



SAFEGUARDING FOR PARTICIPANTS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

Lift Up Voices is committed to promoting and protecting individual rights. This policy outlines the role of safeguarding supports and mechanisms to promote, enhance and protect participants':

- Human rights;
- Decision making, choice and control;
- Safety and wellbeing, and
- Citizenship and quality of life.

Lift Up Voices is dedicated to providing an environment where people with disability receiving services are protected from abuse, neglect or harm and where staff work according to our organisational values.

This policy guides staff to support people to exercise their rights and exercise choice and control over their services. This policy supports the NDIS Practice Standards, *Provider Governance and Operational Management* Core Module.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Directors, staff members, contractors and volunteers of Lift Up Voices.

3. PRINCIPLES

- Safeguarding improves safety and wellbeing while imposing the least possible restriction on an individual and their choices.
- Safeguards are responsive to each person's circumstances and risks, which may change over time.
- Every person should be supported to build their individual skills and capacity and be involved in determining their own safeguards.
- People who want or need support to make decisions will be supported to exercise choice.
- Safeguards may be informal or formal and operate at an individual, service or organisational level.

4. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding: actions designed to protect the rights of people to be safe from the risk of harm, abuse and neglect, while maximising the choice and control they have over their lives.

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5. PROCEDURES

Lift Up Voices provides safeguarding supports and mechanisms for participants who are vulnerable or at risk of compromised rights or outcomes. Strategies include both preventative and reactive measures, such as:

- Involving participants (and others where appropriate) in determining and reviewing their own safeguards, including building skills and capacity
- Supporting participants to make informed choices and decisions about their lives
- Encouraging the involvement of families, carers, friends and advocates in safeguarding
- Providing accessible information on rights and available safeguards
- Training staff in identifying vulnerability, applying duty of care, and implementing safeguarding strategies
- Providing an effective complaints and feedback process that is fair, timely, confidential and without retribution
- Adhering to all mandatory reporting requirements
- Monitoring service provision to detect and address safeguarding issues
- Maintaining an effective incident management system to ensure timely responses, detect trends, and drive improvement

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are responsible for safeguarding the wellbeing and safety of people with disability in receipt of service from the organisation. Any staff member aware of any risk to a person with disability, whether that is a concern or a specific incident must report it immediately to a Director.

Directors must document all concerns or allegations and follow established procedures to reduce harm and prevent re-occurrence. They are also responsible for overseeing implementation and monitoring of this policy.

7. REVIEW

When concerns or incidents of abuse, neglect or harm occur, Lift Up Voices will review the situation once the risk has been managed. This includes identifying opportunities to reduce future risk by engaging with the participant, families, advocates and staff to strengthen systems, strategies, or procedures.

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if internal or external best practice monitoring suggests improvements. Lift Up Voices also monitors updates to the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework and relevant State Government guidelines.

Any breach of this policy by staff, Directors or volunteers may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal proceedings.

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RELATED POLICIES

Code of Conduct Policy
Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy
COVID-19 and Emergency Disaster Management Policy
Incident, Response, Report and Investigation Policy
Occupational Safety and Health Policy
Risk Management Policy

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Code of Conduct Staff Commitment Form
Complaints Register
Incident Management Report Form
Risk Assessment Checklist

RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR STANDARDS

Disability Discrimination Act
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act (2013)
NDIS Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Act 2024
NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators (2021)
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguarding Framework
National Disability Insurance Scheme Rules
United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)

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