

Domestic Service Assistance Scheme – Tasmania

1947 – c. 1989

Other Names:

- Domestic Assistance Service
- Res. D.A.
- Residential Domestic Assistance Scheme

Details

The Domestic Service Assistance Scheme, managed by the Department of Social Services and its successors, was established by the Domestic Service Assistance Act 1947. It provided a housekeeper or temporary accommodation for children during a family emergency which left no one able to look after them. The Scheme ended in about 1989.

The Domestic Service Assistance Scheme originally operated in two ways. Firstly, it supplied housekeepers to go into private homes to assist during times of family emergency, such as a mother being hospitalised with no-one available to care for the children. Secondly, it provided accommodation for children from such families for up to a maximum of six weeks, on the application of the parent.

It never worked well because of the shortage of housekeepers. Originally the Social Services Department had hoped to employ at least six women but there were not enough applicants with the right experiences and personal qualities. It was usually possible to find a housekeeper for confinements but not in the case of sudden illness or other emergencies. As a result of the shortage of housekeepers, the Department placed a limit on the amount of time that they could remain with one family.

In the later years it became extremely difficult to obtain housekeepers and the Department admitted children into temporary care on a status known as 'Res DA'. Children were accommodated in a Receiving Home, an Approved Children's Home that was prepared to receive them, in a Departmental Institution or in a temporary foster home. Parents were required to contribute to the cost of maintaining children in this way. Occasionally, the Department employed a neighbour to look after children which meant they could stay in their own home.

The Social Welfare Department and its successor, the Department of Community Welfare, used the Scheme to give parents who had difficulties with their children some respite. This meant that the children were less likely to become wards of state. The Scheme was part of a group of measures used from the 1970s onwards to keep families together.

The Respite, Emergency and Short Term Care program appears to have replaced the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme in about 1989.

Children looked after by the Scheme were not under the guardianship of the Department and it had no authority to detain them against the wishes of the parent. However, following legal advice, claimants who had been in care under this legislation were included in the 2003-2004 Ombudsman's Review.

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Run by

- [Social Services Department, State of Tasmania \(1934 - 1961\)](#)
- [Department for Community Welfare, State Government of Tasmania \(1983 - 1989\)](#)
- [Social Welfare Department, State of Tasmania \(1961 - 1983\)](#)
- [Department of Community Services, State of Tasmania \(1989 - 1993\)](#)
- [Department of Community and Health Services, State of Tasmania \(1993 - 1998\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Maylands Girls' Unit \(1983 - 1998\)](#)
Maylands Girls' Unit accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Binnowie Receiving Home \(1973 - c. 1980\)](#)
Binnowie Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Kanangra Receiving Home \(1958 - 1975\)](#)
Kanangra Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Mardon Receiving Home \(1969? - c. 1980\)](#)
Mardon Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Miroma Receiving Home \(1969? - 1979\)](#)
Miroma Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Kennerley Children's Home \(1969 - current\)](#)
Kennerley Children's Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Hillcrest Children's Home \(1966 - 1984\)](#)
Hillcrest Children's Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Lismore Receiving Home \(1973 - 1979\)](#)
Lismore Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Abermere Receiving Home \(1975 - 1980\)](#)
Abermere Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Bevis Marks Receiving Home \(1973 - c. 1980\)](#)
Bevis Marks Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Mosley Receiving Home \(1974 - 1980\)](#)
Mosley Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Aspect House \(1981\)](#)
Aspect House provided respite 'care' under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Clarendon Children's Home \(1922 - 2004\)](#)
Clarendon Children's Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Rochebank Hostel \(c. 1950 - c. 1980\)](#)
Rochebank Hostel was established to take children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Casablanca Receiving Home \(c. 1968 - c. 1980\)](#)
Casablanca Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Gilburn Receiving Home \(1959 - c. 1980\)](#)
Gilburn Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
- [Malmesbury Receiving Home \(c. 1962 - c. 1980\)](#)
Malmesbury Receiving Home accommodated children under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.

Related Legislation

- [Domestic Assistance Service Act 1947, Tasmania \(1947 - 1998\)](#)
The *Domestic Assistance Service Act* provided for the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.

Related Archival Series

- [Record Cards of Children with Residential Domestic Status \(1955 - 1972\)](#)
These record cards concern children receiving 'care' under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.
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