

Family Services Model Changes

From 1 July 2026

The Family Services model in Victoria is changing, to ensure that families can receive support based on their individual needs and circumstances. As Early Years professionals you may be referring families to the Orange Door for family services support. Here's a simple overview of everything you need to know.

What is **NOT** changing:

- Families receiving support on 1 July 2026 will continue to receive support under the previous structure.

The new Family Services Streams:

- Any families referred on or after 1 July 2026 will receive services delivered under these 3 streams, this change enables families to access more flexible and tailored support.

Services Stream	Referral Pathways*	Average support hours:	Existing services that fall into this category
Connecting Families: - For families with emerging needs - Short-term, early support - Helps families before challenges escalate	Self referral OR Referral from family services program or local support service	Up to 20 hours	Early help
Strengthening Families: - For families with cumulative or escalating needs - Medium-term support - Builds stability and parenting capacity	Referral via the Orange Door (Some internal referrals from other programs)	90 hours	- Family Services - Integrated Family Services
Restoring Families: - For families with significant, enduring needs - Longer-term support - Focus on safety, keeping families together and healing from harm	Area-based Multi-Agency Referral and Planning - Child protection and Correctional Services	195 hours	- Family preservation and reunification (FPR) - Intensive family services

*First Nations children and families may be able to access supports directly via their local ACCO.

How the new system works

- Families receive support based on their need, goals and circumstances
- Families do NOT need to know what stream they are placed in.

What you might notice in practice

- New language to describe family services interventions- Connecting, Strengthening and Restoring
- Services group differently
- Service contact responsive to changes in family need
- Continued focus on early support, prevention of harm and family wellbeing.



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