

PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS & FREEDOM FROM ABUSE

POLICY

Riverlink Interchange Incorporated (Riverlink) will ensure that the legal and human rights of our clients are respected, their well-being is safeguarded, and that they are not exposed to any form of abuse and/or neglect (including but not limited to sexual, physical and emotional abuse) while in our service.

PROCEDURE

To minimise the risk of participants being subject to abuse and/or neglect and to ensure that their rights are not infringed, Riverlink will:

- 1) Promote the human rights of all clients;
- 2) Minimise the risk of clients' rights being infringed or being subjected to abuse and/or neglect;
- 3) Maintain recruitment procedures to a high standard including:
 - a) Pre-appointment criminal screening of new employees, Management Committee members, contractors and volunteers - including Police Checks and Working with Children Checks (where required);
 - b) Referee checks for all new employees;
 - c) Three-month probationary period for all new employees, with performance being closely monitored during the probationary period;
 - d) Formal induction and orientation procedures for all new employees;
 - e) Regular supervision of all employees.
- 4) Use team meetings and training sessions to remind employees of their responsibilities for safeguarding clients and to raise any matters of concern.
- 5) Identify resources to assist and support Riverlink to empower clients in relation to issues of human rights and self-advocacy;
- 6) Foster a safe, supportive environment that encourages everyone to raise concerns without fear of retribution;
- 7) Reflect in the services which are provided, the protection of human rights and freedom from abuse and/or neglect;
- 8) Seek client feedback via client feedback mechanisms to establish levels of satisfaction with the service.
- 9) Ensure that any instances of abuse or/or neglect are responded to promptly, professionally and sensitively;

- 10) Protect client's rights to dignity, confidentiality and privacy in accordance with Riverlink's policy on Privacy, Dignity & Confidentiality (Ref: 2.14) and Riverlink's duty of care obligations;
- 11) Respond to any concerns or allegations relating to an infringement of human rights, or abuse or neglect of a client another client by:
 - a) Encouraging and supporting all clients to report any concerns to a Riverlink employee immediately;
 - b) Requiring all employees and volunteers to report any concerns to that person's relevant line manager or an appropriate line manager, immediately;
- 12) If the line manager believes that the client is at immediate risk, take whatever steps are required to mitigate the risk and ensure the client's safety while the matter is fully investigated;
- 13) Respond to any allegations of abuse and neglect by implementing Riverlink's Management of Abuse, Injury & Neglect (Ref: 2.21);
- 14) Once the matter has been finalised, identify areas of service improvement with the aim of preventing any similar incidences occurring in the future; and
- 15) Ensure that clients and their families or advocates have access to the Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect policy and are informed that a full copy is available on request.

Riverlink has developed policies and procedures relating to the prevention of abuse and neglect through staff and volunteer:

- 1) Recruitment procedures
- 2) Adherence to the Staff Code of Ethics and Conduct (Ref: 3.05)
- 3) Staff training and orientation programs
- 4) Reporting and responding to abuse

Riverlink has also developed policies and procedures regarding service delivery that:

- 1) Respect the values, culture and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Riverlink acknowledges the importance of working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop and deliver services and supports that reflect identified needs that empower people through person-centred planning and upholds their rights. Riverlink recognises that quality of life, health and wellbeing of families is essential to promoting the safety of people with a disability in Aboriginal families and communities
- 2) Recognise and uphold the rights of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who have a disability and their Carers. Service delivery will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of children, young people and adults with a disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their Carers. Riverlink recognises that quality of life, health and wellbeing of families is

essential to promoting the safety of people with a disability in CALD families and communities

Related Forms:

2.23a Safeguarding People Living with Disabilities from Abuse

Complaints Record Form

Online MRG interactive tool

<http://sdm.community.nsw.gov.au/mrg/app/summary.page>

Online VOOHC register

www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/voluntary-out-of-home-care/voohc-register-log-in

Related Policies:

1.10 Hazard and Risk Management

1.11 Quality & Workplace Health & Safety

2.14 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality

2.22 Duty of Care

2.20 Complaints

2.21 Management of Abuse, Injury & Neglect

2.27 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

2.29 Behaviour Support

3.05 Staff Code of Ethics and Conduct

3.06 Staff Recruitment

3.13 Staff Performance Issues

3.12 Staff Training

3.17 Probity in Employment

Relevant Standards:

NSW Disability Services Standards:

Standard 1; Rights

Standard 2; Participation and Inclusion

Standard 5; Service Access

National Standards for Disability Services

Standard 1; Rights

Standard 2; Participation and Inclusion

Standard 5; Service Access

Children's Standards in Action:

Standard 7; Complaints and Disputes

Standard 10; Protection of Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse

Related documents with reference to:

"Keep them Safe" framework

Children's Guardian VOOHC - Register Manual & Statutory Procedures

Legislation:

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)

Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 (NSW)

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2000

Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 (NSW)

Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)

Disability Services Act (NSW) 1993
Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (Commonwealth)

Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW)

Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)

Public Health Act 1991 (NSW)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)

Ray Palmer

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Executive Officer

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