
P035 – SAFEGUARDING FOR PARTICIPANTS POLICY

1. Scope

This policy applies to all District 360 services, staff, volunteers, contractors and participants.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define District 360's position with regards to safeguarding in order to promote, enhance and protect participants:

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

3. Policy Statement

District 360 will provide safeguarding supports and mechanisms to participants who are vulnerable and whose human rights or individual outcomes are at risk of being compromised.

Safeguards will include preventative and reactive responses to minimise an individual's vulnerability and risk, and will include the following strategies:

- Involvement of participants (and others as appropriate) in the determination and review of their own safeguards during the individual planning process, including strategies to enhance individual skills and capacity to minimise vulnerability and risk.
- Supporting and empowering participants to make informed choices and decisions about their own life.
- Supporting and maximising the role of participants' family, friends, carers and advocates in safeguarding.
- Providing accessible information to participants, their families, friends, carers and advocates, and the general community on rights and available safeguards.
- Training and developing employees in determining individual vulnerability, risk, duty of care and dignity of risk, and determining and facilitating the implementation of the range of safeguarding strategies available.
- Providing an effective complaints and feedback mechanism so that complaints are dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution.
- Adhering to all mandatory reporting requirements.
- Monitoring service provision to detect deficits in safeguarding practices.

- Maintaining an effective incident reporting system to ensure timely and appropriate responses to individual incidents, identifying trends and areas requiring review and improvement.
- Providing a minimum of two support workers per participant to ensure continuity of services through sick and annual leave.

4. Other relevant District 360 policies

Staff, especially managers and supervisors, are encouraged to read this policy in conjunction with other relevant District 360 policies, including;

- Participants' Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy
- Feedback, complaints, and Ideas Policy
- Participant Decision Making and Choice Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Value Status Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Emergency and Critical Incidents Policy & Procedures
- Service entry and exit Policy and Procedures
- Child Safe Policy

Related Forms;

- Participant Service Feedback and Complaints Form
- Individual Assessment
- Care Plan
- Safe Working Guide in Community (Refer to Appendix A)

5. Relevant Legislations and Standards;

- Disability Services Act 1993
- National Standards for Disability Services
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act)
- NDIS Practice Standards
- WA Disability Services Act 1993
- VIC Disability Amendment Act 2017
- NDIS Participant Safeguarding Policy 2023

6. More information

If you have a query about this policy or need more information, please contact the management team at info@district360.com.au

1. Review details

Approval Authority	Tanya Johnston
Responsible Officer	Coco Johnston
Approval Date	14 April 2021

Last updated Date	30 June 2023
Next Review Date*	30 June 2024
Last amended	Updated according to recent NDIS policy changes.

** Unless otherwise indicated, this procedure will still apply beyond the review date.*

Printed versions of this document are not controlled. Please refer to the D360 Policy Library for the latest version.

APPENDIX A – Safe Working Guide in Community

1. SAFETY Issues on Arrival
2. Environmental Safety Issues
3. Self-Factors in Community Setting
4. Chemicals (Hazardous Substances)
5. Personal Security & Workplace Violence
6. Infection Control
7. Electrical Safety
8. Slips, Trips & Falls
9. Burns
10. Vacuuming/Floor Care and Manual Handling
11. Personal Care
12. Shopping
13. Washing Cloths & Hanging On-Line
14. Assisting Participant to Transfer into Wheelchair
15. Assisting a Participant in Transferring out of Wheelchair
16. Assisting a Participant in Transferring sideways from a Wheelchair to another form of Seating
17. Wheelchair and Kerbs
 - a. Negotiating Kerbs
 - b. Pushing an Occupied Wheelchair down a Kerb
 - c. Pushing an Occupied Wheelchair up a Kerb
18. Wheelchair Maintenance Checklist
19. Support Worker not permitted to do!!

1. Safety issues on arrival:

- Physical layout of dwelling.
- Lighting levels.
- Animals.
- Influence of drugs and alcohol.
- Exits – doors locked.
- Presence of others: Who are they and are they supportive? What are their expectations of the service?
- Staff dress: business like – non provocative.
- Unblocked space to park vehicle.

2. Environmental safety issues:

- Weather.
- Noise.
- Location of exits.
- Location of participant.
- Presence of others.
- Presence of potential weapons.

3. Self – factors in community setting:

- Preparation for visit.
- Notifying organisation of visits.

- Notifying organisation at the end of visit(s).
- Access to means of communication (Mobile telephone)
- Levels of self-awareness.
- Knowledge of participant and others.
- Knowledge of own limitations.
- Experience.
- Team issues.
- Staff interpersonal skills.

4. Chemicals (hazardous substances):

- Prevent the mixing of chemicals.
- Keep all substances clearly labelled with the full name and any health of safety warnings (e.g. flammable or gloves to be worn).
- Never use substances in unlabelled containers.
- Only use chemicals for their correct purpose.
- Follow instructions for safe use on labels.
- Inform workers to stop using chemicals that cause any reaction and if effected move away from the area.
- Use the safest alternative chemical (where possible).
- Use exhaust fans or open windows to increase ventilation (where possible).
- Use bleaches with care as they may cause burns to skin, eyes and the mouth in high concentrations.
- When using detergents and other substances wear gloves to prevent dermatitis.
- Fill out hazard form or incident form and report to coordinator.

5. Personal security & workplace violence:

- Relocation of service (participant goes to another location)
- Use of two workers rather than one.
- Identify the safest location in a participant's home to provide care but still enable easy exit.
- Use of duress alarms and mobile phones to obtain assistance.
- Obtaining permission from participants to use their telephone for work related calls.
- Limit the amount of jewellery worn and cash carried.
- Requiring participants to put outside lights on after dark.
- Parking cars in well-lit areas.
- CSW carrying or wearing ID badges.
- CSW have reliable car and roadside assistance coverage.
- Placing all valuables in the boot when the car is unattended.
- Fill out hazard or incident form and report to coordinator.

6. Infection control:

- Immunisation e.g. COVID vaccine.
- Good hygiene practices, e.g. Hand washing, protective barriers (gloves) and appropriate handling and disposal of infectious waste, laundry and sharps.
- Precautions are to be used for the treatment of all participants and in handling all blood and other body fluids (regardless of the participant's perceived infectious status).

- Hand washing should occur;
 - on arrival at each participant's home
 - prior to food preparation
 - after cleaning
 - after touching animals
 - whenever body fluid contamination may occur (e.g., toileting, giving medications, before and after wound care)
 - before and after going to the toilet
 - before and after eating and smoking
 - before leaving each participant's home
- Fill out hazard or incident form and report to Manager.

7. Electrical safety:

- Report to management of electrical hazards and fill out a hazard form.
- Prevent the use of floor heaters or portable fans in bathrooms.
- Remove equipment with faulty cords from use.
- Use power boards with overload switches rather than double adaptors that may overheat.
- Portable Residual Current device shall always be used by staff when using portable electrical equipment.
- No electrical cords or cables should be obstructing pathways, halls ways or other walkways.
- Any situation where staffs identify or feel that an electrical item is not safe – that item of electrical equipment will not be used. (Evidence of bared conductors, broken plug tops, broken switches, loose plugs tops, homemade electrical installation will not be touched or used under any circumstances).

8. Slips, trips and falls:

- Remove loose mats (This may be temporary while the worker is in the home)
- Repair damaged carpet with tape if can.
- Secure cords with tape if can.
- Remove storage from main walkway (at least making a wide enough path to safely walk and/or push a wheelchair).
- Use nonslip mats in bathrooms if participant has one.
- Prevent the use of talcum powder in bathroom.
- Prevent work at heights – provide long handle dusters if needed.
- Store items in easy reach.
- Instruct worker to wear nonslip footwear.
- Maintain good housekeeping (e.g., wipe up spills, keep walkways free of storage and cables, monitor floor condition).
- Keep pets in another room that you are working in if possible.
- Fill out hazard form or incident and report (e.g., improve lighting, repair broken steps and carpets etc).

9. Burns:

- Controls on hot water systems which limit the maximum heat.
- Do not take microwave food from the microwave until it has time to cool a little.
- Have a fire blanket or extinguisher in the kitchen, if can.
- When filling baths, fill with cold water first.

- Ensure electrical equipment is safe for use.
- Ensure RDS" S are in place.
- Use cups and appliances with non-slip base if possible.
- Never place hot items e.g. Cups, kettles, frypans close to the edge of tables or benches.
- Have guards and or fire screens around fires (heat resistant).
- Participants are required to empty their own ashtrays.
- Participants are required not to smoke while CSW is working in the house.

10. Vacuuming /floor care/manual handling:

- The vacuum cleaner should have a disposable bag otherwise may not be emptied by the support worker,
- Mats or carpet squares will not be lifted or banged outside.
- Small mats will be rolled to the end to be vacuumed/mopped under,
- Larger mats will be rolled halfway and then repeated from the other side.
- Heavy, large mats will be vacuumed over and around the edges only.
- Mops should be light weight, yet robust in design.
- Hand-wringing mops will not be used by the support worker.
- Buckets should be light weight (not metal) and if possible, fitted with wheels and incorporate a user-friendly wringer system.
- Buckets should only be filled to the halfway mark of the bucket to reduce the weight,
- Buckets should be emptied straight into floor level waste to avoid awkward and heavy lifting onto sinks or troughs.
- It is recommended that a hose attachment secured to the tap be used to fill bucket at floor level to reduce the risk associated with lifting the bucket.
- Scrubbing floors is not permitted.
- Only one bathroom/shower/toilet per visit will be cleaned.
- Scrubbing of shower recess is not permitted.
- Washing/drying floor on knees is prohibited,
- Furniture or other objects that are awkward, heavy, large sized, difficult to grasp, with limited room to safely manoeuvre, or otherwise hard to lift, lower, push, pull, hold, move or restrain that may include sharp or dangerous protrusions will NOT be lifted or moved by support worker,
- Support worker will be required to undertake a nominal risk assessment of any object or furniture that may need to be moved,
- Support worker will only move, lift or shift objects and furniture where they can comfortably and safely do so within their own individual strength, ability, and competency as it relates to the risks associated with the object, furniture and surrounding environment.

11. Personal Care

- Only medications in a Webster Pack may be dispensed by Community Support Workers according to individual care plans.
- No fingernail or toenail cutting is permitted.
- No hair cutting is permitted.
- Electric razor (for shaving purposes is advisable).
- More than one support worker on team to increase safeguarding.

12. Shopping:

- Do not lift heavy shopping bags – ask supermarket staff to place in number of bags (e.g. up to 2 – 3kg per bag)
- Even weight in both hands.
- For very heavy items organise for home delivery.
- Use shopping trolley to take bags to the car.
- Park car as close as possible to the house.
- Only carry small bags of groceries at a time – make several trips as required.
- Unload shopping bags on a table or bench.
- Where possible store heavy or glass items in cupboards at waist height, making them easily accessible.
- All items must be placed in cupboard within easy reach with both feet on the floor.
- Do not stand on chairs or ladders to reach cupboards.
- Ensure that paths are clear if carrying shopping.

13. Washing clothes and hanging on-line:

- Stand as close to machine when removing washing.
- When reaching in to obtain the final items, brace on the machine with other hand.
- Only half fill the washing basket with wet washing.
- Where available use washing trolley to carry washing.
- Ensure the path is clear.
- Adjust clothesline to suit height where possible.
- Do not hang clothes if the line is too high to reach comfortable with both feet on ground.
- Place basket on appropriate height table or chair to eliminate bending if possible.

14. Assisting a participant to transfer into the wheelchair:

- Make sure that both brakes are 'on', and the front casters are swivelled forwards.
- Fold up both footplates and swing them to the sides and out of the way.
- If possible, get another person to hold the handles of the wheelchair so that it will not move. If this not possible then stand behind the chair and hold the handles yourself.
- Ask the participant to stand then, with both hands on the front of the armrests, get them to lower him/herself onto the seat.
- Swing the footrests to the front and fold down the footplates. If required, assist them participant to place their feet on the footplates, with their heels well back.
- Ensure that the participant's elbows are not sticking outside the wheelchair when going through doorways.

15. Assisting a participant in transferring out of a wheelchair:

- Back the wheelchair so that the front casters swivel forwards.
- Make sure that both the brakes are on.
- Fold up both footplates and swing them to the sides, out of the way.
- If possible, get another person to hold the handles of the wheelchair so that it will not move. If this is not possible then stand behind the chair and hold the handles yourself.
- Ask the participant to move forwards on the seat.
- Ask the participant to place both hands on the front of the armrests, then get them to lean forwards with their head and shoulders over their knees to give balance.

From this position they should be able to push themselves to standing. Always

encourage the participant to take their time with each step of the procedure.

16. Assisting a participant in transferring sideways from a wheelchair to another form of seating:

- Place the wheelchair alongside, and at 45-degree angle, to the chair/toilet/bed/car etc...that they wish to transfer to.
- If possible, back the wheelchair up slightly so that the front castors swivel forwards.
- Ensure that both the brakes are on.
- Fold up both footplates and swing them to the sides out of the way.
- Remove the armrest on the side to which the participant is transferring.
- If possible, get another person to hold the handles of the wheelchair so that it will not move. If this is not possible then stand behind the chair and hold the handles yourself.
- Ask the participant to place one hand on the remaining armrest and the other palm down, on a stable area of the surface they are transferring to.
- Ask the participant to move forwards on the seat.
- Ask the participant to lean slightly forwards, pushing up and slide their bottom across to the other surface.

17. Wheelchair and Kerbs

- a) **Negotiating kerbs** whenever possible, it is **best to avoid kerbs**. Instead, always try to use dropped kerbs or ramps. If a kerb is unavoidable, then the following precautions should be taken:
- b) **Pushing an occupied wheelchair down a kerb**. It is safer to go **down a kerb backwards**. It requires less strength and gives a gentler ride. Care should however be taken due to the weight of the chair and because the task involves stepping backwards into the road.
- c) **Pushing an occupied wheelchair up a kerb**. It is safer to go **up a kerb forwards**; it requires less strength and gives a gentler ride.

18. Wheelchair Maintenance Checklist

Tyres – Correct pressure and check for punctures or weak/cracked tread.

- **Wheels** – Check they are free spinning and if there is any wobbling the wheel requires repair.
- **Spokes** – Check for loose or broken spokes.
- **Hand rims** – Check for rough or sharp edges.
- **Brakes** – Ensure brakes are tight and functioning correctly.
- **Footrests** – Check that all pivot parts move freely if lubrication is required use silicon spray not oil or grease.
- **Armrest/leg rests** – Check for sharp edges.
- **Push handle grips** – Check that they are secure.
- **Frame** – Check for small dents or cracks these can affect the frame strength and dirt should be removed with damp cloth.
- **Ball bearings** – Unusual noise or excessive wheel wobble usually indicates that the bearing is weak and need replacing.

19. Support workers are not permitted to:

- Turn Mattresses.
- Stand on chairs, tables or ladders.
- Move heavy objects.
- Smoke in the participant's home.