



Directions

Disability Support Services

— for individuals & families —

Care and Protection Policy

1. Policy Connections

National Standards for Disability Services Standard 1 Rights. Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth), and Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth), Guardianship and Administration Act 1990 (Commonwealth), and Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1949 (Commonwealth).

2. Policy Statement

Directions Disability Support Services provides a safe environment for individuals and implements practices aimed at preventing any form of harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse.

3. Zero Tolerance to Harm, Maltreatment, Neglect and Abuse

With regard to care and protection, Directions adheres to the following principles:

- Every person has the right to feel safe and receive services in an environment free from harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse;
- The well-being and protection of the people that we support is crucial when dealing with concerns of harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse;
- The people that we support are entitled to and receive the same legal and human rights as the rest of the community;

4. Prevention of Harm, Maltreatment, Neglect and Abuse

With regard to potential harm, maltreatment, neglect and abuse Directions actively creates a culture of prevention by:

- Identifying and monitoring short and long term issues that may lead to harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse;
- Informing people who are at risk of harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse of all available supports;
- Encouraging the people that we support to raise concerns relating to potential and actual harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse and to access support or complaint mechanisms;
- Educating workers on issues associated with harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse including personal rights, sexuality and personal relationships, self-protective behaviours, and legislated provisions;
- Maintaining recruitment procedures to a high standard and ensuring that the right workers are appointed through
 - pre-appointment screening of new workers, including National Police checks and WWCCs;
 - Contacting a minimum of two referees, one must be current or the last employer;
 - Placing new workers on a minimum probationary period of six months;

- Ensuring all new workers go through an induction and orientation process and that their performance is regularly monitored during the probation period;
- Regular appraisal of the performance of all workers.

5. Response to Concerns of Harm, Maltreatment, Neglect or Abuse

In response to any concerns about harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse, Directions workers will:

- Determine the immediate risks, and if necessary take action to ensure the safety of the person that we support and other family members;
- Report concerns to the CEO within 24 hours, take responsibility for reporting the concerns to the relevant authorities according to our legal obligations, and for determining what actions are required;
- Provide the person we support, and their family members where appropriate, with information about how Directions handles concerns of harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse;
- Support individuals to exercise their choice wherever possible in a way that meets their communication needs;
- In consultation with an advocate, withhold information about the concerns from the family or guardian if the protection of the individual could be compromised;
- Maintain strict confidentiality at all times unless required by law or the Department of Communities to report.

6. Reporting Concerns of Harm, Maltreatment, Neglect or Abuse

If anyone at Directions becomes aware of concerns from anyone that we support, a family member, a worker, through personal observation, or have a suspicion that possible harm or maltreatment of an individual has occurred, the following actions are taken:

- The CEO is immediately notified of any concern;
- An incident form is completed within 24 hours of notifying the CEO of a concern;
- The CEO will determine with workers how to communicate concerns of harm, maltreatment, neglect or abuse to the person we support or their family where these concerns arise from observation or information from another person;
- Information will be withheld from the person we support or their family where there is significant risk to a person's safety and this action is recommended by Police or Department of Communities;
- A serious incident report will be made to the Department of Communities within 7 days.

Care and Protection Policy Endorsement			
Frequency	Responsibility	Ratified	Next Review
2 yearly	Board	April 2018	April 2020