



**Participant Handbook  
March 2025**

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## Feedback and Complaints

### Policy

This process is about complaints made to a provider, not complaints about the NDIS.

Complaints are important as they help us identify issues and improve our services. We value feedback from all our participants, families, carers, and staff, and will always strive to improve our services in response to all feedback and complaints.

We are committed to handling all feedback confidentially and in a timely manner. Ensuring the individual/s providing feedback or complaint are informed of their rights and kept in the loop as to the outcome of their comments.

All complaints will be handled giving careful attention to confidentiality. Providing feedback or lodging a complaint will neither affect the right to receive a service, nor the quality of service provided.

Anyone wishing to give us feedback or make a complaint, can do so in person, by phone or email. A complaint form can be provided to be completed by the participant or any representative they wish to have help them in this process:

**Ph:** 0475 733 101

**E:** [hello@mavericksupports.com.au](mailto:hello@mavericksupports.com.au)

If anyone is unhappy with the resolution of the complaint, Maverick Supports recognises the rights of participants, families, carers and staff to contact external bodies such as the NSW Office of Fair Trading ([www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)). All NDIS participants have the right to make complaints to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission ([www.ndiscommission.gov.au](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au)).

Where complaints are made to external bodies, Maverick Supports will actively work with these organisations to resolve any complaints to the satisfaction of those individual/s.

## Privacy & Confidentiality

Maverick Supports is subject to privacy laws including but not limited to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002.

We value your privacy and we will keep your personal information confidential. However, there are some occasions where confidentiality may be broken and we may need to share your information, even without your consent. These are:

- If the safety of yourself or other people is threatened.
- If required by law.
- If directed under legislative requirements.

### Collection and use of your personal information

At times, Maverick Supports will ask you for some personal and medical details. We'll collect this information via forms and by speaking with you, and we will store your information securely in electronic files (only accessible to Maverick Supports).

There are a few reasons why we gather this information from you, it helps us to:

- understand your situation, needs and concerns.
- work out the best way to support you.
- refer you to other services if required.

We will also use this information for record keeping, general administration and billing purposes.

## Client Consent

I have read and understand how Maverick Supports will collect and use my personal information. I understand that there are some occasions where confidentiality may be broken, that is:

- If my safety or that of other people is threatened
- If required by law
- If directed under legislative requirements

I understand that:

- I have the right to refuse to provide or share information at any time
- I can make a request to see the information collected about me

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Maverick Supports Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Consent

### Purpose

Maverick Supports must gain consent from the participant before sharing any information with family, advocates, other providers, and government bodies.

Children under the age of eighteen (18) will need consent from their family/advocate/guardian to share information with other providers and government bodies. It is the responsibility of all Staff to inform participants about their rights regarding the provision of consent.

### Scope

All efforts should be made to obtain consent. When there are language or communication barriers, staff members will ensure that all reasonable efforts have been made to overcome these, using available communication skills and technology, interpreters, relatives/carers, and friends.

Relatives may be consulted about the best ways to communicate or may be requested to assist with establishing the participant's values and preferences if a participant is unable to express these themselves.

Initial consent will be undertaken during the participant's registration with the service. The prime responsibility for obtaining consent lies with the front-line worker who is to carry out the service. Consent can be sought by another individual if they have enough knowledge to provide the right information and answer the participant's questions correctly. Consent is equally valid whether it is expressed verbally, non-verbally (implied), or is written:

- Implied consent is adequate for most of the support provided by the business.
- Oral consent is enough for most interventions provided by doctors and other health professionals (e.g. commencing a manual handling process or use of complex medical procedures). Oral consent should be recorded in the support plan with relevant details of the discussion, date, and time of the entry, together with the name of the staff member legibly written. Oral refusal of consent, for any intervention, must also be recorded in the support plan in the same manner.
- Written consent should be gained for the use of an advocate, or to share information by the participant and the healthcare professional. Note: Participants automatically opt-in and must request to opt-out of NDIS audit requirements.
- Taking a photograph requires written consent to be obtained from any participant whose photo is being taken.

### Policy

Maverick Supports recognises the importance of maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all participants; however, there are times when it is essential to share information with other parties, such as government bodies and other service providers. We will:

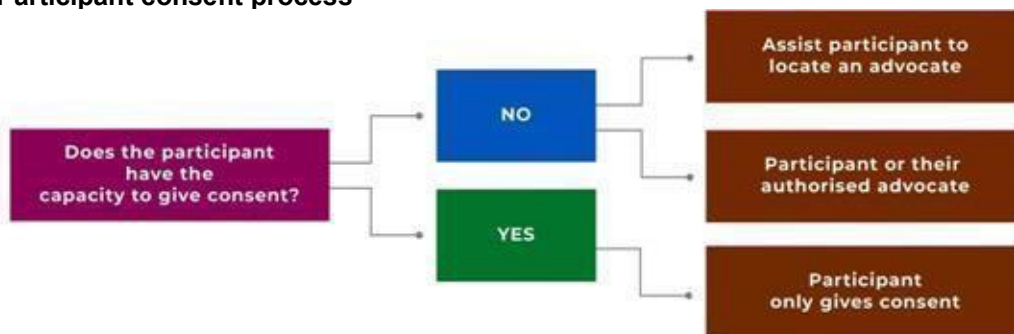
- not provide any information to a person or authority without the participant's consent unless the disclosure is a legal requirement.
- inform all participants, upon entry into the service, about their rights to privacy and confidentiality.
- notify all participants that they have an opt-out option if their information is requested for audit purposes.

### Guiding principles

- Participants have the right to make decisions about things that affect their lives.
- It is presumed that participants have the capacity to make their own decisions and provide consent when it is required unless there is evidence otherwise.

- Participants are supported to make informed decisions when their consent is required.
- Consent is obtained from the participant, or a legally appointed guardian, for life decisions such as accommodation, medical treatment, forensic procedures, and behaviour support.
- Consent for financial matters is obtained from the participant, or a legally appointed financial manager or the person appointed under a Power of Attorney.
- Participants are supported to identify opportunities to make decisions about their own lives and to build confidence in their decision-making skills.
- When a participant wants or needs support to make decisions, it is provided in ways preferred by the participant and by a supporter of their choice.
- Support with decision-making must respect the person’s cultural, religious, and other beliefs.
- If a participant wants support from family and friends, this is encouraged and facilitated.
- Support is provided in ways that uphold the participant’s right to self-determination, privacy and freedom from abuse and neglect.
- Decision-making and self-determination are not limited by the interests, beliefs, or values of those providing the decision-making support.
- The amount or type of support required by a participant to make decisions will depend on the specific decision or the situation.
- Participants are supported to make decisions that affect their own lives, even if other people do not agree with them or regard the decisions as risky.
- Participants are supported to access opportunities for meaningful participation and active inclusion in their community when they want this.
- Information is provided in formats that everyone can understand and enables the participant, their supporters, and others, such as legally appointed guardians, to communicate effectively with each other.

### Participant consent process



### Procedure

If a participant wishes to provide consent so another person or organisation can access their personal information, then the following procedure is to be undertaken:

1. The participant is informed that written or verbal consent is required prior to sharing any of their personal information.
2. The participant is advised that their consent can be withdrawn at any time.
3. Information about the consent is communicated in a method that is relevant to the participant.
4. The participant completes a Consent Form.
5. A signed Consent Form is placed at the front of the participant's file.
6. All relevant staff members are informed about the consent approval.

### Participant consent process



## Culture and Diversity Policy

Maverick Supports is committed to providing quality services and supports to each participant that respect their culture, diversity, values, and beliefs in line with the 'Culture and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Strategy 2018' guidelines.

The 'Culture and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Strategy 2018' is the NDIA's public statement of commitment to working alongside people with disability from CALD backgrounds to achieve access to, and outcomes from, their NDIS Plan on an equal basis with the broader population.

More than a quarter of Australians (26 per cent) were born overseas, and of these, two-thirds were born in non-English speaking countries. Historically, Australians from culturally diverse backgrounds have been underrepresented in the disability sector.

The NDIA recognises that people with disability from a CALD background can face additional challenges in terms of inclusion in their communities, and this extends to their ability to access the NDIS and supports.

At Maverick Supports the participant's right to practice their culture, values and beliefs while accessing supports is supported.

Our workers are inducted to recognise and respect the diverse backgrounds and allow participants to practice their culture, values beliefs while accessing supports.

Participant needs, support requirements, strengths, goals, culture, diversity, values, and beliefs specified by the participant including the inputs from their family/support network are identified during the Initial Assessment Process and documents in the 'Participant Assessment & Support Plan'.

Participant's preferences such as the same language, same culture or specific criteria will be considered, where possible.

## Individual Values and Beliefs

### Purpose

People with disabilities have the same right as other members of Australian society to realise their full potential. They should be supported to participate in and contribute to social and economic life.

We support inclusion of, and access for people with disabilities to mainstream and community- based activities and other government initiatives (National Disability Strategy 2010-2020).

To inform the community of Maverick Supports service provision capacity, including the priority of access process and eligibility criteria requirements, we will encourage and manage requests for service from potential participants and referrals to and from other agencies.

Maverick Supports commits to cultural diversity and to support our participants by respecting their culture, values, and beliefs. We will recognise and value the multicultural nature of Australian society and provide specific acknowledgement and support to the customs of Australian Indigenous people.

### Scope

This policy focuses on the inclusiveness of all community groups and freedom from discrimination that belongs to all people, irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, race, sex, cultural and linguistic diversity, age, and stage of development.

This policy applies to Maverick Supports staff and management engaged in working with participants.

### Policy

Maverick Supports will deliver flexible services that are designed to meet the needs of diverse peoples. We will actively provide a work environment that supports, values, and encourages cultural diversity by training our staff to develop their cultural understandings.

Maverick Supports will identify any real or potential barriers for the participant to access our services.

Our strategies to ensure equity for all peoples may include:

- treating all people equally according to their human rights
- encouraging inclusion of all people regardless of their background, ethnicity, culture, language, beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, level of ability, additional needs, family structure or lifestyle
- promoting inclusive practices and ensuring the successful involvement of participants in the community to enable them to reach their goals and aspirations.

Maverick Supports will collaborate with the participant to identify their culture, diversity, values, and beliefs. We acknowledge the participant's right to practice their cultures, values, and beliefs. Maverick Supports will work with the participant to ascertain how and when they wish to participate in any religious or cultural practices. The team must respond sensitively to the participant's requirements and work with the participant to access their required supports.

Maverick Supports recognises, respects, promotes and celebrates the value of cultural diversity.

Our team will adopt and implement inclusive and culturally diverse policies and strategies.

Maverick Supports is committed to social inclusion and community participation, in both the delivery and expansion of services, for disadvantaged participants. Our team will work in partnership with the community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, people with different sexual orientations and those with disabilities.

To improve and support the varying needs of people with disabilities, their families, and advocates, we will access links between other service systems.

We will:

- consult with our participants to facilitate the provision of fair, equitable and transparent services.
- work with services in the community to ensure our participants are provided with relevant contacts to other services and community networks to enable the development of their personal goals, outcomes, and aspirations, in line with their support plan.
- actively encourage and support our participants to maintain personal networks, community connections and participate in their community.
- use networks and community engagement feedback to inform management processes.

Maverick Supports will gather information about participants' cultural beliefs, values, and diversity. Participants' decisions and choices regarding their beliefs and cultural practices are supported and recorded in their support plan.

Our commitment is to make sure people with disabilities are connected into their communities by:

- providing information on mainstream services and community activities which will benefit people with disabilities, as well as their families and advocates.
- contributing to relevant links and networks within the community
- encouraging participation and inclusion of people with disabilities by working in partnership with community organisations.

Maverick Supports is committed to identifying and liaising with other stakeholders. Stakeholder identification and contact are dependent on the participant and may include local community support organisations, job networks, training organisations and housing agencies.

Maverick Supports will uphold and promote the legal and human rights of all people and abide by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Maverick Supports will treat all people with courtesy, dignity and will recognise their human rights to self-determination and privacy.

## Procedure

Maverick Supports will ensure that all participants are treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner. This intent incorporates both intake and service delivery processes. Information provided will be in an Easy Read format, but we will arrange relevant support in the form of home language, or an interpreter, as required. If a participant has a barrier of not being able to read or understand information, then a support person will be provided to assist the participant in understanding what is said to them.

Maverick Supports will support the participant to access supports linked to their culture, diversity, values, and beliefs. The type of support and responses will be determined through consultation with the participant and will follow the choices made by the participant. To assist the participant in making choices about their level of participation in their relevant supports, our team may:

- pursue contacts that have been chosen by the participant.
- contact local communities, e.g. cultural, religious, sexual orientation groups or spiritual groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- contact government agencies to seek support for individual participants.
- source community members and groups to provide input into the service.

- contact advocates to assist with the development of community support plans for the participants.
- support the rights of the participant to seek contact with those in the community relevant to their wishes, goals, and aspirations. The participant will be encouraged to join with related community links, as required.
- follow the participant's aspirations and needs to participate in the community actively.

Maverick Supports will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culturally diverse groups to actively engage with their communities. Support provided from their community is incorporated within the support plan of the participant. This support will be assessed, monitored, and reviewed to ensure that goals and aspirations of participants are met using the relevant community supports.

Our organisation will work with the community to actively encourage the participant to participate in various activities, including employment, education, sporting activities, cultural events, and any relevant activities.

Maverick Supports promotes inclusion by:

- provide services that meet the aspirations and goals of the participant for inclusion in the community.
- committing to building relationships with and between key stakeholders, including governments, organisations, and communities, to obtain the best result for their participants.
- ensuring our services are tailored to meet the participant's needs flexibly; acknowledging that each person's needs are different.
- working closely with a network of health and allied health professionals to be able to support the holistic needs of our participants.
- building effective partnerships with the participants and their families, advocates, etc to discuss and foster shared priorities and understand the participant's needs and goals.
- focusing efforts on building social inclusion and participation opportunities within the range of services provided
- providing information on community events and other relevant networks that meet participants' needs and identified goals.
- working within a participant's networks and supports, e.g. childcare, school or home environments to assist the participant foster relationships and participation in familiar surroundings.
- operating in a manner that ensures all people can access our services.

## Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation & Discrimination

### Purpose

Maverick Supports recognises the right of all participants to feel safe and to live in an environment that provides protection from assault, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, or any other form of abuse. People with disabilities, children and young people are some of the most vulnerable groups in our society. It is essential that Maverick Supports identify, consult, and respond to instances where persons with disabilities, children or young persons are at risk of significant harm.

Common reasons for people with disabilities, children, and young people to be at risk of significant harm include:

- domestic and family violence
- physical, sexual, and emotional abuse
- neglect.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent and mitigate the effects of violence, abuse, and neglect on participants through training and implementing processes to inform staff and protect participants who are at risk of significant harm.

### Scope

Maverick Supports will encourage and support any person who has witnessed the abuse of a service user or, who suspects that abuse has occurred, to make a report and be confident of doing so without fear of retribution.

### Definition

Terminology	Description
<b>Abuse and neglect</b>	Any behaviour that is outside the norms of conduct and entails a substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm to a person. Such behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e. neglect) and commission (i.e. abuse).
<b>Discrimination</b>	Treating, or proposing to treat someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by the law. Discrimination includes; bullying someone because of a protected characteristic.
<b>Exploitation</b>	The action or fact of mistreating someone to benefit from their work or the action of making use of and benefiting from resources.
<b>Violence</b>	Violent behaviour by a person towards another can include abusive behaviour that is physical, sexual, intimidating, and forceful.

### Types of abuse

Terminology	Signs and Symptoms	Causes
<b>Physical Abuse</b>	Bruising, lacerations, welts, rashes, broken or healing bones, burns, weight loss, facial swelling, missing teeth, pain, or restricted movements, crying, acting fearful, agitation, drowsiness, hair loss and/or poor physical well-being.	Hitting, slapping, pushing, punching, or burning which entails an incident that is non-accidental, resulting in pain or injury.

<b>Psychological/ Emotional Abuse</b>	Loss of interest in self-care, helplessness, withdrawal, apathy, insomnia, fearfulness, reluctant to communicate openly, chooses not to maintain eye contact, paranoia and confusion.	Intimidation, humiliation, harassment, threatening, sleep deprivation, withholding affection, and/or not allowing the person to maintain their decision-making powers, which leads to a pattern repeated over time.
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	Unexplained sexually transmitted disease, vaginal/anal bleeding, fearful of certain people or places, bruising to genital areas inner thigh or around breasts, anxiety, torn or bloody underclothes, difficulty in walking or sitting, change in sleep pattern and repeating nightmares.	Rape (penetration and/or oral- genital contact), interest in older person's bodies, inappropriate comments, and sexual references, inappropriate (possibly painful) administration of enemas or genital cleansing, indecent assault, sexual harassment which is mainly about violence and power over another person, rather than sexual pleasure.
<b>Neglect</b>	Poor hygiene or personal care, unkempt appearance, lack of personal items, absence of health aids, weight loss, agitation, inappropriate clothing and/or lack of food.	The intentional failure to provide basic life necessities.
<b>Domestic and family abuse</b>	Any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship including emotional, physical, sexual, financial, or psychological abuse.	Many experts believe psychopathology. Witnessing abuse as the norm, or being abused, destroys the child's ability to trust others and undermines his or her ability to control emotion.

## Policy

This policy aims to:

- take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to participant safety
- value and empower the participant to contribute to decisions which affect their lives
- foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to disclose the risks of harm to participant safety
- respect diversity in cultures and child-rearing practices, while keeping the participant's safety paramount
- provide training to staff on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards participants
- engage only the most suitable people to work with participants and ensure superior quality staff, volunteer supervision and professional development
- ensure participants know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise any issues
- report suspected abuse, neglect, or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
- share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of the participant is at risk
- value the input of families and advocates and communicate regularly with them.

**NOTE:** In the case that situation meets the criteria of a reportable incident, then the *Reportable Incident, Accident and Emergency Policy and Procedure* will apply.

### Statement of commitment to safety

Maverick Supports is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all participants. This commitment is the primary focus of our support and decision making. We are committed to providing a safe environment

where participants are safe, and their voices are heard and included in decisions that affect their lives. Attention is paid to the cultural safety of participants from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

All Maverick Supports Staff members have a responsibility to understand the critical and specific role they play, both individually and collectively, to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all participants and young people are at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

### **Safe Code of Conduct**

Maverick Supports is committed to the safety and wellbeing of participants. Our business recognises the importance of, and responsibility for, ensuring our environment is a safe, supportive, and enriching environment that respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of all people, enabling them to thrive.

This code of conduct aims to protect both Staff and participants and to reduce opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid, or better manage, risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, disability legislation, policies and procedures and professional standards, codes, or ethics as these apply to all staff.

Maverick Supports management supports the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct. We will plan, implement, and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive and safe environments.

All Staff, volunteers, and any other community members involved in participant-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate and acceptable behaviour (see details below). The Code of Conduct applies in all situations, including planned activities and the use of digital technology and social media.

### **Acceptable behaviours**

Staff or any other persons involved with participant-related work are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of participants by:

- upholding Maverick Supports Statement of Commitment for the participant's safety
- treating the participant, their family, and advocates with respect within the environment and during outside activities as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of the participant, particularly if they are reporting that they or another person have been abused; or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another participant
- promoting cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through interactions with their community leaders and members
- promoting cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of people with culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds through engagement with the community accessing the service
- promoting the safety, participation, and empowerment of people with disabilities
- reporting any allegations of abuse or personal safety concerns to management
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory state reporting), as they relate to protecting the participant from harm or abuse
- maintaining the right to live in a safe environment by promoting and informing the participants of their rights
- ensuring participants are safe and protected from harm, as quickly as possible, once abuse is suspected
- Identifying themselves to a participant upon entering premises and show any required identification.

### **Unacceptable behaviours**

As front-line workers, volunteers and community members involved in participant-related work, our staff will not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of abuse
- develop a relationship with any participant that could be viewed as favouritism or grooming behaviour, e.g. offering gifts
- exhibit behaviours, or engage in activities, with participants that can be interpreted as abusive and unjustifiable in an educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards young participants when they are overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss the content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with participants, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental/ advocate guidance or a therapeutic setting
- treat a participant unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, or ethnicity
- communicate directly with an underage participant, through personal or private contact channels, e.g. social media, email, instant messaging, or texting, except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to work or activities, or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.

### **Screening, supervising, training and human resource practices to reduce risk**

Our staff will be required to undertake checks, including disability worker checks, relevant police, and working with children checks and the mandatory NDIS Worker Orientation Module.

All records will be maintained in their personnel file.

## **Procedure**

### **Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of harm**

Ren's Care Services recognise that creating a safe organisation begins with a clear understanding of the potential risks to the participant and Staff in an organisation's setting. Ren's Care Services will identify possible issues and problems and plan to reduce or remove these risks.

To reduce the likelihood of harm, Ren's Care Services will consider, define, and act against its organisational risks.

These strategies include:

- considering the organisation, activities and the services provided to participants
- reviewing and planning how to make all activities as safe as possible
- developing a safety plan for participants who require additional supports
- supporting participants with disabilities to understand plans and safety procedures using appropriate communication methods
- informing participants that they have the right to live in a safe environment
- acting proactively to reduce the likelihood of any risks.

## Reporting violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination

A report must be made if:

- a participant shows a change in behaviour or mood which may indicate they are being abused
- someone is observed behaving towards a participant in a way that makes others feel uncomfortable
- a participant informs a staff worker they are being abused by another person
- a person advises that they are abusing another participant
- a participant or visitor informs that they have observed abusive acts
- a participant advises that they feel discriminated against, e.g. language and actions
- a participant presents as unkempt or seeking food
- there is evidence of unexplained bruising or similar
- an action or inaction is witnessed that may be considered abusive
- when an individual, for any reason, believes a participant is being abused.

NOTE: Failure to report an abusive situation may result in a criminal offence.

Reporting procedure below relates to:

- abuse or neglect of a person with a disability
- unlawful sexual or physical contact with, or assault of, a person with a disability
- Sexual misconduct, committed against, or in the presence of, a person with a disability, including grooming of the person with a disability for sexual activity
- Unauthorised use of restrictive practices in relation to a person with a disability.

## Reporting roles

The organisation will establish the following roles and ensure that allocated staff are aware of their responsibilities:

- Approved Reportable Incident Approver (Managing Director) responsibilities:
- Collate and report the required information.
- Create new Reportable Incident notifications
- Review and submit reports to the NDIS Commission.
- View previous Reportable Incidents submitted by their organisation.

## How to report

The Managing Director will review the information and contact the police immediately to inform them of the suspected abuse.

Important note: To find out how to report abuse against children go to the *Working with Children Policy and Procedure*.

Reportable Incidents are submitted via the NDIS Commission Portal > 'My Reportable Incidents' page.

- Complete an Immediate Notification Form and submit within 24 hours.
- Approve Reportable Incident Approver will create and submit form.
- The 5-day form is to be completed within five days of key stakeholders being informed.
- Approve Reportable Incident Approver will create submit form.
- A final report will be submitted if requested by the NDIS Commission.
- Approve Reportable Incident Approver will create and submit report.

## Details to provide

The Managing Director will give the following information to the authorities:

- participant's name, age, date of birth and address
- description of injury, abuse, and neglect (outline current and previous)
- participant's current situation
- location of the participant and alleged perpetrator, if known
- explanation of when and how abuse was discovered and by whom.

Note: NDIS forms must be submitted to the NDIS Commission. The required police contact will use the above information.

## Investigating allegation or incident

The Managing Director undertakes a review of the allegation or incident by:

- gathering data from the relevant person/s
- analysing the situation to determine what occurred, how it occurred, and the parties involved
- determining the effect on the participant/s
- consulting with relevant stakeholders; never seek information from children, as this requires a specialist, any questioning will be conducted by appropriate authorities once the incident is reported
- informing the participant or their family that they have access to a support advocate
- reviewing the outcome against practices
- undertaking action to prevent the incident from being repeated.

## Support the participant

Reported allegations or incidents require the Managing Director to gather all the relevant information and make a report to the relevant authority such as the police or via each state's reporting process.

Support will be provided to the participant relevant to the allegation or incident. The participant will be provided with an appropriate advocate if required.

# Independence & Informed Choice Decision Making

## Purpose

Maverick Supports policy is underpinned by international, national, and state obligations, in relation to the human rights of people with disabilities; Article 12 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* is the critical driver behind supported decision-making.

We wish to support all participants to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise their independence relating to the supports provided.

Quality decision-making will underpin the long-term effectiveness of participant supports and agreements. It facilitates the achievement of strategic goals, maximises participant involvement, enhances participant outcomes and encourages wellbeing and productivity of our staff.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Maverick Supports and participants accessing our services.

## Policy

This policy assumes that each participant has decision-making capacity, unless proven otherwise, and acknowledges that each participant's capacity varies for each decision and situation. All participants have the dignity of risk to make their own decisions.

In instances where a participant's decision-making capacity is in doubt, this policy provides direction regarding the determination of capacity and consent, supporting and facilitating decision-making, and deciding on behalf of the participant, where required.

This policy will eliminate the risk of decisions being made about a participant's life without their involvement or against their actual or anticipated wishes. Decisions are only to be made with the consent of the participant.

Maverick Supports puts choice and control squarely in the hands of people with disabilities, their families, and carers.

Maverick Supports will provide information in an Easy Read format for participants who require this communication style.

## Definition

Terms	Definition
<b>Decision-making</b>	Process of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the values, preferences, and beliefs of the decision-maker.
<b>Informed choice</b>	A person chooses services based on knowledge of diagnostic tests or treatments, knowing the details, benefits, risks and expected outcomes of their choice.
<b>Dignity of Risk</b>	The right to take risks when engaging in life experiences and the right to fail in taking these.
<b>Advocate</b>	A person who puts a case on someone else's behalf.
<b>Autonomy</b>	The capacity to decide for oneself and pursue a course of action in one's life, often regardless of any moral content.

## Procedure

### Advocate

Maverick Supports will inform all participants from their first contact that they have the right to access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of their choosing. They will be advised that it is their right to have the advocate present at any time that they are in contact with us.

## Decision-making and choice

During the development of the service agreement and all ongoing interactions with each participant, Maverick Supports staff must:

- inform the participants, and their advocate, of their options regarding their supports
- advise the participants, and their advocate, of any risks to themselves or others regarding their options
- consult and collaborate with the participant, and their advocate, by providing current and relevant information to allow the participant to make decisions
- allow the participant enough time to absorb and understand all relevant information before and during the decision-making process
- provide information in an Easy Read format
- assess the participant's service requirements, against their NDIS plan, to plan and provide proper support and design appropriate strategies with the participant, family, and advocate
- undertake review meetings where the participant, family and advocates have input
- plan with the participant, family, and advocates when the participant decides to exit from Maverick Supports.

Maverick Supports recognises that participants have the right to dignity of risk in their decision-making. Participants will be advised of the:

- various relevant options that may support their needs, before any decisions being made
- benefits of each relevant option
- risk, if any, linked to each relevant option.

Participants will be provided time to absorb information and make the appropriate decisions based on the risks involved. If the participant wishes to undertake an activity that has been deemed by Maverick Supports as a risk to the health and safety of the participant, then our team will:

- inform the participant that if they wish to continue, it is their choice
- develop a risk management plan to identify and reduce the possible risks
- keep notes in the participant's file recording the participant was informed that the activity had identified risks and could be dangerous.

## Autonomy

All participants have the right to autonomy, and all Staff will respect this. Participants can make decisions for themselves and pursue the actions that they determine. Participants have the right to make choices based on who they are and what they want to do. Front-line workers must allow the participant their right to intimacy and sexual expression (in the context of lawful behaviour).

## Time

Maverick Supports recognises that the participant may require time to make some decisions so they can review the various options available to them. Participants may also need to seek advice from their networks and relevant stakeholders. Staff must not rush participants at any stage during the support provision and decision-making process.

## Documentation

Maverick Supports requires staff to record all information and options provided to each participant.

Decisions will be recorded in the participant's file.

## Advocacy Support

### Purpose

Maverick Supports recognises the importance of ensuring the participant's right to use an advocate or representative of their choice is maintained. Both participants and potential participants have the right to select and involve an advocate, or a representative of their choice, to participate or act on their behalf at any time.

### Scope

This policy applies to all participants, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.

### Definition

**Advocacy** is the active support for a cause or position, and, in this context, it is an expression of support for a person who may find it difficult to speak for him or herself. It may include matters such as achieving social justice, improving a person's wellbeing, prevention of abusive and discriminatory treatment, or stopping unjust and unfair treatment so it is possible that a person's fundamental needs and interests are met.

Below is a list of six types of advocacies:

1. **Individual advocacy** - A one-on-one approach, aiming to prevent or address instances of discrimination or abuse.
2. **Systemic advocacy** - Working to influence or secure long-term changes to ensure the collective rights and interests of people with disabilities.
3. **Family advocacy** - A parent or family member advocates with, and on behalf of, a family member with a disability.
4. **Citizen advocacy** - Matches people with disabilities to volunteers.
5. **Legal advocacy** - Upholds the rights and interests of individual people with disabilities by addressing the legal aspects of discrimination, abuse, and neglect.
6. **Self-advocacy** - Supports people with disabilities to advocate for themselves, or as a group.

### Policy

All participants have the right to use an advocate of their choice to represent their interests and speak on their behalf regarding any aspect of the supports or services they receive.

Our staff will work cooperatively with the participant's nominated advocate and will show the same respect to the advocate as is shown to the participant. When a participant cannot advocate for themselves, it is our policy to ensure that the participant's interests are represented and supported using a substitute decision-maker.

### Advocacy principles

Maverick Supports will:

- ensure that all Staff receive training in the use of advocates.
- maintain printed material on advocacy and advocacy services.
- maintain local advocacy resource/contact lists.
- work cooperatively with any nominated advocate chosen by the participant and show the same respect to the advocate, as is shown to the participant.
- utilise a governance system to enable us to identify where a participant needs advocacy.

## Conflict of Interest Policy

Maverick Supports is committed to manage conflicts of interest in an open and transparent manner at all levels in the organisation and comply with NDIS rules and other obligations.

“Conflict of interest occurs when an individual or an NDIS provider is in a position to exploit their own professional or official capacity for a personal or corporate benefit (other than in the usual course of charging fees for services or supports rendered).”

A conflict of interest may affect the way a person acts, decision they make or the way they vote in group decisions.

We will ensure that each participant will be treated equally, and no participant will be given preferential treatment above another in the receipt or provision of supports.

Maverick Supports will act proactively to manage perceived or actual conflicts of interest through the development and maintenance of organisational policies to ensure that personal or individual interest do not impact on the organisation’s services, activities, or decisions.

We will also:

- ensure our organisational or ethical values do not impede a participant’s right to choice and control
- manage, document and report on individual conflicts as they arise
- ensure that advice to a participant about support options (including those not delivered directly by the Provider) is transparent and promotes choice and control

Declaration and management of conflicts of interest are specifically required for management as part of their legal responsibilities. Our management team, employees, and workers:

- are always required to act in the interests of the organisation, and to notify the organisation when this conflicts with other interests or commitments
- will present each participant with a range of choices about providers of supports and not only Maverick Supports
- will not seek to influence the customer to select Maverick Supports
- will never accept and offer of money, gifts, services, or benefits that would cause them to act in a manner contrary to the interests of an NDIS participant
- must have no financial or other personal interest that could directly or indirectly influence or compromise the choice of Maverick Supports or provision of supports to the Participant
- may accept meals, drinks, or entertainment only if such courtesies are unsolicited, infrequently provided, and reasonable in amount

Maverick Supports will ensure that when providing services and supports to the Participant under the NDIS, any conflict of interest is declared, and any risks to the Participant are mitigated.

## Transitions to or from a provider

### Policy

Maverick Supports is committed to implementing a system to ensure each participant will experience a planned and coordinated transition to or from the provider.

Each participant has the right to choose other providers, and Maverick Supports will collaborate with the alternative providers to share information and meet participant needs.

At Maverick Supports we consider the participant during the transition to or from Maverick Supports. Participants will be involved and communicated at all times.

Maverick Supports will communicate and collaborate with the alternative providers, when transferring from Maverick Supports, considering the participant needs and disability levels. Associated risks with the transition are assessed, addressed to, and are documented. The participants will be engaged and communicated at all time and through the process of transition, including when the 'Referral Form' is being completed.

The process of transitioning to or from the provider will be reviewed once applied for a participant.

If practical, Maverick Supports will conduct an exit interview with the participant or their family/support network.

## Participants Money and Property Management

### Policy

At Maverick Supports, employees and workers are trained and inducted to appropriately manage, protect and account for the participant's money or other property, where they have access to.

Workers are only authorised to use the participant's money or other properties with the consent of the participant and for the purpose intended by the participant through the 'Participant Consent Form' at the start of any new planned activities.

Maverick Supports will support the participants to access and spend their own money as determined.

At Maverick Supports, employees and workers are not allowed to provide financial advice or information other than that which reasonably be required under the participant's plan.

## Mealtime Management

At Maverick Supports, we make sure that consumers who need mealtime management have been identified through the initial evaluation and document the details regarding the mealtime management.

We use qualified health practitioners for assessing these needs who conduct a comprehensive analysis on the participants' nutrition and swallowing, their seating and positioning requirements for eating and drinking. These details are documented in the Support Plan and signed off by a qualified health practitioner.

Based on the initial evaluation, a Mealtime Management Plan will be for our participants', which outline their mealtime management needs, including swallowing, eating and drinking.

As the participants' situation might change, we will review plan at least annually in accordance with the professional advice of the participant's practitioner, or more frequently if needs change or difficulty is observed. As a result of our review, we will amend these documents if required.

The Participant's written consent will be obtained at the start of any mealtime planning from each participant requiring mealtime management to be involved in the assessment and development of their mealtime management plans.

The 'Mealtime Management Plan' for each participant who needs that is shared with the appointed worker to be followed. If safety incidents occur during meals, such as coughing or choking on food or fluids, the workers are briefed to follow the Incident Management process. All incidents are recorded and managed through the 'Incident Report Form' and 'Incident Register' in a timely manner.

Meals that may be provided to participants requiring mealtime management are stored safely and in accordance with health standards, can be easily identified as meals to be provided to particular participants using the name tags to prevent mixing up the participants meals and prevent serving the meals that should not be provided to particular participants. We have emphasised these Notes included in the 'Mealtime Management Plan'.

## Management of Medication

### Purpose

Maverick Supports is committed to providing a high standard of care and excellence in supports and service. Maverick Supports participants may take medications to support and improve their health conditions. Many participants will manage and take their medications independently, while others may ask for some form of support or assistance.

### Scope

For this commitment to be achieved, the Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that all medications are correctly managed in accordance with this policy.

We will also correctly supervise the management of documentation, including safe/secure storage and handling and safe support.

### Policy

Maverick Supports encourages participants to maintain their independence for as long as possible, including managing their medications safely and effectively. Where a participant requests help with their medications, the nature of this help will be recorded in detail, and the participant's consent confirmed. Maverick Supports has processes for the reporting and investigation of medication errors.

Participants, carers, and advocates can be confident that Maverick Supports will ensure quality outcomes for its participants through a safe and correct medication management policy.

### Definition

Terminology	Definitions
<b>Medication support</b>	Involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reminding, or prompting, a participant to take medication</li> <li>assisting with opening medication containers</li> <li>providing other assistance, not involving medication aid.</li> </ul>
<b>Medication assistance</b>	Involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening medicine container/s</li> <li>removing the prescribed dosage (from an approved container)</li> <li>giving the medication as per instructions.</li> </ul>

### Roles and responsibilities

Maverick Supports:

- has policies and procedures in place for medication administration, errors, and incidents
- will provide the necessary training to Staff, which includes the effects and side-effects of medications and medication safety
- will document the staff worker's levels of skill and knowledge of medication safety and administration through a yearly competency assessment
- ensures trained Staff is available to perform tasks that are within their knowledge, skills, and experience
- issues clear instructions (with the participant's consent) that outlines steps required to help the participant with their medication. These instructions will include, but are not limited to:
  - medication name and strength, where applicable
  - form of medication, e.g. tablets, suppositories, liquid
  - dose, route, frequency
  - allergies/adverse drug reactions participant is aware of
  - prescriber's name printed on medication, date, and signature.

Staff from Maverick Supports will:

- follow the Management of Medication Policy and Procedure and all other related medication policies
- participate in annual training
- provide services that are consistent only with their level of training and competence
- seek advice from the Managing Director where doubt exists
- follow the instructions from the Managing Director as per support plan requirements
- seek instruction from the Managing Director when a medication requires refilling.

### **Procedure**

Maverick Supports will, with the participant, carer, or advocate's consent, liaise with the family or support network, general practitioner, pharmacist or registered nurse to clarify aspects of the medication management.

The Staff providing medication support will make sure to:

- identify the participant
- note the medication is current, and the label correctly identifies the participant
- administer oral medication, either from a:
  - dosage administration aid (DAA)
  - 'box' medication device filled by a pharmacist, doctor or dentist or Maverick Supports Managing Director
  - participant's labelled pharmacy container
- record the service in the participant's support plan
- monitor the participant for any adverse side effects of the medication.

### **Safety considerations**

The participants are to be observed for any changes to their health status and, where noted, be reported to the Managing Director.

Where a participant refuses the administration of medication, the Maverick Supports Managing Director is to be advised. Relevant health professionals (i.e. doctor, registered or enrolled nurse) will be consulted where necessary.

A staff member shall not decide to withhold a participant's medication unless certain about the participant's health status. The Staff must consult with the Managing Director before withholding medication and follow the Managing Director's decision, in consultation with relevant health professionals (e.g. doctor, registered or enrolled nurse).

Medications are to be stored in a manner that maintains the quality of the medicine and safeguards the participant, family, and visitors in their home. Maverick Supports may assist a participant, carer, or advocate to obtain and use a locked box, another suitable container, or cupboard.

### **Documentation**

The Staff is to record, on our medication chart or the pharmacy generated medication chart, the date and time of medication administration along with their signature and printed name.

The Staff is to record in the participant's health record any change in the participant's health status or medication incidents.

### **Adverse drug reactions**

- Adverse drug reactions must be reported immediately to the Managing Director
- The Managing Director will inform the general practitioner/nurse immediately and document actions taken in the participant's health record.

- An adverse drug reaction is an incident and must be recorded on an Incident Form and in the participant's health record, including symptoms and actions taken.

### Medication errors

Staff workers who detect an error (including an error in dosage, time, frequency, or type of medication administered to, or taken by, a participant) must:

- identify the nature of the error
- notify the Managing Director
- follow the advice from the Managing Director
- complete an Incident Form
- monitor the participant for any adverse events that may be caused by the error.

### Staff training for medication assistance

Staff involved in assisting or supporting the participants with their medication are trained by the Managing Director, in medication procedures. They will take due care and diligence to comply with legislative requirements (i.e. training in first aid, healthy body systems and the administration of medication).

Maverick Supports will ensure that appropriate staff workers hold current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) qualifications, so they can correctly respond when monitoring any adverse reactions that require action, intervention, and escalation. A Maverick Supports support worker has relevant skills and experience, and a level of competency to provide appropriate and safe support to a participant.

Maverick Supports will conduct an annual competency in medication management and administration practices for their support staff workers. Details will be recorded in the Staff files, where appropriate. Maverick Supports annual training will include, but will not be limited to, high-risk medication education as outlined below.

### High-risk medication

Appropriate Staffs will be trained and educated on the specific hazards and risks associated with high-risk medications that participants may be consuming.

Maverick Supports training will incorporate the following topics for their support workers, where necessary for each participant's individual needs and specified in their support plans:

- PRN psychotropic medications
- Schedule 2 medicine (over the counter pharmacy medicine)
- Schedule 3 medicine (pharmacist only medicines)
- Schedule 4 medicine (prescription-only medicines)
- Schedule 8 medicine (controlled drugs)
- Cytotoxic medications.

## Provider Contact Details

**Contact Name:**

**Provider name:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

**Website:**

**Address:**

**Postal Address:**

At Maverick Supports, we will provide an interpreter if required for communication with the participant and respect to work with the participant's interpreter or representatives

## Acknowledgment

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Participant / Participant's representative) have read and understood the information provided in this 'Participant Handbook'.

### Participant

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Participant Representative (if applicable)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Maverick Supports Representative

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**MAVERICK SUPPORTS**  
SUPPORTS OUTSIDE THE BOX