



STAFF HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

We welcome you and wish you every success during your time with us.

Whether you are an employee, contractor or volunteer engaged by Enablepath Support Services, we hope that your experience of working with us is positive and rewarding. We hope that you will take pride in being a member of our team.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with some information about our business, the NDIS Code of Conduct, our Code of Conduct and policies. This will help you understand your obligations as a staff member of Enablepath Support Services and our expectations of you.

Enablepath Support Services makes every effort to maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all staff members. Your role in ensuring a safe workplace is vital. It is your responsibility to protect yourself and others from potential hazards and dangerous situations by following all necessary safety procedures, legislation, and NDIS rules.

The Staff Handbook provides an overview of all applicable legislation, rules and regulations, policies and procedures you need to know to perform your role at Enablepath Support Services and ensure a safe and high-quality service provision. If you need clarification or further information, please speak to your supervisor or line manager.

All staff members are expected to comply with the Staff Handbook, and you are required to familiarise yourself with its contents.

Any violation of our policies and procedures will be taken seriously and may result in termination of employment or agreement with Enablepath Support Services.

This handbook does not form part of your employment contract or agreement with us unless specified otherwise. However, it may be considered when determining your rights and obligations under your employment terms.

This handbook may be updated periodically.



ABOUT US

Enablepath Support Services is a for-purpose organisation that has been providing services and support for people with disability in Victoria .

Our purpose is to build extraordinary lives and support people with disability to be well, learn new skills, participate in the community and enjoy a full life.

We offer a range of essential services for people with disability and their families, including 101-Accommodation/Tenancy,102-Assistance to Access and Maintain Employment,106-Assistance with Life Stage Transition,108-Assistance with Travel and Transport,115-Assistance with Daily Tasks/Shared Living,116-Innovative Community Participation,117-Development of Life Skills,120-Assistance with Household Tasks,125-Participation in the Community,136-Group and Centre-Based Activities.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide quality services to people by empowering them to exercise choice and control and access the full range of quality services and supports that best help them achieve their specific life goals.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to build a people-centric organisation that changes people's lives and helps them to live a great big meaningful life.

We also want to see a future where people with disability and their families are not withheld by disabilities and are able to fully integrate and play active roles in society, maximise their potential, independently make choices, pursue interests and develop skills.

OUR VALUES



We are a values-driven organisation and recognise the importance of a values-based culture in delivering our services. Our values reflect our passion and commitment to making a life-changing difference for the people we care for.

Integrity

We are open and honest in our communication and operate according to the highest ethical standards.

Respect

We are respectful and uphold the human rights of everyone we support and work with. We foster an environment of mutual respect and trust among ourselves and all with whom we serve.

Excellence

We strive for excellence in everything we do – from the services we provide to the outcomes we support clients to achieve.

Innovation

We create and respond to innovative practices that will enable our people to flourish.

Empathy

We understand what others are going through and are here to provide support.

Accountability

We are responsible for ensuring our organisation always maintains high standards and achieves high success levels. We are committed to driving a culture of continued learning.

Inclusion

We understand that diversity is a strength. We will particularly ensure that the thoughts and aspirations of people with disability, and their families, underpin everything that we do.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Enablepath Support Services has a system in place to delegate responsibility and authority to another suitable person in the absence of a usual position holder in the event of planned or unexpected leave.

The purpose of this system is to ensure that:

- Governance and operational delegation are in accordance with legislation.



- Enablepath Support Services will continue to operate smoothly and according to policies and processes in the event of the absence of a usual position holder.
- The person delegated to the role will feel supported and able to fulfil the required duties.
- There will be no unnecessary interruption of services to Enablepath Support Services's NDIS participants or other service users.

For planned leave, Enablepath Support Services has established the following procedures:

- Appropriate induction and training of the role and responsibilities to be covered will be undertaken prior to leave period.
- The *Position Description* of the personnel going on leave will be used to guide the delegation of roles and responsibilities.
- In the event delegated duties includes direct client services all consents must be obtained from participants in advance.
- The delegation of roles and responsibilities and the period of time of the delegation will be recorded via written communication (e.g., minute notes or emails) and a record kept in the delegated person's Human Resource file.

For unexpected leave, Enablepath Support Services has established the following procedures:

- Management decisions/actions:
 - Decisions/actions that can be delegated according to the line of delegation outlined in the organisation chart i.e., by the next most senior person, include:
 - Chairing of meetings.
 - Approval of staff work hours and annual leave.
 - Staff recruitment within existing staffing levels.
 - Routine expenditure.
 - Pre-employment checks.
 - In the absence of the Director, decisions/actions that are delegated to another person including a member of the Governing Body or manager include:
 - Operational management.
 - Incident management.
 - Complaints management.
 - Reporting to external bodies.
 - Taking financial decisions.
 - Conducting risk assessments.



- Conducting internal audits.
- In the absence of the Director, decisions and actions that are not able to be delegated (i.e., require full Governing Body approval), include:
 - Changing existing policies and procedures.
 - The signing of major contract contracts.
 - Staff recruitment outside existing staffing levels.
 - Expansion or cessation of services.
 - Capital expenditure.
- Participant-related decisions/actions
 - Supervisors/managers will delegate the roles and responsibilities of the absent worker taking into account the caseload and ability of the other workers at the time.
 - All consents will be obtained from participants by the supervisor/manager prior to the reallocation of any direct participant services.

The *Delegation of Authority Register* is a document that outlines the specific responsibilities and authorities that have been delegated by the position holder to the delegated authority. It includes details such as the name and position of the person to whom the authority has been delegated, the scope of the delegation, the date of the delegation, and any conditions or limitations that apply.

YOUR ONBOARDING, INDUCTION AND ORIENTATION

On commencement with your employment or engagement with Enablepath Support Services, you will be provided with a Staff Onboarding Checklist and Staff Induction Checklist. This document will allow you to step your way through the onboarding and induction phases to ensure nothing has been missed. Both checklists will be completed by you and your manager.

The induction process allows you to familiarise yourself with our operations, policies and procedures and all you need to know to perform your role successfully. It is expected that the *Staff Induction Checklist* must be completed within the first two weeks of your employment or engagement or sooner, if possible.

You will also have an orientation period with us and be provided with ongoing relevant training according to the *Staff Training Plan*. Some of the items covered in the orientation period are working with participants, work health and safety, manual handling, emergency



and disaster management procedures, emergency participant procedures, infection control, hand washing and safe food handling. You will also be given full access to the organisational policies and procedures and time to read them, including feedback and complaints management, incident management, support planning and participant's rights and responsibilities, etc.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Enablepath Support Services is committed to providing Equal Employment Opportunities to all prospective and current staff, promoting a fair and equal work environment.

Enablepath Support Services recognises that Equal Employment Opportunity is a matter of employment obligation, social justice and legal responsibility. It also recognises that prohibiting discriminatory policies and procedures is sound management practice.

This policy has been designed to facilitate the creation of a workplace culture that maximises organisational performance through employment decisions. These decisions will be based on real business needs without regard to non-relevant criteria or distinctions and will ensure that all decisions relating to employment issues are based on merit.

Enablepath Support Services is an equal opportunity employer and will provide equality in employment for all people employed or seeking employment.

Every person will be given a fair and equitable chance to compete for appointment, promotion or transfer and to pursue their career as effectively as others.

Consistent with this, Enablepath Support Services will not condone and regards as unfair all forms of unlawful discrimination or vilification, including that which relates to gender; pregnancy; potential pregnancy; marital/domestic status; disability; race, colour, national extraction, social origin, descent, and ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin; age; family responsibilities, family status, status as a parent or carer; racial classification; sexuality; HIV/AIDS vilification; religious belief or activity; political belief or activity; industrial activity; employer association activity; trade union activity; physical features; breastfeeding; transsexuality; transgender; profession, trade, occupation or calling; medical record; and criminal record.

In all cases, no factors other than performance and competence are to be used as the basis for recruitment, performance assessment, training and development opportunities and promotions. Managers must make all decisions relating to appointment, promotion and career development without regard to any matters other than the individual's inherent



ability to carry out the position. Any concerns or queries should be directed to the HR Manager.

Employees who believe they are being treated unfairly as a result of discrimination should notify their manager or the HR Manager.

It is the responsibility of the HR Manager to ensure that:

- all managers understand and are committed to the principles and legislation relating to equal opportunity;
- these principles and that legislation are applied in the workplace;
- all decisions relating to appointment, promotion and career development are made without regard to any matters other than the individual's inherent ability to carry out the job;
- the organisation provides an environment that encourages equal employment opportunity and sets an example by their own behaviour.

It is the responsibility of the Human Resource Department to ensure that:

- all managers, supervisors and staff are aware of their obligations, responsibilities and rights in relation to equal employment opportunities;
- any matter which does not comply with the principles of equal employment opportunity are identified and addressed as promptly and sensitively as possible;
- ongoing support and guidance are provided to all employees in relation to equal employment opportunity principles and practice.

It is the responsibility of all employees, contractors and volunteers to ensure that:

- they treat all colleagues and participants with respect and professionalism without regard to non-relevant criteria or distinctions.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a staff member of Enablepath Support Services, you have rights to:

- Receive a Position Description outlining your responsibilities.
- Receive relevant ongoing training from Enablepath Support Services.
- Raise any concerns or complaints, be listened to and receive a response in a timely manager.



- Receive training in all relevant policies and procedures and be informed of any changes.
- Work in an environment that is safe, healthy and positive, free of any form of bullying and harassment.
- Have your personnel records remain confidential.

As a staff member of Enablepath Support Services, you have the following responsibilities:

- Respect the rights of participants to make their own decisions and be treated with respect and dignity, and maintain their privacy.
- Maintain safe work practices and report any hazards, unsafe practices and incidents in compliance with our policies and procedures.
- Be reliable and act with honesty and integrity and comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct and our Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action will be taken if you do not abide by both codes of conduct.
- Attend mandatory training sessions and refresher training.
- Perform required duties with a high standard of care and professionalism.
- Record and document any participant information, interactions, sessions or activities using our approved forms and registers, as required.
- Follow all information management protocols and procedures to maintain participants' information secure and confidential.
- Wear the identification tag or uniform when on duty. Employees shall be provided with a uniform. Each employee is required to wear the uniform whilst on duty. It is expected that employees maintain their uniforms in good order.
- Maintain up-to-date professional registrations, a criminal record check, a working-with-children check, a driving licence and car insurance (as appropriate).
- Inform management if you have secondary employment.
- Advise management of any changes that may affect your conditions of employment, such as name, address or contact details.

NDIS CODE OF CONDUCT

The NDIS Code of Conduct promotes safe and ethical service delivery by setting out expectations for the conduct of both NDIS providers and workers.

Under the NDIS Commission, a worker is anyone who is employed or otherwise engaged to provide NDIS supports and services to people with disability. Workers can be paid or unpaid



and can be people who are self-employed, employees, contractors, consultants, and volunteers.

All workers must:

- act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with relevant laws and conventions
- respect the privacy of people with disability
- provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill
- act with integrity, honesty, and transparency
- promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse
- take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual misconduct

Please refer to the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018* for more details.

There are also guidelines available on the NDIS Commission website to help workers understand their obligations under the NDIS Code of Conduct.

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

Enablepath Support Services is dedicated to creating a safe, adaptable, and productive work environment that is equitable for everyone, with the help of its staff members. Our organisation puts the utmost importance on upholding ethical conduct in all of its interactions with participants, employees, subcontractors, suppliers, competitors, and the general public, which can only be achieved through mutual cooperation and adherence to appropriate standards of behaviour.

Enablepath Support Services's staff members are expected to:

General Conduct

- Comply with all relevant Federal and State or Territory legislation, the NDIS Code of Conduct and other relevant rules, and all organisational policies and procedures.
- Report and manage all hazards, near misses and incidents according to our *Incident Management Policy and Procedure*.



- Manage and resolve all complaints according to our *Feedback and Complaints Management Policy and Procedure*.
- Maintain a high standard of information security.
- Ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants' personal information.
- Maintain hand hygiene and infection control compliance and attend all related training as per the *Staff Training Plan*.
- Be polite and respectful with all participants, their families and support network and the general public. Threatening or intimidating behaviour, including loud, abusive language or swearing, including amongst staff members, is not permitted.
- Reply to all inquiries politely and, if unable to supply the information requested, refer to the person from whom the information may be obtained.
- Respect the diversity of participants and ensure appropriate communication and behaviour, taking into consideration their age, disability, cultural background and beliefs.
- Disclose any risk of harm or inappropriate behaviour from any staff member, participant and/or any member of their family or support network.

Courtesies and Gifts

- Never offer any business courtesy to the participants and/or their family or support network to obtain favourable treatment or advantage
- Never accept any gifts from participants of more than \$50 and report any gift offered by participants to their supervisor and line manager.

Smoking

- Abstain from smoking while carrying out your duties. Enablepath Support Services prioritises a safe environment for its staff and participants.
- Smoking is not allowed by staff in or near the area where participants and their family members or carers are present.
- Avoid smoking while wearing their uniform.

Workplace Health and Safety

- Proactively identify potential hazards in the workplace and report them to their supervisor or line manager.
- Ensure safety awareness is maintained throughout the provision of services and supports to participants.
- Conduct risk assessments as per the supervisor or line manager's instructions and our policies and procedures.



Unacceptable Acts

- Being late or taking unauthorised absences from work. Being on time is one of the most important parts of your role working with participants. In most instances, participants require your timely support to complete everyday living tasks. If you are running late, please contact your supervisor or line manager immediately so that the participant or their representative can be notified accordingly.
- Wilfully damaging, destroying or stealing property belonging to participants, their family/support network, fellow employees or the company. In the event of damages or loss of any company property (including telephones, vehicles, clothing or other articles) as a direct result of negligence, the employee shall be responsible for any costs incurred by the company for repair or replacement of those goods.
- Inappropriate behaviour, including bullying, harassment, intimidation, or engaging in hostility toward other staff members or disorderly conduct.
- Refusing to follow or failing to carry out the reasonable instructions of the supervisor or line manager.
- Ignoring work duties or wasting time during working hours.
- Coming to work under the influence of alcohol or any drug or bringing alcoholic beverages or drugs onto company property.
- Intentionally giving any false or misleading information to participants.
- Use of inappropriate or threatening language.
- Smoking contrary to established policy or violating any fire protection regulation.
- Failing to adhere to our organisation's policies, procedures and directives.
- Conducting any activity contrary to their role while on duty.
- Engage an unsafe work practice and/or not report unsafe work practices.
- Any action at any time which would serve to bring discredit to our organisation.

Enablepath Support Services is dedicated to ensuring a safe and positive work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Enablepath Support Services requires all employees and workers to treat each other with respect and dignity, as outlined in its Code of Conduct, which is based on its core values. Enablepath Support Services is also committed to being an equal-opportunity employer, meaning that all job applicants and staff members are treated fairly.

Failure to comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct and/or our Code of Conduct or observe a direction will be considered a breach that may be subject to disciplinary action or result in termination of the employment or contract.



PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

All employees must undergo a yearly performance review. In the case of new employees, the first appraisal will take place during the initial three months of their employment. The manager will inform the employees of the appraisal date and provide them with the necessary documentation. The Director and supervisor or line manager will conduct the appraisal, which will be based on the employee's Position Description.

APPLYING FOR LEAVE

Annual Leave

After one year of continuous service, all full-time and part-time employees have the right to take four weeks of annual leave based on their ordinary hours of work. Shift workers may get up to 5 weeks of annual leave per year.

All employees need to request to take annual leave before going on leave. The process for requesting annual leave is set out in an award or registered agreement, company policy or contract of employment.

To ensure that there is adequate staff coverage during your leave, it is recommended that you submit your leave application as early as possible. Before filling out the Leave Form, it is important to discuss your leave details with your manager and take into consideration the work rosters and availability of other staff members. If you plan to take leave during school holidays, you should provide even earlier notice, as this is a popular time for staff to take time off.

To apply for annual leave, you need to complete and submit a form to your supervisor or manager. Your request for leave will be reviewed, and you will be informed of the decision. It is recommended that you obtain approval before booking any travel or making arrangements for your time off. The approval of your leave is at the discretion of your manager and may not be granted if other staff members are already taking leave, if the requested dates are particularly busy, or if you do not have enough accrued days.

To ensure that you can take leave when you want to, it is recommended that you give at least four weeks' notice before applying for annual leave. You can apply for leave up to one year in advance, but it is important to take your annual leave in a timely manner, preferably



in the year in which it was accrued. If you plan to take an extended leave, it is important to notify your manager in advance.

If you take leave that has not been approved, it will be unpaid and may be considered as abandonment of employment. Therefore, it is important to follow the proper procedures when applying for annual leave.

Leave without Pay

It is possible to ask for unpaid time off, but approval will depend on staffing levels. The applicant's employment record and reasons for the requested time off will be taken into account. Requests for leave without pay will be granted subject to negotiation with the manager.

Parental Leave

Employees can take parental leave regardless of whether they gave birth to a child or adopted a child under 16 years of age.

Parental leave entitlements include:

- maternity leave
- paternity and partner leave
- adoption leave
- special maternity leave
- a safe job and no safe job leave.

If an employee meets the eligibility criteria, they may be able to take up to 12 months of unpaid parental leave. They can also request up to an additional 12 months of leave. An employee must have worked for at least 12 months before they can take parental leave. Please review to review the relevant workplace agreement or award to understand the specific entitlements.

Your manager must be notified at least six weeks before the intended start date of the parental leave. During the leave, it is recommended to stay in touch with the office, especially in the weeks leading up to the employee's return to work.

Sick & carer's leave

Sick and carer's leave (also known as personal leave or personal/carer's leave) lets an employee take time off to help them deal with personal illness, caring responsibilities and family emergencies.



Sick leave can be used when an employee is ill or injured.

An employee may have to take time off to care for an immediate family or household member who is sick or injured or help during a family emergency. This is known as carer's leave, but it comes out of the employee's personal leave balance.

Compassionate & bereavement leave

The National Employment Standards provide all employees, including casuals, with an entitlement to compassionate leave (also known as bereavement leave). Awards, enterprise agreements and other registered agreements can also provide additional entitlements to compassionate leave. Leave will be granted based on the award as the basis for entitlement.

Long-service leave

An employee gets long service leave after a long period of working for the same employer. Most employees' entitlement to long service leave comes from long service leave laws in each state or territory. These laws set out:

- how long an employee has to be working to get long service leave (for example, after 7 years)
- how much long service leave the employee gets.
- In some states and territories, long-serving casuals are eligible for long-service leave.

If long service leave is requested, it must be agreed upon between both parties. The request will be discussed and then put in writing, so that consideration can be made for approval.

YOUR INFORMATION

At the commencement of your employment or contract, you will be required to fill out the Staff Information Form, which will be retained in your personal file. Your employment record is kept confidential by Enablepath Support Services.

You must notify your manager if there are changes to any of your personal details, including your name, address and other contact details, emergency contact details, and details relating to emergency medical treatment. Changes must be reported in writing and within five working days.

We are legally required to keep some employment records for 7 years, such as:



- employee details, including information about pay, leave and hours of work- external site
- reimbursements of work-related expenses
- workers' compensation insurance for each employee
- superannuation contribution amounts.

While not all employee records have to be kept for the same period, we will keep other records to provide a full employment history for the same period as a best practice. These include, but are not limited to:

- resumes, and job applications
- pre-employment checks
- contracts of employment
- performance reviews
- training certificates or records
- qualifications and registration certificates.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Everyone has the right to a workplace free from bullying and harassment. We will not tolerate any bullying and harassment or any form of discrimination in the workplace. Such conduct, when experienced or observed, should be reported immediately to your supervisor/manager or the WHS representative.

We are committed to access and equity principles and processes in the delivery of its services and working environment and in accordance with the Federal and State or Territory legislation.

There are Federal laws to protect people from discrimination and from breaches of their human rights. We have responsibilities under these laws to investigate and conciliate complaints of discrimination and human rights breaches.

GRIEVANCE

At Enablepath Support Services, we require our staff to follow the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and Equity, which are defined in the Federal and State or Territory legislation and ensure that all grievances are dealt with fairly.



Our priority is to provide high-quality services that meet our participants' needs and expectations, and service requirements. We understand that conflicts and grievances may arise and have established a fair and equitable process to handle any grievances that may involve our employees or participants

Grievances could pertain to complaints about staff, access to services, the conduct of others, advertising, ethical practices, or any other aspect of the organisation. We aim to resolve any grievances quickly for the benefit of all involved, and we base our entire process on the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Grievances can be raised in a variety of ways, including verbal complaints, written statements, or feedback forms. Once we receive a complaint, we will:

- Explain to the complainant how the complaints process will work (including their right to raise their complaint to an external party or body).
- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 1 business day of receipt.
- Keep the complainant informed of progress throughout the process.
- Inform the complainant in writing when the resolution is expected to take place.
- Advise all staff of changes to complaint management systems or policies created as part of a resolution to the grievance.
- Keep records of any meetings or discussions held to investigate and resolve the grievance.
- Use the grievance or complaints management procedure to ensure that the principals of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted throughout all proceedings.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Enablepath Support Services is dedicated to handling conflicts of interest in an honest, transparent and efficient way throughout the organisation.

Enablepath Support Services will proactively handle both perceived and actual conflicts of interest through policies to make sure that personal interests do not impact the organisation's services, activities, or decisions.

All Enablepath Support Services staff must:

- Manage, document, and report all conflicts of interest as they arise.
- Ensure that any advice or information provided to participants about support options (including options not provided by Enablepath Support Services) is clear and supports choice and control.



PARTICIPANT RIGHTS, VALUES, BELIEFS, PRIVACY AND DIGNITY

It is crucial for you to understand the rights of the participants you work with. Your role involves assisting and guiding them in the decisions they make while upholding their right to dignity, respect and choice and control.

As our staff member, you must:

- Uphold the legal and human rights of each participant, including their right to make informed choices and exercise control.
- Inform participants of their rights as appropriate.
- Respect the diverse backgrounds of participants and allow them to maintain their cultural values and beliefs while accessing supports.
- Protect the privacy and dignity of each participant.
- Treat participants equitably and without discrimination and support the company's efforts to promote diversity.
- Respect the human rights of the communities in which the company operates.
- Collaborate with management on consulting with participants on human rights issues and provide information about our feedback and complaints management system.
- Acknowledge the rights of Indigenous People and respect their culture.
- Proactively identify and understand the communication needs of participants as documented in their support plans.
- Be aware of their obligations in interactions with participants, families, and supporters to avoid abuse and neglect and report all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination to your manager or supervisor.
- Attend training on recognising and responding to indicators of abuse, neglect, harm, and exploitation and on rights-based and person-centred approaches.

ADVOCACY

You must be aware of the participants' right to access an advocate and involve this person in their dealings with Enablepath Support Services. Participants are encouraged to bring their advocate to the initial assessment meeting for input into the assessment and support planning processes and to ensure a person-centred support plan.



Participants may use an advocate any time they wish to communicate with us, at the initial meeting, during interviews and reviews.

An advocate is an individual who will attentively listen to the participant, help them in determining what actions should be taken in their life, and support them in carrying out those decisions by speaking on their behalf.

The advocate will ensure that the participant is given proper support, their rights are acknowledged and upheld, and they will speak up if the participant's needs are not being met.

The [National Disability Advocacy Program \(NDAP\)](#) supports people with disability to access effective advocacy that promotes, protects and ensures their full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in our communities.

Some agencies (NDAP agencies) are funded to provide disability advocacy support in specific geographic areas. The [Disability Advocacy Finder](#) is a web-based application developed to assist people with disabilities, carers, and their families in searching for federal, state, or territory government-funded disability advocacy agencies.

NDAP agencies may be categorised into generalist or specialist agencies:

- Generalist agencies provide advocacy support to people with any type of disability or cultural background., and their families in searching for federal, state,
- Specialist agencies may provide advocacy support to people with disability:
 - with a specific type of disability;
 - with specific issues such as housing, education or employment;
 - from Diverse Cultural and Linguistic backgrounds; or
 - from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds.

You or any of our support workers must support each participant in accessing an advocate where needed.

LANGUAGE INTERPRETING SERVICES

If the participant is from a non-English-speaking background, we will attempt to place a staff member who speaks that language with them. Additionally, participants from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds may need interpreting assistance to communicate with us.



Support workers will assist participants in accessing interpreting services where needed. Consent is required to assist with accessing an interpreter. Once the participant's consent has been obtained, staff will book a face-to-face or over-the-phone language support interpreter.

Interpreting Services are delivered by TIS National on behalf of the NDIS. TIS National is an interpreting service provided by the Department of Home Affairs for people who prefer a language other than English and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with linguistically diverse people. An Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS) is also available for participants as an NDIA- funded service.

Services available for participants to use with NDIS-registered providers include:

- immediate phone interpreting
- pre-booked phone interpreting
- on-site interpreting.

NDIS participants and carers are not charged for the language interpreting services. Participants can ask us to help book a specific interpreter every time they meet with us, for example, if they want the same interpreter or prefer a specific gender.

The interpreter is required to document in the participant notes stating that they were present at a meeting or interview with the participant and us.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT

The issue of informed consent is recognised by Enablepath Support Services as a challenging area due to the functional limitations of some of our participants. Enablepath Support Services has identified the need to obtain consent and agreement from our participants for the following activities:

- Understanding of, and agreement to, the terms and conditions of the NDIS Service Agreement.
- Commencement of the services outlined in the Support Plan.
- Seeking or disclosing information to or from other service providers and providing information to other agencies or funding bodies such as the NDIA.
- Taking and use of photographic/video materials by Enablepath Support Services for use in participant-related records.



- Participation in Participant Satisfaction Surveys and Quality Management Activities such as internal and external audits.
- Sharing information with the participant's family or advocate.
- Managing or administering participants' medication.

Enablepath Support Services recognises the rights of the participant to limit their consents or withdraw consents at any time.

Participants will have their consent clearly documented on their Service Agreement and Participate Assessment and Support Plan, which is accessible to those working with them.

Consent must be appropriately sought by staff and given by the participant or their guardian/representative or substitute decision maker. Consent must be appropriately documented and stored for all participants receiving services from Enablepath Support Services. Particularly, consent must be sought for the following activities:

1) Consent to Partake in Intake and Initial Assessment

The *Participant Intake Form* used by the staff member taking the new referral includes obtaining verbal consent from the participant or their family, guardian, advocate or substitute decision maker to undergo the Intake and Initial Assessment and for the associated fees to be claimed through the participant's NDIS account. This verbal consent is recorded on the participant's file.

2) Consent to seek and disclose information to others

At the time of the Initial Assessment, the participant will consider the consent contained in the NDIS Service Agreement. One of these consents is for sharing information with and obtaining information from other service providers and pertinent others. The participant can choose to provide limited consent, e.g., choose for information not to be shared with certain service providers. This consent is stored on the participant file and is referred to prior to the information being sent or the information being sorted.

3) Consent to proceed with services

At the time of the initial assessment, staff will discuss planned services and any risks associated with the planned services. Participants are given the opportunity to ask questions until they understand and are satisfied with the explanation of the answers. Participants are requested to sign a *Service Agreement*, which includes a consent section that includes the consent for services to be provided. Participants are informed they can withdraw their consent for services at any time.



4) Consent to use photographic/video materials for use in participant-related records

Participants are requested to sign a Service Agreement, which includes a consent section that includes the consent for taking photographs for the purpose of service provision and inserting them in reports if required. It also includes consent to participate in Participant Satisfaction Surveys and Quality Management Activities. Participants are informed of their right to refuse consent and withdraw consent at any time. Participants are informed that their decision not to partake in Participant Satisfaction Surveys or Quality Management Activities will not change or jeopardise the services they receive from Enablepath Support Services.

5) Consent to use participant’s photographic/video materials for marketing or external use

The consent section of the Service Agreement does not include consent to use photographs or video material of participants for marketing or non-participant-related reports. In the event this consent is sought, the *Participant Consent Form* will be used to document it, specifying the details of the marketing project or report. This consent would be stored as above and attached to the participant record.

The range of consents is part of the Service Agreement form, as well as the Participant Consent Form. All Service Agreements and Participant Consent Forms are safely electronically stored and attached to the participant record.

Participants who are physically unable to sign their own consent but have the ability to determine their consent can provide verbal consent, which is documented on the Service Agreement and/or Participant Consent Form. In this case, they should need to have a witness present when giving verbal consent. Staff should not record their verbal consent without a witness.

You will be inducted on the various consents and the documentation of consent at induction and then annually or as required.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Enablepath Support Services is committed to protecting and upholding, respecting and protecting the right of privacy and dignity of participants, staff and management.

Enablepath Support Services ensures that personal and sensitive information is collected, stored and used in a way that complies with all relevant federal and state or territory legislation.



Our policy is to respect and protect the privacy of all people connected with Enablepath Support Services, including participants, employees, contractors, other service providers, and community partners.

We collect personal information about employees, prospective employees, contractors or volunteers in order to conduct employment/engagement and employment/engagement-related activities such as recruitment and selection, payroll, payments, performance management, reporting and work health and safety. The collection, use and disclosure of our staff members' personal information, including employees, contractors, volunteers, directors and managers, will be in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

Our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure* tells the kinds of personal information we, and others for us, collect and hold from participants, how and why we collect and hold that information and how we use it. It also tells how participants can access and amend their personal information and how they may make a complaint if they think that we have breached our privacy obligations. As an employee or contractor, you can also file a complaint with your manager or supervisor if you think that we have breached our privacy obligations.

Personal information is information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is reasonably identifiable. Examples of personal information include a person's name, address, date of birth, contact details, gender, bank account details, details about their health or disabilities, etc. We may also collect some 'health information' as defined under the Privacy Act, such as information about the participant's health or disability, doctors they have seen or health services they have received.

Information about an NDIS participant that is or was held by Enablepath Support Services is considered 'protected information' for the purposes of the NDIS Act. We often collect personal information from participants directly or from people who are authorised to represent them. We sometimes collect personal information from a third party if the participant has consented, been told of this practice, or would reasonably expect us to collect the information in this way.

The information collected is usually about NDIS participants and their family members, carers, guardians or representatives and is collected from them, other providers of NDIS supports or anyone else who may hold relevant information about the NDIS participants.

We collect and hold information that is reasonably necessary for us to carry out our operations and NDIS supports and services. The kinds of information we collect and hold include (but are not limited to) personal information about participants and other users of our services and about our employees, contractors and providers.



We may contact the participant or their representative by phone, electronically or in person to facilitate their access to our services. In any case, we will only request this information once we have explained the purpose for asking for this information and once we have their consent to proceed.

Privacy laws do not apply to the information of corporate entities, such as providers or community partners. However, the personal information of individuals connected with those entities (such as employees) will be protected by privacy laws.

In dealing with personal information, we abide by the obligations imposed on us under federal law, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth) (NDIS Act).

The Privacy Act authorises our collection of personal information, which is required to provide our NDIS supports and services and perform our other functions.

Federal law allows us to require the provision of information in certain circumstances. We do this in order to deliver our supports and services.

We are also bound by confidentiality and secrecy provisions in the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth) (NDIS Act). These provisions limit how we collect and use personal information and when and to whom information can be disclosed.

We collect, hold, use and disclose participants' personal information for the purpose of providing services, including conducting our operations, providing supports and services to participants, communicating with participants, their families and support network, and complying with our legal obligations.

When we need to use their personal information for our business purposes, we will limit this use to only those Enablepath Support Services personnel who need to know that information. All participant records will be kept on a securely protected database that is restricted to staff members directly engaged in the delivery of service to the participant. Participant paper records will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the Privacy Officer. The Senior Management Team is consistent and careful in the way they manage the participants' personal information and who can see or have access to this information.

If we need to disclose personal information outside the Enablepath Support Services, we will de-identify the information prior to disclosure, wherever it is practicable to do so. We will not normally disclose a person's personal information to anyone outside the Enablepath



Support Services except where we refer participants to external providers of in-kind supports under an approved NDIS plan, where that person consents, or where the disclosure is authorised or required under the law. Information about participants may only be made available to other parties with the consent of the participant.

Some examples of when we may disclose the participant's personal information include:

- For purposes related to improving our supports and services, including for quality assurance purposes (internal and external audits).
- referrals to external providers of supports for NDIS participants, or sharing information with support coordinators where this is required for services included in an approved NDIS plan;
- this is required or authorised by law, including under the NDIS Act;
- it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to someone's life or health or a threat to public health or safety;
- it is a necessary part of an internal investigation following a complaint; or
- we engage a contractor to provide some NDIS services, and the contractor needs the personal information of certain participants, providers, carers or other persons in order to perform that service for us;
- data sharing or data integration with other Australian Government agencies, including but not limited to data sharing or data integration with the NDIA.

Where a person requests us to correct the personal information we hold about them, we will action this request promptly. All participants can request access to the information that Enablepath Support Services holds about them by notifying the Privacy Officer.

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

Enablepath Support Services welcomes feedback and complaints from our staff members, participants and their representatives.

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018* require NDIS providers to have an effective system for the management and resolution of complaints about the supports or services they provide.

Our complaints management system and process make it easy for participants to make a complaint (anonymously if they choose) and ensure that we deal with all complaints quickly and fairly.



All staff members are required to support all participants to speak up and provide feedback and acknowledge when supports or services have not met the expectations or applicable standards. You will receive training on how to respond to feedback and complaints.

If you receive a complaint from a participant, you must keep records of any complaints received, even if they were provided verbally. All complaints from participants and/or their representatives must be recorded using the *Feedback and Complaints Management Form*.

You must ensure that appropriate support and assistance are provided to any person who wishes to make or has made a complaint, such as offering your help to document a complaint on behalf of a participant, if required.

A participant may be affected by an issue raised in a complaint but may not necessarily be the person making the complaint directly to Enablepath Support Services. When Enablepath Support Services receives a direct complaint, the person making the complaint and the participant affected by the issue must:

- be informed of the complaint's progress;
- be appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint; and
- be updated on the implementation of any relevant outcomes, including any action taken and decisions made.

If a participant affected by an issue raised in a complaint has a decision maker, advocate or substituted decision maker, these people may need to be included and recognised in the complaints management and resolution process, depending on their role in the life of the participant.

A positive attitude towards complainants and a commitment to resolving complaints will create a noticeable improvement in client satisfaction. Timely resolution of a complaint with the NDIS provider reduces the number of issues being raised with the NDIS Commission or any other authority unnecessarily.

Effective complaint management requires that:

- complaints are acknowledged, assessed and resolved in a fair, efficient and timely manner,
- appropriate action is taken in relation to issues raised in complaints,
- reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any person who makes a complaint, and any affected participant, is advised how to make a complaint to the NDIS Commission, and



- appropriate support and assistance in contacting the NDIS Commission in relation to a complaint are provided to any person making a complaint and any affected participant.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Managing incidents effectively is an essential part of providing quality and safe disability supports and services.

All incidents that occurred in connection with providing supports or services to NDIS participants must be recorded and managed as per the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018*.

The incidents that must be recorded and managed are:

- Acts, omissions, events or circumstances that occur in connection with providing NDIS supports or services to a person with disability and have, or could have, caused harm to the person with disability
- Acts by a person with disability that occur in connection with providing NDIS supports or services to the person with disability and which have caused serious harm, or a risk of serious harm, to another person
- Reportable incidents that are alleged to have occurred in connection with providing NDIS supports or services to a person with disability.

Under the NDIS Code of Conduct, staff must:

- Provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill.
- Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of supports and services provided to people with disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against and exploitation, neglect and abuse of people with disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

Staff must comply with our *Incident Management Policy and Procedure*. Our incident management system includes procedures for identifying, assessing, recording, managing, resolving and reporting incidents. Staff must ensure they respond appropriately and take steps to prevent such incidents from happening again.

Effective incident management practices can reduce preventable deaths, serious injuries and other serious incidents.



Enablepath Support Services must notify the NDIS Commission of all reportable incidents (including alleged reportable incidents) that occur in connection with the NDIS supports or services they deliver.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Enablepath Support Services is committed to understanding, implementing and improving practices that safeguard the rights of the people we support and preventing and responding to abuse of people with disabilities.

Everyone has the right to live their life free of abuse, violence, neglect, and fear. Enablepath Support Services has zero tolerance for violence, abuse or neglect.

Some examples of abuse and neglect include:

- Financial abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Isolation and confinement
- Sexual abuse

You will be asked to complete the 'Zero Tolerance' training on the National Disability Services (NDS) website.

All staff must be proactive and ensure that all people are supported in safe environments and in a way that upholds their rights, dignity and individual needs.

Enablepath Support Services demonstrates a commitment to the prevention and management of allegations through systemic approaches in service culture, staff training and education, reporting and reviewing processes and confidentiality considerations.

All staff and individuals engaged by Enablepath Support Services must comply with legislative mandatory reporting requirements and frameworks as defined by the State or Territory of the service delivery.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY



Enablepath Support Services is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all workers (including contractors and volunteers) as well as participants/clients, visitors and members of the public. Hazards and risks to health and safety will be eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.

The responsibility for managing health and safety ultimately rests with the Governing Body, directors and management. Workers also have essential responsibilities for health and safety in the workplace.

We are committed to complying with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011, codes of practice and other safety guidance material.

Management will:

- Ensure the business complies with all legislation relating to health and safety
- Eliminate or minimise all workplace hazards and risks as far as is reasonably practicable
- Provide information, instruction and training to enable all workers to work safely
- Supervise workers to ensure work activities are performed safely
- Consult with and involve workers on matters relating to health, safety and wellbeing
- Provide appropriate safety equipment and personal protective equipment
- Provide suitable injury management and return to work program

Workers will:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- Follow safe work procedures, instructions and rules
- Participate in safety training
- Report health and safety hazards
- Report all injuries and incidents
- Use safety equipment and personal protective equipment as instructed.

Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy work environment that is free from workplace injury and illness. This will only be achieved through the participation, cooperation and commitment of everyone in the workplace.

Enablepath Support Services will ensure that:

- The risk of injury to workers and others will be prevented;
- Workers will be consulted in the risk management process;
- Safe systems of work will be established and maintained;



- WHS training will be available for you and will be updated according to current regulatory WHS requirements.

You are responsible for reporting any hazard or incident in the workplace to your supervisor or line manager. To do this, you must complete the *Hazard Report Form* or any other form as required.

MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling is the actions of lifting, pushing and pulling in a care setting. Manual handling is one of the most significant risks to you when performing your role of assisting participants. Failure to perform manual handling tasks safely could result in injury to the participant or to you.

To minimise the risk of injury when you are asked to support someone who requires physical support, Enablepath Support Services will:

- Provide you with manual handling training before commencing work.
- Provide you with refresher training in manual handling every year.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT POLICY

Enablepath Support Services is committed to continuous service improvement. Continuous improvement requires a deliberate and sustained effort and a learning culture. It is results-driven with a focus not only on strengthening service delivery but also on individual outcomes.

All staff, whether permanent or casual, contractors, volunteers or business partners, are responsible for monitoring how well Enablepath Support Services's services and supports are working.

We aim for a high-quality service that meets the needs of our participants. You are an integral part of this, so we will seek your information and give you feedback on your practices.

Our continuous improvement principles:

- All services provided to participants and all processes and procedures undertaken by staff are the best they can be.



- Services are regularly reviewed and measured for quality and effectiveness.
- Staff and participants are encouraged to provide feedback on how to improve service delivery.
- Participants should be involved in all decision-making processes that affect them.
- Participants and their families/carers can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of services, highlight any gaps or issues that arise, and suggest improvements and innovations.
- A learning culture of quality of the organisation ensures all staff, regardless of their role, contribute to service quality and quality management.
- Planning, resource allocation, risk management and reporting are critical for continuous improvement and part of an integrated approach that supports Enablepath Support Services's mission and vision.
- Enablepath Support Services is committed to innovation, high quality, continuous improvement, contemporary best practices and effectiveness in the provision of supports to people with disability.