



Children's Court of Western Australia

Practice Direction 4 of 2026

Dandjoo Bidi-Ak Protection and Care Court

1. Background

- 1.1. Dandjoo Bidi-Ak Protection and Care Court (**Dandjoo Bidi-Ak**) is a therapeutic court list at the Children's Court of Western Australia (**Children's Court**).
- 1.2. Dandjoo Bidi-Ak operates under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* and responds to protection and care proceedings involving Aboriginal families engaged with the Department of Communities.
- 1.3. The Dandjoo Bidi-Ak Guidelines (the **Guidelines**) have been developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, as part of Children's Court's therapeutic programs.
- 1.4. To the extent that they relate to the administration, disposition of business, practice and procedure of the court, the Guidelines are approved by the President of the Children's Court for the purposes of s 37 of the *Children's Court of Western Australia Act 1988*.
- 1.5. The approved Guidelines, as amended from time to time, are published on the Children's Court website.

2. Application of Practice Direction

- 2.1. This Practice Direction applies to proceedings in the Children's Court that are referred to, or listed in, Dandjoo Bidi-Ak.
- 2.2. To the extent of any inconsistency between the Guidelines and this Practice Direction, this Practice Direction prevails.
- 2.3. This Practice Direction has effect from 4 May 2026.

3. Dandjoo Bidi-Ak Procedure

- 3.1. Pursuant to s 37 of the *Children's Court of Western Australia Act 1988*, and subject to the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* and any other applicable legislation, the practice and procedure governing the listing, case management, and disposition of proceedings in Dandjoo Bidi-Ak are as set out in the Guidelines.
- 3.2. For clarity, this includes the procedures and practice relating to:
- a) referral and eligibility;
 - b) the progression of matters through the therapeutic process;
 - c) court updates and the identification of next steps; and
 - d) the conduct of proceedings.

4. Judicial Independence

- 4.1. For the avoidance of doubt, the therapeutic model governing Dandjoo Bidi-Ak functions in accordance with the fundamental principles of judicial independence and the separation of powers.
- 4.2. Accordingly:
- a) individual matters are considered on their own circumstances by the presiding judicial officer;
 - b) judicial officers remain autonomous in the exercise of judicial discretion; and
 - c) a judicial officer may, in the exercise of that discretion, permit departure from the Guidelines where appropriate.



Judge Hylton Quail

President of the Children's Court of Western Australia

4 May 2026