



Staff Handbook

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Section 1: Staffing Information

About Us

Welcome!

Hope Ability is a registered NDIS service provider that supports people with disabilities. We are committed to, and abide by, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Practice Standards and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission requirements.

This handbook is your guide to Hope Ability's current practices, policies and procedures and provides information regarding guidelines and rules that may affect your employment. This handbook is not a standalone document, and it should be read in conjunction with Hope Ability's policies and procedures.

The purpose of this handbook is to:

- provide information regarding your employment
- outline the terms and conditions of your employment
- inform you of the orientation process
- provide information on Hope Ability's policies and procedures
- provide information on the NDIS Standard Practice indicators and requirements.

Hope Ability hopes your time with us is rewarding and fulfilling. We are proud to offer our employees an open and friendly work environment. We encourage employees to upskill, and we provide development training programs to ensure key competency and performance requirements are met. When filling vacant positions, we endeavour to promote from within our organisation.

Our managerial team follows set processes and procedures when exercising their right to change employment conditions, to discipline employees, or terminate employment. If your employment should be adversely affected or terminated under circumstances which you consider unfair, you may request a review of the matter with our Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or exercise your rights which are summarised in our Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure.

This handbook will answer most questions you have regarding your employment, but if you require further clarification on any point, please feel free to contact the General Manager (HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT) to discuss.

Your job satisfaction, progress, and welfare are important to us. Hope Ability provides a supportive, positive and rewarding work environment that is profitable and efficient.

Contact Details

Phone	1300424442
Email	admin@hopeability.com.au

Employee Rights

Your rights as Hope Ability employee include:

- receiving an accurate position description that outlines all responsibilities
- having concerns and complaints responded to and addressed promptly
- receiving relevant ongoing training, as required
- being informed of changes to policy and procedures relating to your job role
- working in a harmonious and harassment-free work environment
- appropriate management of your personnel records to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

Employee Responsibilities

As our employee, you must act responsibly when undertaking all aspects of your job. Your responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- respecting the rights of participants to make their own decisions
- treating all participants with respect and dignity
- maintaining a participant's privacy
- maintaining safe work practices
- reporting to management any unsafe equipment, practices and environments
- attending mandatory training sessions
- completing the mandatory NDIS Worker Orientation Module

- complete the mandatory Federal Government's COVID-19 online training
- providing and maintaining all relevant state clearance checks against current NDIS worker screening requirements
- following the NDIS Code of Conduct requirements
- referring to Hope Ability policies and procedures, as required
- performing duties with a consistently high standard of care and professionalism
- wearing a full uniform and identification tag, when on duty (if provided)
- recording and documenting participant information, as required
- maintaining all document security outside of the office (e.g. never leave the participant's paperwork on the front seat of a car)
- acting with honesty and integrity
- complying with Hope Ability's Code of Ethics and Conduct
- informing your supervisor of work absences as soon as possible
- reporting to management any potential or real risks of harm to participants
- maintaining currency in your work practices and knowledge of the NDIS Standards and Rules.

It is your responsibility to maintain appropriate current professional registrations and checks which may include a criminal record check, a Working with Children Check and completion of the NDIS Worker Orientation Module and the Federal Government's online COVID-19 training. You may also require a valid driving licence and car insurance (as appropriate) if this is needed to fulfil your job role.

It is your responsibility to advise management of any revisions to your contact details, e.g. name, address, emergency contact details, as soon as possible.

All employees are required to sign our Code of Ethics and Conduct and a Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if you do not abide by these documents during your employment with Hope Ability.

Conflict of Interest

Hope Ability is committed to ensuring that actions and decisions taken at all levels in our organisation are informed, objective and fair. A conflict of interest may affect the way you act, the choices you make, or the way you vote on group decisions. Identified conflicts of interest

require action to be undertaken by our organisation to ensure that personal or individual interests do not impact on the organisation's services, activities or decisions.

Hope Ability expects you to declare your involvement in external work-related activities to allow for discussion and management of the potential conflicts of interest with the General Manager (HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT). Declaration and management of a conflict of interest is handled by the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT. If you undertake other (new) work outside of our organisation you must inform the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT immediately.

It is your responsibility to act in the best interest of Hope Ability and notify the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT of any potential or actual conflicts of interest immediately. You must provide formal notification of the conflict in writing to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT by completing a Conflict of Interest Declaration Form.

All potential and actual conflicts will be recorded in the Conflict of Interest Register to provide oversight of the identified and declared conflicts.

In the event you declare or identify a conflict of interest the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will assess the conflict to determine if a conflict of interest exists (or there is a perception that a conflict exists). A meeting will be convened to discuss the conflict and you may be asked to:

- contribute to the discussion, but abstain from voting or taking part in a decision on the matter
- observe but not take part in the discussion or decision-making
- leave the meeting during the discussion and before a decision has been made.

You will be informed of the outcome of the review by the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT and, if there is a conflict, advised how the conflict will be managed by our organisation.

Working Hours and Breaks

Hope Ability will provide you with specific details regarding:

- minimum shift hours, if any, e.g. paid for two hours
- start and finish times or flexible hours

Your award, enterprise agreement or other [registered agreement](#) will outline specific details for your paid and unpaid rest breaks and meal breaks, including:

- length of breaks
- break times
- staff payment rules.

Break Between Shifts

Awards and registered agreements may detail the minimum amount of time you may take off between the end of one shift and commencement of the next.

Pay Details

You will be provided with information regarding:

- pay frequency
- pay periods
- payday
- mandatory payroll deductions (e.g. taxation, super guarantee, garnishee order, deduction authorised by industrial instrument)
- optional payroll deductions, e.g. medical insurance, voluntary super contributions
- payslips and the information they contain (as per the *Fair Work Act 2009*)
- employee records are retained for seven years from the date on which an entry is changed, or from when employment is terminated (depending on which occurs first).

Your salary and conditions are covered in your work agreement, as is your pay period. Pay will be processed as per your work agreement. Your wages will be deposited into your nominated bank account. Please allow for overnight processing.

You will receive a payslip after your wages are processed. As per legislative requirements, your payslip will include:

- hours worked
- pay rate
- period covered
- classification
- overtime details
- superannuation details, including the super guarantee amount
- tax deductions
- allowances or reimbursements

- leave taken.

If you have a pay query, contact the Hope Ability to discuss.

Applying for Leave

Annual leave accumulates from the first day of employment, even if an employee is in a probation period for full time and part time employee. For part time employee leave will be accumulated on pro rate basis. The leave accumulates gradually during the year, and any unused annual leave will roll over from year to year.

To apply for leave, you will be required to:

- complete a leave form
- provide the length of leave
- seek the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT's approval.

All full-time employees are entitled to four weeks annual leave after 12 months of continuous service. Applications must be made as early as possible, in advance of the actual leave date, to ensure staff coverage can be arranged. For planning purposes, at least four weeks' notice should be given when applying for leave. Annual leave may be applied for up to one year in advance.

Discuss your proposed leave details with the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT before completing the Leave Form. Please consider other staff and work rosters when requesting leave. School holidays are a priority leave time and, as such, require considerable advanced notice. Complete the Leave Form and provide to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT who will notify you, in due course, if leave is approved.

Approval of annual leave is at the discretion of the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT and may not always be provided. We recommend you obtain consent for any proposed leave before arranging or booking a holiday. Annual leave may not be accepted if it falls during a busy time, if other employees already have their leave approved for the same period, or if you have insufficient days accrued.

We prefer annual leave to be taken in the year it has been accrued; however, we realise that may not always be possible, and over time you may accrue many leave days. If you plan to

take extended leave, we request you provide the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT with as much notice as possible, so that they can prepare appropriately.

Any leave that is taken, which has not been approved (other than personal/carer's leave), will be unpaid and, depending on the circumstances, may be considered as an abandonment of your employment.

Leave without Pay

Requests can be made for leave without pay. This type of leave is subject to staffing levels at the time of your request. Consideration will be given to the circumstances for the intended leave and your employment record. Leave without pay will be granted subject to negotiation with the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT.

Maternity and Parental Leave

Parental leave is available to all employees. Leave entitlements include maternity, paternity and adoption. Parental leave can be taken when:

- an employee gives birth
- an employee's spouse or de facto partner gives birth
- an employee adopts a child under 16 years of age.

Most employees are entitled to 12 months unpaid parental leave. Usually, parental leave is applicable after 12 months of continuous employment. Please refer to your relevant award or workplace agreement for entitlement details.

The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT should be advised at least six weeks in advance of the intended parental leave commencement date. While on parental leave, we encourage you to keep in touch with our office, especially in the weeks leading to your return to work.

Long Service Leave

Although employment law is generally regulated at a federal level, under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, long service leave is covered under state-based legislation. Long service leave will accrue and be calculated as per the appropriate legislation.

Long service leave must be agreed between yourself and Hope Ability. Initially, you should discuss your request with the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT and then put your request in writing for final consideration. Long service leave approval will be advised in due course by the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT.

Bereavement Leave

We acknowledge, at times, our employees need to take compassionate leave. Where such leave is necessary, you should contact our office as soon as possible. Leave will be granted, at the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT's discretion, using the award or work agreement as the basis for entitlement.

Superannuation

Superannuation is paid to all employees under federal government legislation governing employee superannuation. Our superannuation employee contribution will be paid at the current prescribed rate, as legislated.

Superannuation will be paid on your behalf, as per the statutory requirements, into your nominated compliant superannuation fund. The current rate is 10% and is calculated on ordinary hours worked. If you do not nominate a superannuation fund, your contribution will be automatically paid into Hope Ability's nominated default superannuation fund.

Additional employee voluntary super contributions can also be arranged. If you choose to contribute extra, please inform us in writing and provide this information to payroll. Information regarding this can be downloaded from the Australian Government's Fair Work Australia website www.fwa.gov.au.

Emergency Contact Details

During orientation, you will complete a form that provides details of an emergency contact. These details are recorded and remain confidential and are only accessed in an emergency, by an authorised staff member. Information stored in your personnel file is password protected and saved on a secure server.

Please inform management if there are changes to your emergency contact details within five working days of changes being made.

First Aid

Hope Ability will advise you if you require current first aid certification (if so, the certification record will be kept on your file).

If you are certified, in the event of an emergency, it is expected that you will undertake immediate first aid (avoid moving a participant unless they are in immediate danger). Call 000 for emergency service assistance and then contact your supervisor.

Smoking

Hope Ability employees are not to smoke in, or around, a participant's environment, on our premises, or while wearing our uniform.

Hope Ability is committed to providing our employees with a safe workplace. The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT requests all participants who smoke to refrain from doing so when employees are performing their duties or sharing their environment.

Company Vehicle, Clothing and Equipment

You may be provided with a company vehicle for work usage. Private usage of a vehicle is undertaken, as per an agreement with Hope Ability. Usage conditions are recorded separately.

You will be provided with an Hope Ability uniform. We expect you to wear the uniform while performing your job, whether on or offsite. You are expected to maintain your uniform in clean and neat order. If you require a replacement uniform, please discuss this with your immediate supervisor.

If you damage or lose equipment or property (e.g. mobile phone, iPad, vehicle, clothing, or equipment) as a result of negligence, you will be required to reimburse Hope Ability the cost incurred by the organisation to repair or replace the item.

Changes to Personal Information

At the commencement of your employment, you are required to complete a form detailing your contact and medical emergency information. Your employment record is confidential and stored securely in our Employee Records.

Please notify the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT, in writing, if there are any changes to your details, including your name, address or information relating to any required emergency medical treatment.

Bullying and Harassment

Hope Ability will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or any conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Types of harassment include sexual, racial, cultural, religious, disability or age. Please report any bullying or harassment experienced or observed immediately to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT.

Access and Equity

A central aim of the NDIS is to provide equity of access to disability support. All Australians regardless of racial, religious, cultural or language backgrounds, should enjoy full access to services.

Hope Ability is committed to applying access and equity principles and processes to our service provision according to all relevant state and national legislation. The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT is responsible for implementing appropriate policy and procedures to ensure equity of access for our participants. The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will provide employees with policies relevant to access and equity, as necessary.

Complaints and Grievances

Hope Ability complies with the principles of equal employment opportunity and equity, as defined in the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act (1984)*. Hope Ability endorse these

principles and are committed to the delivery of quality services that meet the needs of our participants.

We recognise differences and grievances arise from time to time. We have a fair and equitable process for dealing with employee and participant complaints and feedback. Grievances may occur internally within the organisation, or externally involving our staff or third-party representatives or participants. Grievances may include issues regarding staff complaints, access to services, the conduct of others, advertising, ethical practices, or other functions of our organisation.

Hope Ability believe a fair and quick settlement of a complaint is in the best interest of all parties concerned. The principals of natural justice and procedural fairness underpin our complaints and feedback process. Our complaint mechanisms include, but are not limited to:

- verbal complaint
- written complaint
- anonymous complaint
- feedback forms/surveys.

Once a complaint has been received, Hope Ability management will:

- outline to the complainant our complaints process (including the complainant's right to have the claim reviewed by an external/individual party)
- advise receipt of the complaint in writing to the complainant
- update complainant regularly regarding complaint process progress
- inform the complainant, in writing, if a resolution is expected to take over sixty days
- record minutes of any meetings held to discuss or resolve the issue
- adopt the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness throughout all complaint proceedings
- advise staff of changes to systems or policies required to meet resolution decision/s.

Hope Ability is bound by our Code of Practice. If a resolution has not been reached to the benefit of all parties, the complainant has the right to representation and appeal under the relevant state or federal legislation.

Probation Period

All new Hope Ability employees are provided a probationary period of three months to assess if employees are suitable for the role and our business. While on probation, you will receive the same entitlements as someone who is not in a probation period.

If you do not pass probation, you are still entitled to receive notice when employment ends and have your unused accumulated annual leave hours paid out.

Performance Appraisals

As a new employee, your first performance appraisal will occur at the end of your three-month probation period. You will be notified of the date of your performance appraisal and provided all relevant documentation by the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT. Performance appraisals are based on your position description and are carried out by the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT.

After your initial performance review, you will receive a minimum of one performance appraisal annually. As part of your annual performance appraisal, you will need to show current knowledge regarding our policies and procedures and any applicable NDIS legislative requirements.

Potential areas of training and education will be identified and discussed during your performance appraisal.

Education and Training

It is your responsibility to maintain current practices in your field of work. We will seek feedback on your work performance from colleagues, supervisor/s and participants to identify any areas you may require additional training.

At the time of your performance appraisal, the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will discuss any additional training requirements and develop an appropriate training plan to assist support you in developing currency in skills and knowledge to meet NDIS legislative requirements including, but not limited to:

- complaints and feedback procedures

- incident management procedures
- recording and reporting procedures
- understanding and implementing the NDIS Code of Conduct
- meeting job description requirements.

Section 2: NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators (abbreviated version)

Background

The NDIS Practice Standards create an essential benchmark for providers to assess their performance, and to demonstrate how they provide high quality and safe supports and services to NDIS participants. Together with the NDIS Code of Conduct, the NDIS Practice Standards assist participants in being aware of what quality service provision they should expect from NDIS providers.

The NDIS Practice Standards consist of a core module and several supplementary modules that apply according to the types of supports and services NDIS providers deliver, and the corporate structure of the organisation.

These NDIS Practice Standards set out the rights of participants and the responsibilities of providers that deliver supports and services to them.

Core Module

1. Rights and Responsibilities

The standards addressed in this division include:

- 1.1 Person-Centred Supports
- 1.2 Individual Values and Beliefs
- 1.3 Privacy and Dignity
- 1.4 Independence and Informed Choice
- 1.5 Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination

People with disabilities have the right to receive respect and dignity and to be provided with the opportunity to participate fully in society. Our participants must be aware of and understand their rights. Our employees support and provide guidance to our participants and assist them in making quality life decisions.

It is a participant's right to try new experiences and activities, and it is Hope Ability's role to assist them in doing this. At all times, we treat our participants fairly and independently.

Our participants have the right to talk freely and express their thoughts, opinions and choices. As our employee, you are expected to listen and consider the opinions of our participants and their family and, where possible, support their choices.

Hope Ability undertake ongoing consultation with participants, their family, the advocate, and support workers to discuss the participants support needs and how they are being met. We understand all participants communicate differently, so we provide a variety of communication methods which allows participants to be able to communicate safely and privately.

Hope Ability identifies the culture, diversity, values and beliefs of participants and sensitively responds to their needs. We support each participant's right to practice their culture, values and beliefs. Our employees support and assist a participant's decision to be involved in the community of their choice.

We respect our participants right to privacy and retain the confidentiality of all participants personal information and records.

2. Provider Governance and Operational Management

The standards addressed in this division include:

- 2.1 Governance and Operational Management
- 2.2 Risk Management
- 2.3 Quality Management
- 2.4 Information Management
- 2.5 Feedback and Complaints Management
- 2.6 Incident Management
- 2.7 Human Resource Management
- 2.8 Continuity of Supports

It is essential our participants feel comfortable to tell us what they think about the services we offer. Hope Ability provides a non-discriminatory, supportive environment to any person providing either a complaint or feedback.

We welcome feedback and complaints regarding our services and make appropriate service improvements based on this information. Hope Ability will do everything possible to correct a problem a participant has reported. If a participant requires help to make a complaint or to provide feedback, they can seek assistance from a support person, e.g. family member, support worker, advocate or the Ombudsman.

Hope Ability believes the elements which are vital to successful service management include high-quality ongoing staff training, continuous quality improvement of services, proper work processes and procedures, and clear and transparent communication between our staff and participants. We endeavour to meet service standards and improve our service management by working in partnership with our participants to strengthen and improve our systems by incorporating feedback throughout the organisation.

Our senior management possesses all appropriate skills and experience to monitor the effectiveness of Hope Ability's policies and procedures and make any relevant changes identified through our continuous quality improvement system.

3. Provision of Supports

The standards addressed in this division include:

- 3.1 Access to Supports
- 3.2 Support Planning
- 3.3 Service Agreements with Participants
- 3.4 Responsive Support Provision
- 3.5 Transitions to or from the Provider

Hope Ability supports participants to set goals and make choices regarding the appropriate supports they require. We offer guidance and assist the participant in identifying their strengths and weaknesses so that they can learn and develop new skills to achieve their goals.

We treat all participants fairly, irrespective of age, gender, disability, cultural background or sexuality.

Hope Ability believe all participants have the right to access support and select the service provider of their choice. We provide appropriate information, support, advice and assistance to anyone enquiring about the services we provide. We refer participants to alternative

services if needed. We encourage participants to engage actively and meaningfully within the community and develop relevant connections to assist this to occur.

4. Provision of Supports Environment

The standards addressed in this division include:

- 4.1 Safe Environment
- 4.2 Participant Money and Property
- 4.3 Management of Medication
- 4.4 Management of Waste

Hope Ability ensures that our participants are provided with a safe physical and emotional environment, appropriate to their needs. Our staff are trained to deliver supports to participants safely and how to identify and report any risks or potential risks.

Hope Ability works with a participant and their family or advocate regarding issuing of invoices and payment of fees. Hope Ability ensures that all information regarding payment is precise and accurate.

Only staff who are appropriately trained in managing medication assist participants with their medication needs. The staff correctly administer medication and understand the steps to take in the event of an incident. At all times, our staff follow strict medication management processes.

Hope Ability staff are trained to manage waste appropriately, to protect the participant, and any other person, from harm as a result to exposure to waste, infectious or hazardous substances created during service delivery. Our policies, procedures and practices all comply with relevant legislation and include incident management processes and emergency plans. In our office, we will sustainably manage paper, glass and plastic waste through recycling methods.

Section 3: Hope Ability Policies (abbreviated)

The abbreviated policies included in this handbook are intended as a guide only and are subject to change.

Code of Conduct Policy

The purpose of this policy is to apply a Code of Conduct to govern the decisions and actions of Hope Ability employees.

During your orientation, you will learn the procedure you must take when allegations of abuse are made to you. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (2018) states:

“As a worker providing supports to people with a disability, you must:

- *act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making, in accordance with applicable laws and conventions*
- *respect the privacy of people with disability*
- *provide supports and services safely and competently, with care and skill*
- *act with integrity, honesty and transparency*
- *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, exploitation, neglect, discrimination and abuse of people with disability*
- *take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.”*

Definitions

Term	Definition
Abuse	Physically hurting, hitting or saying hurtful things to another person.
Discrimination	Treating a person differently due to race, sex, age, disability or culture.
Exploitation	Mistreating someone, usually to gain a profit or advantage.
Neglect	When someone fails to provide the support or care needed by another person; this may include not providing food or repeatedly ignoring a person.

<p>Sexual misconduct</p>	<p>Any unlawful or unwelcome sexual conduct that is using force, intimidation, coercion, harassment or manipulation. Also includes inappropriate sexual relationships.</p>
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Advocacy Policy

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees that every participant has the right to an advocate. An advocate is a person who will listen to a participant, help them make life decisions and set goals, and identify and implement ways to achieve a participant’s goals. The advocate can also speak on the participant’s behalf.

An advocate will make sure that a participant feels supported and that their rights are being respected. If the participant’s needs are not being met, it is the role of the advocate to speak out. Participants are encouraged to bring their advocate to their initial meeting with Hope Ability, so they can provide input into the assessment and planning processes, ensuring a person-centred support plan.

Participants may use an advocate:

- to communicate with us at anytime
- at their initial consultation
- during interviews, meetings and reviews.

Consent

Every participant has the right to privacy and to provide consent. Employees of Hope Ability cannot disclose any personal information regarding a participant to another party unless the participant has provided their written consent. Our employees are provided training regarding a participant’s privacy and consent requirement.

All participants are asked to sign a consent form permitting the release of their personal information. Participants can withdraw their consent at any time. Hope Ability requires a participant’s consent to:

- read information about the participant, e.g. medical records, support plan, etc.
- provide information to another service provider, their family or advocate
- collect data for funding bodies

- ask support people to attend a person-centred planning meeting
- undertake training or behaviour change programs specific to their support plan
- provide information to a doctor or a dentist
- review the participant's medication records to provide medication support.

Effective communication between Hope Ability staff, the participant and all other stakeholders is pivotal to providing person-centred and informed support. Our HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT is the key contact for frontline staff queries regarding work-related tasks or issues.

Hope Ability's HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will provide all correct and relevant information regarding employment details, e.g. wages, leave, performance appraisals, etc.

At times, the nature of fulfilling a support role may mean you feel isolated, it is important to understand Hope Ability provides support and guidance to all employees, and we appreciate the invaluable work you are performing. Hope Ability communicates with our employees in various ways, including:

- staff meetings
- emails
- newsletters
- supervisor site visits.

Assisting with Family Communication

Hope Ability encourages and supports the family to maintain involvement with the participant. A participant's consent is required for a family member to contact Hope Ability and request information and support to be provided. The family, or an advocate, can be involved in planning services that a participant will receive via our person-centred planning meeting.

Hope Ability supports the family of a participant by:

- communicating using methods they understand
- providing information on all available services, including other support services/agencies
- helping build trust and respect between our employees, the family and the participant
- providing them with the opportunity to take part in service delivery planning

- creating opportunities to develop links with other supports and the community
- assisting them to access counselling, advocacy and support services
- providing access to useful feedback and complaint procedure.

Interpreter Services

If a participant is from a non-English speaking background, Hope Ability attempts to assign them a staff member who speaks their language. Participant consent is required to access an interpreter. In the participant's notes, an interpreter is required to document any meetings they attended with the participant and staff/workers. A telephone interpreter service is used only in a crisis or an emergency.

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure

Hope Ability is committed to protecting and upholding the right to privacy for our participants, employees and senior management. Hope Ability protects the privacy of individuals by using appropriate processes to collect, store and use information.

Employees and management, consistently and carefully, manage what is written and said about individuals and the process taken to decide who can hear or view this information.

Management of Participant's Information

Participant records are confidential. They are only available to the participant and employees directly engaged in the delivery of service to the participant. Information regarding participants is only made available to other parties with the consent of the participant.

All participant records are kept on a secure password-protected server, and they are restricted to employees directly engaged in the delivery of service to a participant. Participant paper records are kept securely in a locked filing cabinet in the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT'S office.

Management of Your Personnel File

Your employee record is confidential and can only be viewed by senior management and yourself. You can request access to your file by contacting the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT. All your records are kept on a secure password-protected server or in a securely locked filing cabinet in the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT'S office.

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Hope Ability commits to providing equal employment opportunities to all prospective and current employees, promoting a fair and equal workplace. Hope Ability selects the most suitable candidate for a role, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibility and religious or political beliefs.

Risk Management Policy and Procedure

Hope Ability has established and maintained a Risk Management Plan. This plan identifies and addresses risks associated with key stakeholders identified below:

Stakeholder	Risks identified and addressed
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of suitably qualified staff ● Extended staff illness ● Staff injury due to work health and safety issue
Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental ● Disaster ● Emergency ● Transport ● Working in the participant's home ● Service delivery interruption
Hope Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loss of funding ● Inability to delivery funded outcome within budget ● Lack of suitably qualified staff ● Extended staff illness ● Damage to reputation and relationships

Risk Management Procedure

1. Identify the hazard and risk.
2. Assess the hazard and risk.
3. Report the hazard and risk.
4. Monitor and maintain participant/staff safety.

5. Document circumstance of hazard and risk.
6. Evaluate the resolution of hazard incident.

Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure

Staff and participants are encouraged to provide feedback or make a complaint. Our collaborative and person-centred approach means that Hope Ability will respond to information received to improve the services we provide.

The purpose of the Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure is to seek feedback from participants and employees, as this often drives changes to our procedures and processes, enabling us to provide a high-quality service that continually meets the needs of our participants.

We consider our employees an integral part of our continuous improvement system. We welcome your feedback and, in turn, provide you with feedback to guide and improve your work practices.

Gifts

The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT recognises that participants, on occasion, like to give gifts to our employees. It is our policy that employees may only accept a gift that can be shared with other staff members, e.g. a cake or chocolates. Money is NEVER to be accepted by an employee, under any circumstances.

Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure

Hope Ability welcome complaints and feedback from employees, participants, family and visitors. A Feedback and Complaint Form can be submitted to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT or anonymously. A complaint can be made without fear of reprisal as we have a resolution-focused culture, which respects the right to privacy and confidentiality.

As an employee, it is your responsibility to document a complaint on behalf of a participant (if required) and refer the matter immediately to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT. Participants are advised of their right to take their complaint to whomever they feel comfortable and are offered an independent advocate (if required).

Complaint Handling Within Hope Ability

1. If a complaint is regarding **support or service**, it will be dealt with by management.
2. If the complaint is about a **staff member**, it will be dealt with by management.
3. If the complaint is regarding **management**, an external person or body may be approached (see our Complaints Policy and Procedure for detailed information).

Employees should not discuss a complaint with anyone other than Hope Ability management.

Reportable Incident, Accident and Emergency Policy and Procedure

This policy seeks to minimise risk and prevent incidents by implementing appropriate participant care plans, assessment and review.

During orientation, you will be advised of all procedures involved in the event of an incident occurring. Employee compliance is monitored, and ongoing training provided by Hope Ability.

Reportable incidents are incidents or allegations that result in serious harm to an NDIS participant. These incidents must be notified **immediately** to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT for recording and reporting.

The NDIS Commissioner must be notified within 24 hours in the event of:

- the death of an NDIS participant
- serious injury of an NDIS participant
- abuse or neglect of an NDIS participant
- unlawful sexual or physical contact with or assault of an NDIS participant
- sexual misconduct committed against or in the presence of an NDIS participant, including grooming of a participant for sexual activity
- the unauthorised use of the restrictive practice in relation to an NDIS participant.

What is Restrictive Practice?

A restrictive practice is a practice or intervention that has the effect of restricting the rights or freedom of movement of a person with a disability. Restrictive practices include the use of seclusion and chemical, mechanical, physical and environmental restraints.

Working with Children Policy and Procedure

Hope Ability believes all participants have the right to feel safe and live in an environment that protects from assault, neglect, exploitation or abuse, particularly children.

Hope Ability recognises that prevention is the best protection from abuse and neglect. Our employees have a duty of care to implement our prevention strategies. Staff who work in a risk-assessed role require current clearances and criminal record checks.

Hope Ability staff (as a mandatory reporter) are required to report any indicators of assault, neglect, exploitation or abuse to the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT, who will follow the required state reporting processes. Failure to report an abusive situation may result in a criminal offence.

Assistance with Medication

Hope Ability's HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will speak with the participant and their family/advocate to complete an assessment regarding medication needs. Where we have concerns regarding a participant's ability to manage their medication safely, a Self-Administration of Medication Assessment will be completed. Staff members with relevant qualifications deliver medication to our participants.

Work Health Safety and Environmental Management Policy and Procedure

Hope Ability has established and maintained an effective work health and safety (WHS) process, so our employees can contribute to any decisions Hope Ability make which affect their health, safety and welfare at work.

The intended outcomes of this policy include:

- prevention of risk or injury to workers and others
- ongoing consultation with staff regarding the risk management process
- establishment and maintenance of safe work systems
- appropriate employee training available (and updated according to current regulations).

Employees are required to follow WHS policy procedures, including:

- using personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves, masks and enclosed shoes
- using only approved chemicals and products
- using approved equipment in the method required
- informing management when a doctor has diagnosed a short-term, infectious illness
- completing a Hazard Report Form, as required.

Support Planning Policy and Procedure

This policy focuses on successful participant outcomes and how we undertake a collaborative approach to achieve this.

The participant is the focus of a support plan, and all aspects are designed with the participant's needs, interests and aspirations as the focus. The following processes will be undertaken:

- Assessments are conducted prior to commencement.
- The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will conduct all assessments face-to-face with the participant and/or their representative/advocate.
- Assessment interview time/s are arranged by telephone. The participant is informed that they can have their representative present if required or desired.
- An interpreter and information in the participant's language will be sourced if their background and language require these services.
- During the assessment process, the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will explain to the participant information regarding:
 - collection and use of the participant's personal information
 - privacy and confidentiality
 - advocacy.
- The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT then reviews the completed assessments; areas of independence and identified needs would form the basis of support discussions.
- Developing a support plan is a consultative process between all relevant parties. Once the support plan has been finalised, and the participant is happy, they must sign-off on the plan. A copy of the plan is then issued to the participant.
- A staff member will record the participant's goals and aspirations which focus on the participant as an individual. Goals are flexible and subject to change depending on

progress or other factors. Records will also include the participant's unique skills and strengths to promote independence.

- A staff member will collect information during their work with participants. This evidence-based information is recorded to ensure service delivery meets a participant's current needs, interests and aspirations.
- Assessments are conducted regularly to ensure the participant's needs continue to be met.
- Support plans are reviewed regularly to ensure that the participant is continuing to receive relevant supports. If it becomes evident that supports should be adjusted, then Hope Ability will consult with participants and their family or advocate. Reviews will occur as required.

Continuity of Support Policy and Procedure

This purpose of this policy is to manage the ongoing provision of continuous supports to participants. Where possible a staff member is paired with a participant who requires their skills and knowledge. The HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT will arrange schedules to suit the staff member's availability.

If a staff member has a second language or can relate to a cultural group, then our HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT may link them to a participant who is seeking a worker with these attributes. Consideration is also given to the employee's home location during the work allocation process and will always endeavour to place employee's close to their home if possible.

Staff are allocated to a participant on an ongoing basis to create predictability and provide continuous support. All supports are linked to the participant's plan and will demonstrate consistency to their preferences and needs.

In the event a participant's worker is absent, Hope Ability will:

- contact a staff member with appropriate qualifications, as a suitable replacement
- provide a staff member who has worked previously with the participant and who is aware of the participant's requirements (where possible)
- advise the participant details of the replacement worker and then gather participant feedback on the replacement service

- ensure replacement staff are sensitive to the participant's needs and ensure that care is consistent with their expressed preferences.

Networking and Community Engagement

Hope Ability will engage with networks and local communities to ensure that our participants are provided opportunities to be involved in activities and areas of interest. We will access networks such as religious groups, local ethnic communities or other groups, as requested by the participant. We believe that it is essential for participants to be part of their community.

We encourage our employees who have links to various networks or communities to advise our HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT of this.

Employee Training and Personal Development

Each employee is required to maintain current knowledge and skills relating to their job role. For some employees, this will require they maintain currency and registration in relevant professional bodies.

All employees undergo an annual performance appraisal. This process allows us to match your performance to your job description, feedback from participants, services delivered and the quality of your work. You will have the opportunity to be involved and provide feedback during this appraisal. This process may lead to:

- additional training
- promotion
- increased wages
- increased hours
- improvement in our policies and practices.

If you wish to increase your knowledge and undertake a professional training course, please contact the HOPE ABILITY'S MANAGEMENT to discuss your training options.

First aid qualifications are part of your job specifications. Training in work health and safety areas, such as disaster management and manual handling may be undertaken on an annual basis by some employees.