



CLEARANCES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard Lift Up Voices and its participants against recruiting employees, contractors or volunteers who have been convicted of criminal offences that would raise reasonable doubts about their suitability to provide care and support to people with a disability.

2. SCOPE

This policy recognises Lift Up Voices' legal and moral duty of care obligations to clients under the NDIS (Practice Standards Worker Screening) Rules 2018, Provider Governance and Operational Management: Human Resource Management (2020) and Standard 8 of the Disability Service Standards (1993). This policy applies to all of Lift Up Voices' programs and activities.

It also aligns with the requirements introduced through the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Act 2024, which strengthens worker screening obligations and workforce safeguards.

3. DEFINITIONS

Staff – paid employees, volunteers, contractors and students

Child – any person aged less than 18 years of age

Identity Check – a collection of personal information used to verify an applicant's identity

Working with Children Clearance – a check undertaken prior to employment to prevent those who pose a risk to a child from working with them.

National Police Check – a check of a potential staff member's Australian criminal record to uncover any past convictions, which may pose a risk to the organisation engaging that person to perform their business.

NDIS Worker Screening Check – a check undertaken prior to employment to assess whether a person who works, or seeks to work, with people with disability poses a risk of harm to them. It determines whether a person is cleared or excluded from working in certain roles with people with disability.

Referee – a person willing to testify to the character of another – typically an applicant for a job.

Adverse Finding – any outcome of a background check, screening or referee check that raises concerns about a person's suitability to work with people with disability. This may include criminal history, exclusion status under the NDIS Worker Screening Check, or past disciplinary action.

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4. POLICY

- 4.1 **Lift Up Voices** require all prospective staff to undergo pre-employment screening processes.
- 4.2 **Staff** are expected to undertake required employment screening processes.
- 4.3 **Directors** will ensure that employment screening processes are completed and records kept on file.
- 4.4 **Lift Up Voices** will only engage workers in 'risk-assessed roles' who have a valid and current NDIS Worker Screening Check clearance.

5. PROCEDURE

The following procedures are to be implemented to ensure that employees, contractors and volunteers have appropriate clearances prior to undertaking any duties for Lift Up Voices.

5.1 All Checks

- 5.1.1 Directors will ensure that relevant checks are sighted and copies are maintained on staff files in One Drive.
- 5.1.2 Directors will maintain a record detailing when relevant checks need to be renewed and will notify staff 2 weeks prior to this date.
- 5.1.3 Directors will:
 - 5.1.3.1 Ensure the individual is notified of any adverse results of any check and given an opportunity to provide further information and context regarding the result.
 - 5.1.3.2 Ensure that the Department of Human Services is notified in a timely manner of the adverse result and provided with any additional information, which may be relevant.
- 5.1.4 Where an applicant or current staff member receives an exclusion under the NDIS Worker Screening process, they must be immediately removed from any risk-assessed roles in line with NDIS obligations.
- 5.1.5 All records of checks, disclosures and correspondence relating to clearances must be stored securely and confidentially, with access limited to authorised personnel only.
- 5.1.6 Volunteers who do not hold all required clearances must not engage in participant-facing duties and must be supervised at all times until clearances are confirmed.
- 5.1.7 This includes all staff delivering supports in offsite locations such as participant homes. Offsite workers must hold the same mandatory clearances as onsite staff, including a current NDIS Worker Screening Check and any other role-specific checks (e.g. Working With Children Check).
- 5.1.8 In addition, all workers delivering supports offsite must be appropriately insured. This includes holding valid professional indemnity and public liability insurance where applicable, and ensuring that vehicles used for travel are insured.

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5.2 NDIS Worker Screening

- 5.2.1 As a provider funded through the NDIS, Directors must ensure that all staff have, or obtain prior to employment, a current NDIS Worker Screening Check.
- 5.2.2 Staff may not engage in work with Lift Up Voices without complying with NDIS directives pertaining to NDIS Screening and background checks.
- 5.2.3 If a prospective staff member has a current, valid Disability Services Employment Check, then a NDIS Worker Screening Check is not required.
- 5.2.4 If staff are required to undergo a NDIS Worker Screening check, Lift Up Voices will pay for renewal costs.
- 5.2.5 Screening checks will be verified through the NDIS Worker Screening Database and staff clearance status will be regularly monitored for changes.

5.3 Onboarding Staff – Conditional Engagement (Pending NDIS Clearance)

In exceptional cases, a person who has not yet received their NDIS Worker Screening clearance may be engaged as Onboarding Staff in a strictly limited, non-risk-assessed capacity under the following conditions:

- The individual must hold a valid Working With Children Check (if working with children) in accordance with state legislation, and
- Hold a current National Police Check.

They may only participate in onboarding activities, observation, or indirect support duties. They must not:

- Provide personal care or transport,
- Deliver any unsupervised or independent support to participants, or
- Be placed in any risk-assessed role.

This arrangement must:

- Be time-limited,
- Be subject to a formal risk assessment,
- Receive written approval from a Director, and
- Include direct supervision at all times.

No individual may commence in a risk-assessed role until their NDIS Worker Screening Check has been verified in the NDIS Worker Screening Database (NWSD).

5.4 National Police Check

Police Checks are not required if a staff has undergone a NDIS Worker Screening check.

5.5 Referee Check / Disciplinary Action Disclosure

- 5.4.1 Individuals are required to consent to referee checks, as well as to disclose any past disciplinary action in their employment history. This may have impact on the decision to award/not award a position but will not be the only determining factor.

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5.6 NDIS Worker Orientation Module ‘Quality, Safety and You’

- 5.5.1 Prior to the commencement of work and completion of staff training, all Directors and staff members are required to complete the interactive online course, NDIS Worker Orientation Module ‘Quality, Safety and You’, available to access at: <https://training.ndiscommission.gov.au>.
- 5.5.2 Once completed, workers will receive a Certificate of Completion and a copy of the certificate will be stored on their staff file.

5.7 New Worker – NDIS Induction Modules

- 5.6.1 As of January 2021, prior to commencement of work and completion of staff orientation and training, Directors may require staff members to complete the interactive online course, ‘New Worker – NDIS Induction Modules’. This is at the discretion of the Director/s. This series of eight modules is in addition to the Worker Orientation Module ‘Quality, Safety and You’ and is available to access at: <https://training.ndiscommission.gov.au>.
- 5.6.2 Once completed, workers will receive a Certificate of Completion and a copy of the certificate will be stored on their staff file.

5.8 Infection Prevention and Control

- 5.6.1 Prior to commencement of work and completion of staff orientation and training, staff members are required to complete the interactive online course, ‘Infection Prevention and Control’. This training covers the fundamentals of infection prevention and control for COVID-19 and is available to access at: <https://covid-19training.gov.au/login>.
- 5.6.2 Once completed, workers will receive a Certificate of Completion and a copy of the certificate will be stored on their staff file.

6. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly. Reviews will also take into account updates to the NDIS Practice Standards, NDIS Commission Rules and audit outcomes.

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RELATED POLICIES

Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Policy
Code of Conduct Policy
COVID-19 and Emergency and Disaster Management Policy
Incident, Response, Report and Investigation Policy
Occupational Safety and Health Policy
Risk Management Policy
Safeguarding for Participants Policy

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Certificate of Completion – Infection Control Training
Certificate of Completion – NDIS Worker Orientation Module
Code of Conduct – Staff Acknowledgement Form (Cognito Forms)
NDIS Worker Screening Check

RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR STANDARDS

Disability Service Standards (1993)
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
NDIS Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Act 2024
NDIS Practice Standards – Provider Governance and Operational Management (Updated 2024)
NDIS (Practice Standards Worker Screening) Rules 2018

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