

Information Package

Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People

October 2026

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We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the First Peoples of lutruwita and the continuing custodians of this land, sea and waterways.

We pay respect to Elders past and present, and acknowledge the strength, knowledge, culture and leadership of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, their families.

Purpose of the role

Tasmanian Aboriginal¹ children and young people have the right to:

- grow up safe, connected and supported to reach their full potential
- grow up strong in culture, identity and community
- be safe from harm, abuse, racism and discrimination
- be listened to and have a real say in decisions that affect them
- access education, health, housing, justice and care systems that respect who they are
- have Aboriginal people, families and their community involved in decisions about their lives

The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People (the Commissioner) is a new statutory office within the Commission for Children and Young people with a clear mandate to promote and protect the rights, interests, safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people in Tasmania.

As an Aboriginal person, the Commissioner brings lived experience and a deep understanding of Aboriginal ways of being, knowing and doing. They will have a strong connection of Country, culture, community and an appreciation of the importance of family, relationships and community connections in the lives of Aboriginal people.

The Commissioner will work directly with Aboriginal children and young people, their families, the Aboriginal community, government and the broader service community in Tasmania.

The Commissioner will provide a dedicated and independent focus for Tasmanian Aboriginal children and young people.

The new Commission for Children and Young People

The Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings (the Commission of Inquiry) recommended the establishment of a statutory Commission for Children and Young People, with 'powers and resourcing to act as a strong and fearless advocate for children's rights and to monitor child safe practices in organisations' (Recommendation 18.6).

Whilst this is the primary recommendation relating to the establishment of the Commission, there are more than 15 other recommendations that relate to the structure, role, functions and powers of the new Commission and its statutory officers.

The Commission for Children and Young People will replace and expand on the functions of the previous **Commissioner for Children and Young People** and work

¹ References to Aboriginal persons, children and young people includes persons, children and young people who are Torres Strait Islander.

with the **Independent Regulator** of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework to strengthen Tasmania's oversight system and serve as a strong advocate for young people.

The Commission's key roles are set out in the provisions creating its functions and powers. These include:

- recommending system improvements to Government
- conducting inquiries into systemic issues
- promoting, monitoring and reviewing the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- promoting and upholding their rights
- promoting and empowering their participation in influencing decisions, and expressing opinions on matters, that affect their lives and
- monitoring and reviewing data and information that is collected in relation to them.

The Commission for Children and Young People will also have statutory powers including to require information and answers to questions, conduct inspections of detention facilities and publish reports in such manner as it considers appropriate.

The Commission of Inquiry recommended a phased implementation of the new Commission. The key first step was the Tasmanian Parliament passing a Bill to create the new Commission for Children and Young People.

The Tasmanian Parliament passed the [Commission for Children and Young People Bill 2025](#) in December 2025.

The [Commission for Children and Young People Act 2025](#) commenced in September 2026.

Central to the development of the Bill was consultation with children and young people, victim-survivors, Tasmanian Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and people, and foster and kinship carers to ensure Commissioner roles align with what is expected and needed by these critical groups.

Important reading for applicants includes the following reports resulting from this consultation:

- the [What We Heard Report](#) which summarises the key themes and insights from targeted consultation sessions. This includes the specific needs and wants from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community.
- [Letting them have a say: Children and Young People's views on the proposed new Commission for Children and Young People](#) outlines the views and ideas expressed by close to 700 children and young people on the new Commission.

The Government also [published submissions](#) received on a consultation Bill (note that the final Bill which Parliament endorsed was quite different to the consultation version which the submissions commented on).

Functions of the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People in the new Commission

The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People will have responsibilities and powers set out in the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2025*.

Advocate for Aboriginal children and young people

The Commissioner can advocate for:

- an individual Aboriginal child or young person
- a group of Aboriginal children or young people
- Aboriginal children and young people across Tasmania.

This includes Aboriginal children and young people who are living in out-of-home care or are involved in the youth justice system.

Listen and help resolve concerns

When acting for an individual child or young person, the Commissioner can:

- listen to their concerns and help make sure their voice is heard
- help resolve concerns or grievances
- help them find and access appropriate support services
- check that they understand their rights
- consider whether their safety and wellbeing needs are being met.

Monitor how systems impact Aboriginal children and young people

The Commissioner can monitor and investigate systemic issues affecting Aboriginal children and young people, to ensure that systems are culturally safe, particularly those in:

- out-of-home care
- youth detention
- remand
- other parts of the youth justice system.

Examine services when concerns are raised

When contacted about the services provided to an Aboriginal child or young person, the Commissioner can inquire into the relevant out-of-home care or youth justice service. The Commissioner can seek information, examine what has occurred and consider whether broader changes may be required.

Support complaints and speak on behalf of children and young people

The Commissioner can help Aboriginal children and young people make complaints to an independent complaint body, such as an Ombudsman or other statutory authority.

With the appropriate consent, the Commissioner can also make a complaint on behalf of an individual Aboriginal child or young person. Where an issue affects a group of Aboriginal children or young people, the Commissioner can make a broader complaint on behalf of that group.

Promote rights, safety and wellbeing

The Commissioner must uphold and promote the rights of Aboriginal children and young people and work to improve their safety and wellbeing. This includes bringing attention to laws, policies, services or practices that are not culturally safe and meeting their needs or respecting their rights.

Investigate and influence broader systems

As a member of the Commission, the Commissioner can also use the Commission's broader statutory functions and powers where they relate to Aboriginal children and young people. This may include:

- providing advice and recommendations to ministers, government agencies and organisations
- researching and reviewing laws, policies, practices and services
- conducting systemic investigations, inquiries and reviews
- monitoring information and identifying patterns or trends
- examining the treatment of children and young people in out-of-home care and youth justice
- inspecting detention facilities
- publishing reports and recommendations.

These powers allow the Commissioner to turn the experiences and concerns of Aboriginal children and young people into practical recommendations for transforming a system-wide change.

A Commissioner with equal standing

The Commission for Children and Young People will include:

- the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People
- the Commissioner for Children and Young People
- the Child Advocate.

Each office has a distinct focus and statutory responsibility.

The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Child Advocate will work collaboratively, while retaining the independence and authority necessary to carry out their individual functions.

The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People will have equal standing within the Commission and will bring a dedicated focus to the rights, interests and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people.

The role in practice

The Commissioner's work includes:

- meeting directly with Aboriginal children and young people
- working with Aboriginal organisations and community leaders
- visiting communities, schools, services and places where Aboriginal children and young people receive care or support
- conducting inquiries, reviews or systemic examinations
- providing advice to ministers, parliament and government agencies
- making public statements and publishing reports
- monitoring the impact of laws, policies and services
- promoting children's rights and culturally safe practice
- supporting Aboriginal children and young people to participate in public decision-making
- collaborating with the other statutory officers of the Commission.

The Commissioner will work statewide, including the Islands, and engage with people living in urban, regional and remote regions.

Key accountabilities and responsibilities

Key accountabilities and responsibilities of the role include:

- Exercising the statutory functions and powers under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2025* as part of the statutory Commission for Children and Young People, and other responsibilities under Tasmanian law, including but not limited to the child and youth safe standards in the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*, including meeting the universal principle that the Commission provide an environment that ensures that the right to cultural safety of children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is respected.
- Building and maintaining relationships with members of the Aboriginal community, community and government stakeholders, including ministers and relevant departments.
- Providing strategic leadership for policy and service delivery.
- Developing risk management strategies and resolving complex issues.
- Leading change management initiatives within the Commission.
- Formulating and implementing strategies for organisational sustainability and service effectiveness.
- Overseeing continuous improvement in service planning and performance.
- Exercising delegations mandated by statutes and regulations.
- Ensuring compliance with all policy and protocol requirements, including education and training mandates.

Other responsibilities under the Act

The Act ensures the new Commission's independence from Government and ensures power equivalence of the three Commissioners.

The Act states:

- The Commission and each Commissioner is not subject to the direction or control of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, or any other Minister, in respect of the performance of a function, or exercise of a power, under the Act.
- No Commissioner, when performing a function, or exercising a power, as Commissioner, is subject to the direction or control of any other Commissioner or to the [State Service Act 2000](#) in respect of that function or power.

The Commission and each Commissioner must act independently, impartially and in the public interest when performing a function or exercising a power.

Commissioners must avoid duplication of work across the system and must liaise with other relevant statutory authorities, statutory officers and official bodies to facilitate the provision of support and assistance to children and young people.

Subject to any express limitations in the Act (such as that disallowing the Commissioner for Children and Young People from advocating for individuals), each Commissioner may perform the functions, and exercise the powers, of the Commission. Two, or all three, of the Commissioners can perform the same function or exercise the same power.

Key skills and personal attributes

You will be an Aboriginal person who can provide leadership, cultural authority, professional capability and sound judgement. You will foster creativity and innovation across the Commission, have a proven ability to manage critical projects, and meet the highest contemporary work standards. Above all, you will have a passion for championing the rights and needs of Aboriginal children and young people.

Demonstrated knowledge and ability

Capabilities

- Extensive knowledge of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and lived experience.
- Strong and extensive knowledge of, and experience in, the out-of-home care and youth justice systems.
- Strong and extensive experience working in the child and young people rights and wellbeing sector.
- Strong and demonstrated understanding of trauma-informed and culturally safe practice.
- A deep understanding of the strengths, experiences and aspirations of Aboriginal children, young people, families and their community.

Demonstrated leadership ability

Capabilities

- High level ability to act as a change agent and inspire purpose and direction leading by example.
- Demonstrated organisational leadership to enable innovation in an environment of change.
- Proven ability to manage effective relationships and maintain strong self-discipline.
- The ability to demonstrate self, social and political awareness including through proactive action.

Strategic analytical and thinking skills

Capabilities

- Thinks strategically, conceptually and analytically at the highest level, using evidence and lived experience to inform outcomes.
- Develops innovative solutions within a complex political, cultural, social and multi-organisational environment.
- Astute judgement, sensitivity and awareness in identifying, managing and resolving complex stakeholder relationships, issues and concerns.

Strong outcome orientation

Capabilities

- Commits to highly reliable and consistent standards of performance.
- Uses both personal and organisational performance measures.
- Understands the needs and aspirations children and young people and other relevant stakeholders.
- Recognises opportunities and brings them to realisation.
- Manages ambiguity by dealing effectively with uncertain situations and incomplete information.
- Achieves closure and delivery.

Influential communication skills

Capabilities

- Communicates clearly and can articulate Aboriginal children and young people's needs to decision makers, using evidence and lived experience.
- Listens, understands and adapts to different audiences, in particular vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, using trauma-sensitive and culturally safe language.

- Negotiates coherently and persuasively and is able to advocate for the rights of Aboriginal children and young people.

Productive working relationships

Capabilities

- Strong cultural standing and credibility within Aboriginal Tasmania.
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain trusted relationships with Aboriginal community organisations, Elders, leaders and representative bodies across Tasmania.
- Creating safe spaces where Aboriginal children and young people feel heard and respected.
- Facilitates co-operation, teams and high-level autonomy.
- Coaches, mentors and develops people.
- Applies contemporary management practice and principles such as workplace diversity and occupational health and safety.

Positive personal values

Capabilities

- Respect for the diversity of views, experiences and identities within Aboriginal Tasmania, demonstrated through culturally respectful and inclusive practice.
- Balances risk-taking, innovation and courage with personal accountability.
- Models professionalism, probity, and integrity.
- Accepts improvement as a key personal and organisational driver.
- Is adaptable, resilient and respectful.
- Demonstrates a commitment to personal learning and development.

Qualification for appointment

A person appointed to the position of Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People must:

- Be an Aboriginal person.
- Have relevant experience, knowledge or qualifications in relation to Aboriginal children and young people, including vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people.
- Have relevant knowledge of, or experience in, implementing culturally safe, trauma-informed and healing-informed approaches that have the primary purpose of avoiding, as far as possible, further harm or trauma to individuals.
- Have relevant experience in advocacy or casework, complaint handling or investigations, and policy development, systemic reviews, or monitoring and oversight function.

- Hold the prescribed registration and have satisfactorily completed the prescribed checks to ensure that the person is a suitable person to perform the functions and exercise the powers of the Commissioner, including a National Police Record Check and Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.

Basis of appointment and remuneration

The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People is appointed by the Governor. The successful applicant will be appointed on a contract for a period up to 5 years and can be reappointed for a further one term.

The salary range for the position is \$266,773 - \$306,623.

Other conditions of employment include:

- Employer superannuation contributions of 12% of salary.
- Ability to salary sacrifice additional superannuation contributions.
- Official and private use of a fully maintained motor vehicle with private number plates.
- Twenty working days annual recreation leave, and 20 working days personal (sick) leave per year of service.
- Long service leave in accordance with the *Long Service Leave (State Employees) Act 1994*.

For further information contact:

Kristy Bourne
Secretary
Department of Justice
Secretary@justice.tas.gov.au
Tel: 03 6165 4943

Responses must contain a curriculum vitae and should contain the names of three (3) professional and confidential referees. All applicants must also complete and sign the probity statement provided at Attachment 1.

Responses should be marked PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL and sent to:

Kristy Bourne
Secretary
Department of Justice
GPO Box 825
Hobart Tasmania 7001
or via email to secretary@justice.tas.gov.au

Applications must be received by close of business on **22 November 2026**

Please note that as part of the selection process there will be direct engagement with a recruitment panel comprising young people. Candidates who are invited to interview will be required to have a current Working With Vulnerable People Check.

Attachment 1 – Probity Statement (to be completed by applicant)

I declare that I have no business or personal interest, real or perceived, which might conflict with the interests of the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, other than any required as a prerequisite for the office which might appear to raise a material potential conflict with my public duty as Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.

Signed

Date

Name (printed)

Address