



Linking the Next Steps Inc.

Policy and Procedure Document

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the standards, processes, and procedures that guide the operations of Linking the Next Steps Inc., a nonprofit organisation dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities. The policy ensures compliance with relevant legislation, promotes best practices, and upholds the organisation's commitment to empowering and advocating for people with disabilities in a respectful, inclusive, and ethical manner.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, workplace students, volunteers, contractors, and stakeholders involved in the delivery of Linking the Next Steps Inc. programs and services. It covers all activities within the organisation that directly or indirectly impact individuals accessing services, stakeholders, and the organisation's operations.

3. Principles

- Person-centred approach: Providing services tailored to the individual needs, preferences, and goals of participants.
- Inclusivity and accessibility: Ensuring all programs and services are open to all individuals, without discrimination, and accessible to people with diverse needs.
- Ethical and transparent practices: Upholding high standards of ethics and transparency in all interactions, ensuring trust and accountability within the community and among participants.
- Compliance with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Code of Conduct, ensuring participants' rights are respected.





- Continuous improvement: Committing to ongoing evaluation of programs and services, improving operational effectiveness, and delivering quality support.

4. Governance and Compliance

4.1 Legal and Regulatory Framework

Linking the Next Steps Inc. operates in accordance with the following:

- NDIS Act 2013
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Relevant state and federal legislation relating to nonprofit organizations and disability services
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) requirements

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

- Management: Ensures compliance with relevant laws, policies, and procedures. Oversees organisational strategic planning and operational decisions, ensuring alignment with mission and goals.
- Employees, Workplace Students, and Volunteers: Adhere to policies, maintain ethical standards, and support high-quality service delivery while contributing to a respectful and inclusive environment.
- Participants & Families: Engage with services in an informed, respectful, and active manner, ensuring that feedback is provided and any concerns are raised in alignment with the complaints process.

5. Participant Support & Safeguarding

5.1 Service Access & Equity

- All services are provided in a manner that ensures no discrimination, embracing diversity in all its forms.
- Participants are supported in making informed decisions about their service options, including accessible options that meet their specific needs.





5.2 Participant Rights & Responsibilities

- Participants are entitled to receive services with dignity, respect, and in accordance with privacy regulations.
- Participants must engage with services in a respectful manner, provide accurate information for their care, and cooperate with staff as required.

5.3 Conflict of Interest Management

- Staff members, volunteers, and contractors must declare any potential conflicts of interest that may affect the impartiality or quality of service delivery.
- Participants are provided with independent advice when needed, ensuring they have autonomy in decision-making.

6. Financial Management

6.1 Participant Funds & Property

- Transparent financial management practices are in place to ensure the fair use and protection of participant funds. This includes clear accounting of funds allocated to participants for the services rendered.
- Safeguards are implemented to prevent misuse or exploitation of participant assets, and participants are encouraged to report any concerns.

6.2 Organisational Financial Integrity

- Linking the Next Steps Inc. maintains financial integrity by adhering to proper reporting, auditing, and compliance requirements set forth by government bodies and regulatory agencies.
- Ethical practices are followed in handling donations, sponsorships, and grants, ensuring all financial activities align with the nonprofit's goals and mission.

7. Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)





- Regular risk assessments are conducted to maintain a safe environment for staff, volunteers, and participants.
- Staff and participants are trained in safety procedures to minimize risks and ensure awareness of potential hazards.
- An established incident reporting system is in place to quickly address and resolve any safety concerns or issues.

8. Complaints and Feedback

- Participants, families, staff, and stakeholders can submit complaints or feedback through formal and informal channels, ensuring their voices are heard and addressed.
- Complaints will be dealt with fairly, promptly, and in compliance with legal requirements, including NDIS regulations.
- Feedback is used to guide improvements in service delivery, operational policies, and participant engagement, fostering a culture of transparency and responsiveness.

9. Policy Review and Continuous Improvement

- The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually or more frequently if necessary, ensuring they remain relevant to the needs of the organization and its stakeholders.
- Stakeholder feedback is a vital component in the review process, ensuring that policies evolve in line with emerging needs and best practices.
- Ongoing staff training and professional development are key components to ensure that policies are understood and implemented effectively across all levels of the organisation.

