

# LIFE INDEPENDENCE DISABILITY SERVICES

[www.lifeindependence.com.au](http://www.lifeindependence.com.au)

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## RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy number	14	Version	1
Drafted by	Merryn Farnsworth	Approved by	20/11/2020 manager
Responsible person	Merryn Farnsworth	Scheduled review date	20/11/2021

### INTRODUCTION

This policy is designed to clarify to staff, clients, supporters and relevant stakeholders how Life Independence manages risk in relation to delivering support services to participants funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The policy establishes how Life Independence identifies and priorities what constitutes as risk to service delivery and who that risk applies to through the use of policies, processes and checks in place for any likely exposure to risk as described in this policy. This policy will also identify how Life Independence is committed to improving how it manages risk.

This policy describes a framework for the management of risk in the context of a small disability support service. Anyone can ask for information from the service on specific steps in place for specific risks if required.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with procedural guidelines Life Independence follows and is to be complied to as such. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with risk controls identified and managed using an approved Risk Management & Controls Model in accordance with the ISO 3001: 2009 Risk Management Standard.

This policy is best read and understood in the context of an organisation governed, guided and obligated by various legislative tools, guidelines and both federal and state oversight agencies.

### PURPOSE OF POLICY

The desired purpose of this policy is to outline and provide definitions as to what constitutes risk. It further describes how Life Independence categorises risk and what criteria is used for identification and response to risk.

The document explains our operating environment and our ethos, approach and focus of what areas of risk we prioritise to manage. It describes the strategies and steps we take to do that and how we review our performance to make sure that is happening. It gives examples of how the service meets its obligations to deal with risk ranging from the governance level through to actual procedures used in the field with clients.

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## POLICY

Our ethos and prime purpose of our risk management strategy is to identify, manage and mitigate risk to clients, supporters, funding agencies and the public in that order. We put this before our business sustainability processes which also manage risk to our viability and success in the marketplace. Our strategies for addressing this direction lie in how we comply with legislation, funding body guidelines, safety oversight agencies, our own policies, guidelines and risk identification processes.

## Our Operating Environment

We define ourselves as a small, community based organisation using our risk management and control model across six key areas or elements of activity, informed by the Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF).

- Leadership
- Strategy and planning
- Financial Management
- Innovation, Quality and Improvement
- People
- Client and market focus

In this environment, the service has developed a range of policies, guidelines, tools and everyday processes that show how we identify and manage risk. This policy reflects steps we have in place in terms of broad strategies in each element area that focus on how we focus our risk management towards protecting our customers, funding agencies and the public. This is our risk management system using our risk management framework.

Each key element area also contains strategies for how we work in the individualised one on one support coordination delivery setting to improve how we manage risk. This is our risk improvement system.

Each key element area is broken down into a series of identifiable actions or omissions that can be rated in terms of risk. We call this our risk identification matrix. We use this matrix to identify how likely a risk is to a person or organisation and how well we are managing that risk.

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## WHY WE MANAGE RISK

We manage risk to meet the following objectives.

- To reduce the likelihood and/or consequences of potential adverse events.
- To maximise the results of positive events.
- To provide people with information to assess risk in receiving service from us.
- To add value to how well we deliver our service
- To ensure that we deliver cost effective service that complies with the expectations of clients, funding bodies and the public interest.

## DEFINITIONS

“**Risk**” is the probability that an occasion will arise that presents a danger to our organisation, our staff, our volunteers, our clients, or the general public. It includes, but is not limited to,

- Physical hazards
- Financial hazards
- Reputational hazards
- Legal hazards

“**Risk Framework**” is the process used to deal with risks. This means that the standards we comply with, the policies we develop and the service we deliver are all done with a view to identifying how these steps respond to possible risks in service delivery. We do this by:

1. Identifying risk
2. Assessing risk
3. Eliminating, treating, reducing and mitigating risk
4. Evaluating, reviewing and improving dealing with risk.

## “RISK MATRIX”

Is the calculations we do to identify how likely a risk is to occur and how serious a threat that risk is to person receiving service. When we identify a risk to how we deliver service using our risk framework we give that risk a rating of how likely it is to happen and what the outcome will be. We prioritise risks to our clients including the wider public over our own business concerns when delivering service.

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## **HOW WE APPLY OUR RISK MANAGEMENT MODEL TO OUR KEY ELEMENT AREAS.**

### **LEADERSHIP**

We manage and prioritise how are leadership relates to our clients through how transparent our governance procedures with evidence of how we do this. For example, our compliance with standards of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Victorian Disability Code of Conduct, Victorian Department Funded Agency Channel and Victorian State Disability Plan can be viewed in our Code of Conduct, Customer Charter and Service Delivery charter which can all be viewed on our web site. Also, for example, we use an opportunity for improvement form which clients can fill in at any time. We will use this form to help build our quality improvement plan which reviews how we can improve our service including risks identified to our service delivery.

### **STRATEGY AND PLANNING**

Our strategy and planning reflects how well the service has been set up and built to manage risk to our service users. For example, anyone can review our ASIC business registration on-line or our registration to the Victorian Human Standards listed online with the Victorian Department of Human Services. Anyone requesting service can request to see evidence of our insurance policy protections for managing risk in how we deliver service. We keep a register of all systemic risks we identify to receiving service along with a qualification register. Anyone can ask to see these records to be sure of our suitability to manage risk and delivery disability services.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Managing financial transparency and risk of improper financial dealings impacting on the client and wider public is addressed in our procedures. For example, any person can review our terms and conditions on our web site which explain how we bill for our services. Also, for example, each person receiving service is given a service agreement itemising costs before committing to service and is then invoiced for each individual service delivered.

### **INNOVATION, QUALITY AND IMPROVEMENT**

We manage risk in the flexible and changing environment of community based service delivery by been flexible in supporting the needs of people with disabilities. For example, the service uses a complaints and feedback form which any person can request and submit at any time.

The procedures we use reflect the importance of monitoring how we handle risk and improving our risk management processes. For example, we use and on-line server protected software compliance program to conduct regular reviews of how well we are

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giving our participants the information they need and how we comply with regulations and legislation.

## **PEOPLE**

How the service attracts and retains skilled and competent employees to deliver safe services to clients in accordance with the values of the organisation is an important part of how risk is managed. For example, any person can go to the service web site and view the Staff Recruitment Policy for the service. Also, for example, the service uses approved national police checking, qualifications and reference checking services before employing staff. No one is able to deliver service without a current working with children check, police check and clearance from the Disability Worker Exclusion scheme. Also, for example, anyone can go to the web site and view the service Occupational Health and Safety Policy including an explanation of risk assessments and forms used by staff to keep clients safe when receiving service.

## **CLIENT AND MARKET**

How effectively the service meets the needs of the client and marketplace is an important part of how well it manages the risk poor service poses to client wellbeing. For example, the service identifies and manages this risk by using a person centred approach to developing an individual plan for the client. This plan is regularly reviewed including how well the service is meeting the client need to be kept informed of options for service available to them. Our Occupational Health and Safety policy; also, on our web site shows how we protect our clients and others during the delivery of service.

## **SCOPE**

This policy relates to any work practice carried out on behalf of Life Connect Disability Services by any person acting on behalf of the service be it as a direct employee, agent, contractor or person purporting to represent the service. The practices and intent of this policy also relate to any client or other stakeholder involved in the receipt of service from Life Connect Disability Services.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Any person carrying out work on behalf of Life Connect Disability Services is responsible for complying with the procedures and aspirations of this policy. Those persons are also responsible for working with the guidelines and risk management model tools to manage risk available to them as part of their employment or relationship with the service. Any person receiving service from Life Connect Disability Services is responsible for informing the service of any likely risk that a

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reasonable person might expect would affect the receiving of service in an individualised community disability setting.

### **LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES THIS POLICY COMPLIES WITH**

This policy aims to meet prescriptive requirements of each listed resource. For a further explanation of specific aspects of those requirements people can go to those resources or request an explanation from Life Connect Disability Services:

- Victorian Disability Act, 2006
- Victorian Department of Human Services Funding and Service Agreement
- Victorian State Disability Plan, 2017-2010
- Standards for Disability Services in Victoria, 2007
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2017 (Vic)
- National Disability Insurance Agency Act, 2013 (Cwlth)
- Victorian Disability Workers Code of Conduct, 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Terms of Business
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Rules
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Provider Registration Guidelines

### **PROCEDURES**

Life Connect Disability Services will take all reasonable steps available to it to put the intent of this policy into day to day practices. This means that any staff member receiving an inquiry for service or delivering service should aim to:

- Not deliver any service or inquiry for service without receiving the appropriate workplace safety checks such as national police check and other clearances listed in this policy and the guidelines.
- Advise any person requesting service or receiving services of the resources on the service web site including service policies.
- Refer any person requesting information on insurances and accreditations of the service with access to the relevant resources such as the ASIC portal.
- Advise any person requesting specific information on risk management practices of the service's response using the risk management model tool.

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- Provide any person requesting facilities to provide feedback or complaint on how to improve services with the forms or other resources to do that.
- Refer any person seeking clarification on pricing to the resources available to them with the NDIS on pricing protocols and give an individualised breakdown of any funding provided or proposed to be provided.