



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

# Child Care Support Provision at Rhodes University Events Protocol

<b>Responsible Committee/Unit/Division/Faculty</b>	HR division
<b>Responsible Chairperson/Director/Manager</b>	Director of HR
<b>Date</b>	May 2010
<b>Review Cycle (e.g. every 2/5/7 years etc)</b>	n/a
<b>Last Reviewed</b>	n/a



## **1. Background**

This protocol together with policies such as that for parental leave and benefits is situated within a framework of recognising:

- (a) Different family patterns of our society and as an employer seeking to respect such differences through the provision of suitable parental benefits;
- (b) That more often than not women bear the dominant responsibility for child-rearing and that this does impact on a woman's career. In this regard, the framework attempts to provide women with opportunities for balancing these multiple responsibilities;
- (c) The need to move away from an exclusive emphasis on the mother's role in child-rearing as this enforces gender stereotypes of women as primary caregivers and negates the potential role that fathers can play;
- (d) The need to be supportive and non-judgmental of others regarding the decision to become a parent; and
- (e) The interplay between work and family responsibilities and trying to promote a healthy balance and therefore well-being of staff.

The University has many functions and events that are in the evening. It is recognised that these may be difficult for parents to attend given the multiple roles that they play and contingent on their support structures. Acknowledging that child care issues contribute strain on individuals' capacity to attend meetings, functions and events after hours, the provision of child care support aims to provide a range of solutions. While these will have benefit for the individual beneficiary of these funds, it is also seen as a necessary contribution to the university's transformation initiatives.

## **2. Purpose of this protocol**

This protocol outlines:

- a) The nature of the support provided;
- b) Who is eligible for such support;
- c) Procedures regarding offering (on the part of the institution) and accessing (on the part of the staff member) of such support;
- d) Risk management issues.

## **3. Nature of support**

Support will be provided for functions, events or meetings which are held after official work hours and on week-ends or public holidays, hereafter referred to as after hours. The following support is available:

- a) The provision of appropriate child-care; and
- b) Where necessary, provide funds for parents of children with special needs to use their own child-carer.

The provision of children care will be as follows:

- Care is provided by Rhodes University's Day Care Centre;
- Care will be provided by trained child carers;
- There will always be two staff offering care: one staff from the Day Care Centre and one other trained professional;
- Care will be provided 30 minutes before an event and up to 30 minutes after an event but usually no later than 22h00;
- Care is only provided for children younger than 10 years of age;
- There will be one care child carer per 5 children;
- The child care will not involve the feeding of children but the provision of snacks and drinks by parents is encouraged;
- The facilities of the Day Care Centre are available to the children but it must be borne in mind that the Day Care caters for children up to and including 5 years of age. Games, books etc should therefore be brought for children older than this age;
- Mattresses are available for children to sleep on but parents will need to bring blankets and pillows for children; and
- Parents using this facility will abide by the rules and regulations of this facility.

#### **4. Eligibility for support**

Individuals accessing such support must be members of staff and must be legally responsible for the children for whom child care is sought. Where funds are being accessed (see point 3b above), only parents of children with special needs will be considered. Future access to support may be denied on the basis that children are not collected as agreed in terms of the specific child care agreement.

#### **5. Process for providing support and accessing support**

The following procedures are necessary to provide support:

- a) This protocol and supporting documents will be made available on the HR and any other relevant website;
- b) The Events Section of the Communications Division will ensure that for every event, function or meeting after hours that staff are reminded of this child care support. Staff will be advised to visit the HR website for further detail;
- c) The Events Section will notify the Day Care Centre of the event
- d) The Day Care Centre is responsible for ensuring that child carers are available and for the provision of the child care service;
- e) Heads of Departments and Divisions will be encouraged to be alert of this opportunity when organising events, functions or meetings after hours. Where support is needed, this should be facilitated through Events Section as per above; and
- f) The cost of such support should be borne as part of the expenses of organising that function.

The following procedures are necessary for staff accessing support for institutional events:

- a) Following the announcement of the provision of child care support for an event, staff are required to complete the child care request application form, available on the HR website;
- b) These requests must be submitted electronically at least 5 working days before the event to the Day Care Centre. Regretfully late applications cannot be considered unless child care has already been organised; and
- c) Parents will be required to sign an indemnity form each and every time the child care support is used. Such indemnity forms should be sent at the same time as the requests for support. Child care will not be arranged without this support.

#### **6. Remuneration for Day Care Centre Staff**

- a) Transport costs for child carers for travelling to and from the Day Care Centre for this after hours child care, will be borne by the institution; and
- b) The remuneration for the child carers will be 2x the cash standard hourly rate for grade 1 staff (grade of staff doing this work).

#### **7. Risk management issues**

The provision of child care facilities will be in line with the Child Care Act which the Day Care Centre already follows in terms of its operations. All parents will be required to sign an indemnity form.

Last updated: Director, HR in May 2010