



Protection of Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy

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1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Valued Lives employees and volunteers promote individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making and actively prevent abuse, harm, neglect and violence. This policy includes the National Framework for Restrictive Practices (2013) and the Department of Communities (Disability Services) 'Positive Behaviour Support Information for Disability Sector Organisations'.

2. The Human Rights Principles

Valued Lives adheres to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Practice Standards (2020) which sets out the following rights of participants and the responsibilities of providers delivering supports and services to them:

- **Person-centred supports** - Each participant accesses supports that promote, uphold and respect their legal and human rights and is enabled to exercise informed choice and control. The provision of supports promotes, upholds and respects individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making.
- **Individual values and beliefs** - Each participant accesses supports that respect their culture, diversity, values and beliefs.
- **Privacy and Dignity** - Each participant accesses supports that respect and protect their dignity and right to privacy.
- **Independence and informed choice** - Each participant is supported by the provider to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise their independence relating to the supports provided.
- **Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination** - Each participant accesses supports free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination.

Valued Lives recognises people's inherent right to freedom of expression and the right to make decisions about and exercise control over their own lives. It is the fundamental right of people with disability to have respect and dignity. This includes the dignity of risk - the right to choose to take some risks in life.

Valued Lives employees and volunteers will recognise the importance of:

- Legal and human rights
- dignity and respect
- freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making
- self-determination
- informed choice and control
- respecting culture, diversity, values and beliefs
- confidentiality and privacy
- freedom from discrimination, exploitation, abuse, harm, neglect and violence
- the role of families, friends, carers and advocates in the safeguarding of rights

- comprehensive systems to prevent or promptly respond to any breaches of rights.

3. Safeguards

Valued Lives recognises that people with disability may be vulnerable and at risk of experiencing compromised outcomes. Valued Lives understands the importance of safeguarding and will endeavour to ensure that a range of preventative and reactive responses are considered to minimise vulnerability and risk.

Valued Lives service model promotes the development of natural support networks and encourages independent, freely given relationships around a person as a fundamental safeguard and 'voice' to protect an individual's:

- human rights
- decision making
- choice and control
- safety and wellbeing
- citizenship and quality of life.

4. Key Principles

- Valued Lives will always treat people with dignity and respect
- Valued Lives welcomes and encourages feedback and will assist people who are not happy to lodge a complaint. Concerns and complaints will be resolved efficiently and fairly
- Valued Lives will provide accessible and reliable information on Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect upon request.
- All employees and volunteers will receive training about the NDIS Practice Standards and Human Rights as part of The Valued Lives induction requirements.
- The reporting process for reporting abuse and neglect is fully understood by employees and people with disability and clearly outlines responsibilities.

5. Training

Valued Lives employees and volunteers will have the appropriate level of training, experience and supervision dependent upon the type of support provided around Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect

6. Practice

- Valued Lives employees will recognize and respond to people who require support with decision making or communication to exercise choice and control.
- Valued Lives recognises, and is committed to, honouring the Code of Practice: A Guide for the Elimination of Restrictive Practices.
- Valued Lives includes the National Framework for Restrictive Practices (2013) and the Department of Communities (Disability Services) 'Positive Behaviour Support Information for Disability Sector Organisations' in staff induction as part of the Valued Lives Code of Conduct Policy. Staff will seek advice from their Line Manager about applying these in the work they undertake on behalf of Valued Lives.
- Serious Incidents will be investigated by the Network Manager/Team Lead who will ensure that Notification of Serious Incidents and relevant procedures are followed.
- All employees will undertake an NDIS Worker Screening Check and a Working With Children Check prior to commencement of employment with Valued Lives.

- All employees abide by the Valued Lives Code of Conduct.
- Employees are trained to write reports that identify possible abuse and/or neglect.

7. Reporting Process

It is the responsibility of Support Workers and Business Assistants to follow relevant policies and procedures and report possible abuse and neglect as per the Responding to Abuse and Neglect Policy to their Line Manager

8. Confidentiality

All employees must adhere to the confidentiality agreement which forms part of their contract of employment with Valued Lives. When reporting an incident to their Line Manager, the need for confidentiality is reinforced and is not to be discussed with other team members.

Under no circumstances are employees to discuss suspicion of abuse/neglect with employees not involved in the process.

9. Staffing

Although Valued Lives endeavours to provide Support Workers/Business Assistants who are compatible with the person, changes can be made upon request by either party.

Valued Lives will endeavour to ensure compatibility of Support Workers/Business Assistants working together to increase effectiveness.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.