hospitalisation due to COVID-19.



*\*Families involved with child protection are not in scope for Family Finding and should be referred to the local Department of Families Fairness and Housing child protection office*

## How to refer to Family Finding

Consent should be provided by parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to making a referral to Family Finding. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should also be advised for a referral to be made; their relevant information will be shared with the Family Finding agency.

### Referrals for non-Aboriginal families, including families from CALD backgrounds:

Referrals can be sent to Uniting Vic Tas via [carecoordination@vt.uniting.org](mailto:carecoordination@vt.uniting.org) with the subject line *Family Finding*

The email must contain:

- name and a contact number of the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- names and ages of all children
- Confirmation of the following:
  - a) parent(s)/guardian(s) can identify a care option however the identified carer will require support such as transport, food and other relief to maintain care arrangements, OR
  - b) the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot identify anyone who would be able to care for their children and require support in identifying a care option.
- advice whether the family requires an interpreter.

Hours of operation for Family Finding are 9am-9pm, seven days a week.

### Referrals for Aboriginal families

Referrals for Aboriginal children can be sent to the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) via [covidcare@vacca.org](mailto:covidcare@vacca.org) using the attached referral form.

For urgent referrals, VACCA can be contacted on their response number: 0488 930 509.