



Employment Manual

Revised October, 2015

Mission Statement

NOSS Tasmania will work with people with a disability to enhance their quality of life through the provision of support in activities which promote their involvement in the community.

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Introduction

NOSS Tasmania (NOSS) commenced operation in 1991 under the name of Northern Occupational Support Service. NOSS was originally funded by the State under the Community Integration Project (CIP) which resulted from a Government policy which aimed to integrate people with a disability into their community. Many of the people supported by NOSS lived at Willow Court Centre before moving into shared homes in Launceston.

NOSS now operates a community access service, an activity centre and an Australian Disability Enterprise for people with a disability called Bluegum Grounds Maintenance. Currently, the Service supports over 120 adults with a disability living in the Launceston area.

NOSS is a not for profit organisation currently funded by the Departments of Health and Human Services (Tasmania) and Department of Social Services. However, with the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), in the future, funds will be directly allocated to clients based on an assessment of their needs and aspirations. Clients will then have the choice to purchase their support from a variety of service providers, such as NOSS.

1. Community Access

NOSS focuses on the provision of quality individualised support of all kinds to people with a disability to pursue their chosen social, leisure, pre-vocational and vocational activities. This includes:

- supporting clients to find and participate in a variety of community activities including educational institutions and work based opportunities.
- supporting clients to gain skills both in the community and in and around their own home
- providing training in a range of areas, including numeracy, literacy, transport training, personal care, household tasks, gardening and social skills

Support is usually between the hours of 9.30am and 3.30pm. However, other hours may be negotiated if required.

2. Activity Centre

The NOSS Activity Centre. The Red Shed, is situated at the rear of the Tailrace Centre at 1 Waterfront Drive, Riverside. The Centre is being developed as a venue to run a range of activities such as literacy classes, cooking classes, craft activities of various types, drama classes, singing lessons, music and dancing, computer lessons etc. Activities will be on a fee for service basis. In addition, activities will be organised off site such as tennis, fishing etc.

The Red Shed is managed by the Community Access Manager with the assistance of the Admin Officer (Activities).

3. Bluegum Grounds Maintenance

Bluegum Grounds Maintenance is a community-based work crew which provides crew members with the opportunity for employment and training in a variety of community settings. Bluegum carries out a range of jobs, including grounds maintenance and process work.

The work crew currently supports 24 work crew members. The work crew operates from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm.

4. NOSS Association

NOSS is an incorporated association managed by a Board of Governance, which is responsible for policy development and long term planning.

Association members are people within our community committed to the goals of NOSS. Any staff member wishing to become an association member should contact the office. The current membership fee is \$10.00. At the Annual General Meeting, the association members elect the Board of Governance.

The current members of the Board are:

Chairman	Dennis Cook
Treasurer	Nick Adams
Secretary	Marg Flannery
Members:	Peter Hatters
	Sharyn Burston
	Melinda Whybrow

5. Organisational Flow Chart

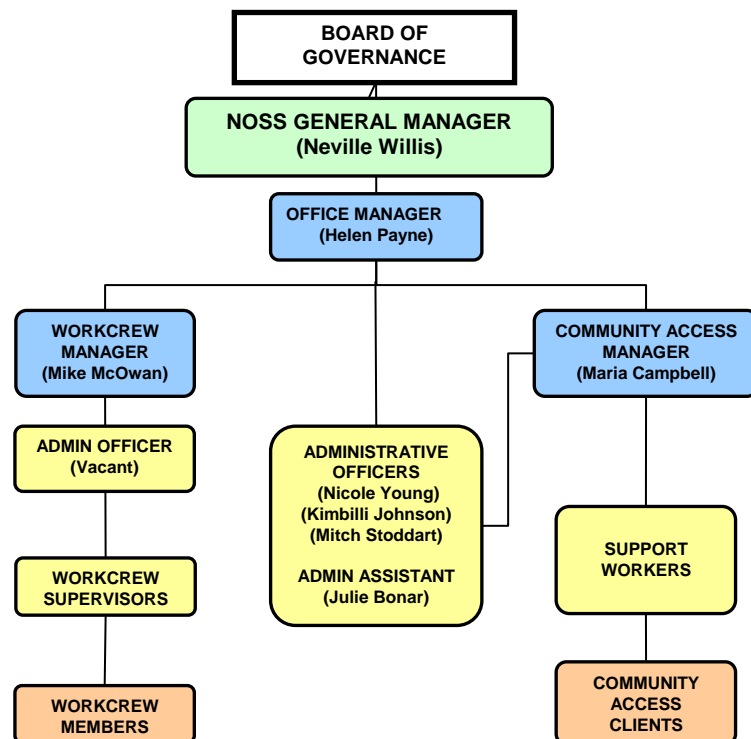


Figure 1: NOSS Organisational Structure

Service Philosophy

1. Code of Ethics

Value Statement

- 1.** Every person with a disability has the right to be treated with dignity, empathy and respect, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, age or disability.
- 2.** Every person with a disability has the right to informed choice, a normal daily routine and life experience and to be treated as a valued human being.
- 3.** Every NOSS staff member has a primary commitment to the aims and philosophy of the organisation and an obligation to abide by its goals, policies and procedures.

Principles of Practice

- 1.** Commitment to Clients
Staff members will promote the empowerment of clients and facilitate their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development.

Staff members will advocate on behalf of clients in order to uphold their human rights and ensure that all allegations of harassment and abuse are reported.
- 2.** Commitment to Privacy and Confidentiality
Every staff member will respect the privacy of clients and staff and treat as confidential all information obtained in the course of professional service, except when the law demands otherwise.
- 3.** Commitment to Colleagues
Staff members will respect and support each other as individuals and equals and maintain a professional work ethic.
- 4.** Commitment to NOSS
Staff members will support the Service in a professional manner and uphold the Service goals, policies and procedures including the immediate reporting of unethical conduct.
- 5.** Commitment to Professional Development
Staff members will strive to improve proficiency in professional practice.

2. Service Goals

The goals of NOSS Tasmania are:

1. To enable people with a disability to engage in their chosen social, leisure, learning and employment activities.
2. To enhance the self image of people with a disability and promote their acceptance as valued and productive members of their community.
3. To provide opportunities for people with a disability to integrate into their community.
4. Whenever appropriate to use existing generic services and resources in the community to meet the individual needs of people with a disability.
5. To provide opportunities for people with a disability to increase their social networks and develop new friendships.
6. To develop employment opportunities for people with a disability.
7. To empower people with a disability to make informed choices.
8. To assist people with a disability to maintain and develop social, recreational and vocational skills.

3. Principles

NOSS Tasmania adopts the principles of the Disability Services Act 2011 (Tas) and Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986 (see Human Rights Policy).

4. National Disability Services Standards

1. **Rights:**
The service promotes individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making and actively prevents abuse, harm, neglect and violence.
2. **Participation and Inclusion:**
The service works with individuals and families, friends and carers to promote opportunities for meaningful participation and active inclusion in society.
3. **Individual Outcomes:**
Services and supports are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed to build on individual strengths and enable individuals to reach their goals.
4. **Feedback and Complaints:**
Regular feedback is sought and used to inform individual and organisation-wide service reviews and improvement.
5. **Service Access:**
The service manages access, commencement and leaving a service in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way.
6. **Service Management:**
The service has effective and accountable service management and leadership to maximise outcomes for individuals.

Employment Conditions

1. General

All Community Access and administrative staff are employed under the conditions of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry (SCHCADS) Award, 2010. Copies of the Awards are available for perusal at the NOSS Office. All conditions are in accordance with the National Employment Standards (NES).

Employment may be terminated should the Service's funding be reduced or as a result of illness, death or a change in a client's support needs. Should staffing levels need to be reduced, at least two weeks notice will be given.

The position classification for support workers under the SCHCADS Award is Social and Community Services Employee Level 2.

All staff are expected to carry ID cards which will be issued to all employees.

All NOSS forms are available at the office. Many are also available on the NOSS website at www.nossinc.org.au.

2. Wage Related Matters

1.1. Claims for Payment

Claims for Payment will be submitted to the NOSS Office each fortnight, no later than midday on the Monday following the end of each pay period.

Claims will normally be processed on the Tuesday following the end of the pay period. Bank transfers will generally arrive by Wednesday afternoon but we recommend that automatic deductions not be processed until the Thursday in case of bank errors or holidays which may delay the transfers occasionally. Notification will be made of any change to processing dates due to public holidays or shut down periods.

When completing Claims for Payment, any holidays, training, personal/carer's leave etc should be noted as such. Should a client's particular hours differ from the hours claimed, please record those hours separately.

1.2. Mileage and Extra Expenses Claim Form

Mileage

Employees may be required to use their own vehicle to transport clients in accordance with the NOSS Transport Policy, in which case they are entitled to claim reimbursement for use of their own vehicle at the rate specified in the relevant Award, currently 78 cents per kilometre. Support workers are required to start work from the first pick up point. Mileage will be paid from that address or (in the case of client residing out of town) from a distance of 20km from the NOSS Office or the support worker's home. Mileage between clients is ONLY payable if there is no break between shifts.

To minimise mileage expenses, travel will be confined to the Launceston metropolitan area. For longer trips, permission must be obtained from NOSS Management.

Employees are required to enter relevant details on the Mileage Claim Form, including details of the journey and the share of kilometres for each client. Please include client surname and first initial. Any queries regarding each client's share of kilometres should be directed to the office. It is important to accurately record the details of your journey. Failure to do so may result in your claim not being paid.

The relevant details should be recorded in a log book or on your claim form daily. Log books, for the purpose of recording all work related mileage, are available upon request.

Extra Expenses:

In certain cases NOSS will reimburse expenses incurred by employees in supporting clients. These should be entered on the Mileage & Extra Expenses form. Clients will pay their own admission to activities and half of any admission cost for their support worker. NOSS will reimburse the other half of the admission cost. Any claims must be accompanied by receipts and must be approved by NOSS Management beforehand.

1.3. Tax and Superannuation Forms

Tax File Number Declarations are to be completed by all employees.

Superannuation guarantee payments are made in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Amendment Act 2012. Super payments may be made to a superannuation company of your choice. Should you fail to nominate a Super fund, payments will be made to TASPLAN Super Fund (SCHCADS Award).

1.4. Pay Authorisation

A Pay Authorisation should be completed if you wish to

- contribute additional superannuation payments
- deduct additional tax to be forwarded to the Australian Tax Office
- deduct an amount to be retained by NOSS and paid to you during December (Christmas Club). It this is cancelled during the year, it will not be reinstated until the next year except with the express permission of management.

1.5. Salary Sacrifice/Packaging

NOSS currently offers part time employees the opportunity to take a portion of their pay as tax free payments. There are two types:

- Salary Sacrifice - A nominated amount paid to your superannuation company on your behalf as an "employer contribution". These are not treated as fringe benefits but are taxed in the superannuation fund (15%) under specific tax laws and/or
- Salary Packaging - Paying nominated amounts on your behalf to your creditors, such as loan repayments, school fees, credit card accounts. These payments are treated as fringe benefits and, for any amounts over \$2,000 per annum, the grossed up amount will be shown on your Statement of Earnings and will increase the 'nominal income'. This may affect some Government assessments such as Centrelink and Child Support. NOSS reserves the right to charge an appropriate administrative fee on Salary Packaging deductions.

Whilst NOSS currently pays superannuation on these payments, NOSS is not obliged to do so and may cancel this at any time.

Further information about these options can be obtained by contacting the Office Manager. However, we recommend that employees seek financial advice to determine the best option for them.

1.6. Police Clearance

All new employees are required to provide a current National Police Clearance before commencing work. Employees will provide an updated Tasmanian Police Clearance annually.

3. Leave

1.7. Personal/Carer's Leave

In accordance with the NES, employees are entitled to up to two weeks (pro rata) personal/carer's leave per year. If an employee is unable to attend work because of sickness, he/she must contact the office as soon as possible.

Employees will generally be permitted to take personal/carer's leave for three single non-consecutive days in a calendar year without providing a certificate. A certificate must be provided in all other instances including each time a staff member takes personal/carer's leave for two or more consecutive days.

Notwithstanding the above, NOSS reserves the right to request the employee to verify a claim for personal leave by providing a certificate for any absence from the workplace.

In the case of carers leave only, a Statutory Declaration confirming that the absence is for the purpose of caring for an immediate family member, or a member of the employees' household, may be accepted in place of a medical certificate. Statutory Declarations must be witnessed by a Justice of the Peace, or a Commissioner for Declarations (as defined in the Oaths Act (Tas)).

NOSS may also request an employee to undertake a medical examination, conducted by a registered health practitioner, where there is reasonable doubt that an employee is able to perform their work without putting themselves and/or others at risk. If this is found to be the case, the employee may be required to take leave.

1.8. Annual Leave

In accordance with the NES, full and part time employees are entitled to four weeks (pro rata) annual leave per year. The community access program (non NDIS clients) currently closes down for two separate shutdown periods (one week during July and three weeks at Christmas). Staff will be notified in advance of the shutdown dates for the following year. All accrued annual leave will be taken during the scheduled shut down periods.

1.9. Leave at other times

Any requests for leave at any other time should be made in writing to the General Manager with at least two weeks notice. A submission must be made to the Board for any leave without pay exceeding four (4) weeks. If annual leave is approved at other times, and/or sufficient annual leave has not been accrued to cover any shut down period, employees must be prepared to take the remaining time as leave without pay.

1.10. Long Service Leave

Subject to some exceptions specified in the Long Service Leave Act, long service leave is payable after ten years service, at which time an employee can apply for up to 8 weeks (with a minimum of one week) giving at least 4 weeks notice. After that time, long service leave will accrue at the rate of .8667 weeks per year.

4. Use of Vehicles and Equipment

Employees will familiarise themselves with the NOSS Transport Policy. In particular:

- All drivers will be appropriately licensed and vehicles used for support work must be roadworthy and registered.
- Employees will provide a road safety check certificate upon commencement and annually thereafter.
- If an employee chooses not to fully insure their vehicle, NOSS accepts no responsibility for any damage incurred. We recommend that you inform your insurance company that you will be using your vehicle for work purposes to ensure that you are covered in the case of an accident.
- Employees will be personally liable for any infringements which may be incurred for any accidents/incidents or breaches of traffic laws, including any speeding or parking fines.
- Smoking is prohibited in residential vehicles and in any vehicle in which a client is present.
- Support workers and clients are responsible for interior and exterior cleaning of a residential vehicle soiled during NOSS use.
- All employees will treat NOSS vehicles with respect and ensure that they are kept in a clean and tidy condition.

5. Damage by Clients

Should personal items be damaged during the course of work, this should be reported on an Incident Report form immediately. In some circumstances, NOSS may be able to arrange for these items to be reimbursed by the client. However, employees are expected to be extremely careful with the placement of their personal property (ie sunglasses, prescription glasses, keys etc) whilst supporting clients. Compensation will only be made if staff have taken all necessary precautions with respect to their personal belongings.

Where there is any possibility of incontinence when transporting a client, staff should ensure that they use the plastic seat covers from the office whenever they are transporting clients. If an accident does occur and these precautions have not been taken, seat cleaning will not be reimbursed.

Should a vehicle be damaged by a client, an Incident Report form must be completed and handed to NOSS Management within 24 hours. The incident will be investigated and, if appropriate, NOSS will reimburse you for the excess and recover that amount from the client.

6. Office Premises

A number of facilities are available at the NOSS office located at 49 York Street, Launceston for the use of clients and staff including activity rooms, meeting room, kitchen and bath and shower facilities. NOSS also provides a photocopier and other office equipment for work related purposes.

To facilitate effective communication between NOSS Management and staff, each staff member is allocated a pigeon hole which is located in the foyer at the main office. All staff are required to clear their pigeon hole at least once a week. In addition, the notice boards in the foyer and activity room should be checked regularly. Communication will be made through emails and/or text messages wherever possible and staff members should check for emails regularly.

7. Media and Communication

Mobile phone use during work hours must be kept to a minimum. Personal calls should be restricted to emergencies. Games and social media will not be accessed during work.

It is not recommended that staff give their personal phone numbers or social media contacts to clients.

Social media should not be used to discuss any work issues at any time. This includes

- any personal information about NOSS clients or employees;
- any pictures of employees without their consent;
- any client related issues or photographs (whether or not the client is identified);
- any inappropriate, false or malicious comments regarding NOSS, its clients or employees.

All contact with the media on behalf of NOSS must be approved by the General Manager.

8. Staff Development

1.11. Probation Period

All successful applicants will serve a minimum probationary period of three months or twenty shifts, whichever is the greater, during which time, monthly written assessments will be undertaken by his/her supervisor. This process will provide a formal opportunity for you to raise any questions. However, this does not prevent you from, at any time, contacting your supervisor or other management staff if you have any queries or need assistance with any aspect of your employment.

1.12. Performance Management

Performance appraisal meetings will be held after three months and annually thereafter to discuss work performance, training needs and job satisfaction. These meetings provide a channel for confidential consultation between employees and Management.

At Performance Appraisal meetings, both management and employee concerns, training needs and any other issues are identified and discussed. Performance goals are agreed and documented. Your performance appraisal is based on the duties contained in your position description which will also be reviewed at the meeting. Employees will complete the Employee Response section of a Performance Appraisal Form and return it to their supervisor within one week.

Attendance at Performance Appraisal meetings is compulsory.

When necessary, additional Performance Appraisal meetings can be arranged at the request of either the employee or management. Employees will be paid at their normal rate to attend the Performance Appraisal meetings.

1.13. Training

NOSS supports ongoing training and encourages staff who would like to attend conferences, seminars, workshops etc. Information regarding upcoming events will be distributed when available. Specific training sessions will be considered in areas suggested by staff or management. It is the responsibility of all employees to identify and report to management any additional training required to safely carry out their duties.

Employees may be required to attend compulsory training sessions such as Administration of Medication and First Aid. Contact hours will be paid at their normal rate. If an employee is unable to attend any meeting or training session, management must be notified as soon as possible. Employees who fail to attend or complete a compulsory training without adequate reason may be required to complete that training at their own expense.

Training resources are regularly updated and new materials purchased. Resources such as articles, books and videos. are kept at the office. Employees are encouraged to borrow this material by arrangement with the Admin Officer.

9. Employee Files

NOSS maintains a file for each of its employees. Employees have access to their own files by contacting the office. To ensure confidentiality, files are kept in a locked filing cabinet.

10. Continuous Improvement Policy

NOSS is committed to enhancing the quality of its service using a systematic process of continuous improvement in order to improve performance in all areas. Both external and internal audits allow NOSS to constantly review its performance against the Disability Services Standards and Service Goals and to instigate ongoing improvements.

All employees are encouraged to suggest improvements to any aspect of the Service and, to this end, all management staff adhere to an 'open door' policy where staff can talk to management at little or no notice. Feedback will also be obtained via feedback forms, regular staff meetings, performance appraisals and/or completing a Suggestion Form which are available from the office.

11. Dress Code

Staff are required to present a professional service image in terms of dress. For this reason NOSS dress code includes:

- Smart casual clothing (not too revealing)
- flat, closed in shoes (ie not slip ons or thongs)

Work Health and Safety

1. General

It is the policy of NOSS to do all that is reasonable to safeguard the health and safety of employees. Safety is the responsibility of everyone employed within the organisation. It is essential that we all contribute positively to safe work practices. There is no short cut to reducing or eliminating accidents within our organisation other than total commitment to safe work practices.

NOSS acknowledges its legal obligation to provide safe and healthy working conditions in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act, 2012. However, NOSS expects employees to be aware of and follow safe work practices. Section 28 of the Act states that, while at work, an employee must –

- a) take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety;*
- b) take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and*
- c) comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the person conducting the business or undertaking to allow the person to comply with this Act;*

This includes using safe manual handling practices, using appropriate protective clothing and equipment and reporting any hazards or potential hazards immediately. It is vitally important that employees avoid putting themselves in potential danger by intervening in behavioural episodes of clients.

Employees should familiarise themselves with the NOSS Work Health and Safety Policy, NOSS Reporting Policy and any safety information, such as manual handling and safe use of equipment, provided to you.

The procedures set in place are tools to assist everyone. The real objective is NO ACCIDENTS. No job is so urgent or important that it cannot be done safely.

2. Protective Equipment and Practices

Support workers will use appropriate means to protect themselves and others from infectious diseases such as the flu, including safe cough methods, hand washing, distancing etc in accordance with the NOSS Pandemic Policy and Guidelines.

Gloves, alcohol based hand gel and plastic car seat covers are available at the NOSS Office if required. Gloves are also contained in the First Aid Kit.

Support workers must ensure clients are restrained or seated appropriately for safety;

In the event of any behaviour which may make it unsafe to drive, support workers must stop the car immediately;

3. Health and Safety Representative

Albert Olden is currently the Health and Safety Representative. Albert can be contacted through the office or on 0431 646 325.

4. Bullying and Harassment

NOSS will not tolerate bullying or victimisation under any circumstances, including via social media. It is therefore important that all employees know exactly what bullying is and familiarise themselves with the explanation of bullying from Worksafe Tasmania.

What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or group of workers. It creates a risk to personal and workplace health and safety.

Differences of opinion, conflicts and personality clashes can happen in the workplace and they are not bullying. If the behaviour goes beyond a one-off disagreement, if it increases in intensity or becomes offensive or harmful to someone, it is bullying.

Bullying can be verbal, physical, written or electronic (such as emails and texting). It can include:

- insults and constant criticism that makes you feel humiliated or intimidated
- cruel and malicious rumours, gossip and innuendo
- deliberately and repeatedly being ignored, excluded or undermined
- behaviour or language that frightens or degrades you. This might include swearing, threats, yelling.

Bullying may be linked to work tasks and duties. For example, as an employer or manager, you are bullying a worker if you deliberately:

- give them work that is unreasonably above or below their ability
- give them meaningless work that is unrelated to their job
- give them inconvenient rosters, or change their hours on a whim or to inconvenience them
- deny them information or resources to do their job
- scrutinise their work excessively and unreasonably.

In some cases, bullying may be part of the workplace culture, continued (and wrongly accepted) over time as “the way things are done here”.

What isn't bullying?

Reasonable management actions carried out in a fair and reasonable way are not bullying. For example, bullying is not:

- A setting standards and deadlines
- A allocating work to a worker
- A transferring a worker
- A deciding not to select a worker for promotion
- A informing a worker about unsatisfactory work performance
- or inappropriate behaviours
- A providing constructive feedback.

Even poor management practices don't necessarily constitute bullying. Differences of opinion or personality clashes, provided they don't interfere with work, aren't bullying either.

If you witness bullying or ever feel that you are being bullied while at NOSS, it is important that you talk to your supervisor, management or the Health and Safety Representative immediately.

5. Work Related Stress

NOSS recognises that employees are often isolated from co-workers. Should any employee feel that this isolation, or any other factor, is causing work related stress, it should be immediately reported to Management so

it may be addressed. Management will treat all such concerns seriously and work with the employee to achieve a positive outcome.

6. Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

1.1. Smoking

NOSS does not support smoking and encourages staff to quit. Details of the Quit program are available at the Office. Any smoking during work will be under the following strict guidelines:

- The duration and number of any smoke breaks should be kept to a minimum.
- Employees will not smoke in the proximity of clients ie keep a safe distance (at least 3 metres) from any client whilst smoking. If this is not feasible, then smoking should be stopped until it is possible to do so.
- Smoke breaks away from clients must only be taken when it is safe for another support worker to supervise the client.
- Support workers will avoid accessing unhealthy environments and ensure that clients are not subjected to passive smoking.
- There will be no smoking:
 - during organised client programs such as music, compic bingo, bowling or Independent Services programs
 - whilst at the NOSS Office, inside or out, including the car park area and Vincent Street.
 - at public pick up and drop off points
 - in vehicles whilst a client is in the vehicle.
 - at the Bluegum workshop except in those areas designated by the Workcrew Manager.
 - at Bluegum worksites except when authorised by the Workcrew Manager.

1.2. Alcohol and Drugs

Alcohol and 'recreational' drug use will not be tolerated during work hours (excepting limited alcohol at authorised work functions). Whilst supporting clients, staff will not consume or be under the influence of alcohol (ie a blood alcohol level of 0.0) or other 'recreational' drugs. Employees must inform management of the use, type and possible side effects of prescribed medication which may have the potential to compromise safety. In such cases, an employee may not be permitted to work.

If an employee appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, coworkers must report it to management immediately. NOSS reserves the right to request an employee to undergo a drug test. Any proven allegations may result in termination of employment.

More information is available in the NOSS Work Health and Safety Policy

7. Workers Compensation

You have a right to make a claim for compensation for any injury which occurs at work. However, failure to report accidents (or work related stress) and/or failing to follow NOSS policies and procedures may prejudice your workers compensation claim. If you are injured at work you must notify management immediately.

Should an accident occur, you should immediately contact the office. If warranted an appointment will be made with the appointed Treating Medical Practitioner, currently Dr Frank Brunacci of the Prospect Medical Centre. You will be supported at that and subsequent appointments by the Return to Work Coordinator, currently Kimbilli Johnson. You will also be provided with a workers compensation package explaining NOSS' rehabilitation and return to work policy. This will be given to your doctor at the first appointment.

The Return to Work Coordinator will provide an injured worker with support and assistance to achieve the best possible return to work outcome. To this end, light duties will be provided wherever possible should an employee be unfit for normal duties. It is vital if you are suffering an injury, that you comply with the doctor's recommendations both at work and home for the duration of your recovery.

In order to minimise injuries at work, management will carry out an investigation of any workplace injury.

If employees have any queries or concerns regarding safe work practices, see management immediately.

8. First Aid

Support workers will be issued with a basic first aid kit. This should be kept in the support worker's vehicle whenever transporting clients and used only for work related incidents. This kit remains the property of NOSS and will be returned to NOSS upon leaving the Service.

There is also a first aid kit in the foyer of the NOSS Office, at the Bluegum Workshop and in each NOSS vehicle. Should you use anything from these first aid kits, please note it in the book provided in the kit and complete and Incident Report. You will also be required to complete an Incident Report as usual.

9. Vaccinations

If employees wish to be immunised against Hepatitis B or get the influenza vaccine, NOSS will cover the cost of the vaccine. If any staff wishes to do so, please present a receipt with their Pay Claim and it will be refunded in the next pay.

Working with Clients

1. General

All employees will familiarise themselves with and abide by the contents of this manual, in particular the Goals, Principles and Code of Ethics contained in Chapter 1.

Management are available at all times if any assistance is needed during the day. In addition, the Community Access Manager and Program Officer will from time to time visit support workers in the community.

2. Health and Safety

All employees will ensure that client and employee safety is the highest priority when making decisions in relation to client support. Unless authorised by Management no client should be left unattended at any time.

It is the responsibility of the residential service, parent or carer to support clients when they are unwell. This includes any infections such as head lice, scabies etc. Support workers should make an assessment when they pick up a client to ensure that they are well enough to access the community. If not, or if a client becomes unwell during the day, they should contact the NOSS office for further advice.

When supporting a client at a community venue, staff will ensure that they, and the client (where appropriate) are aware of the closest exit in the case of emergency.

3. Client Information

The Community Access Manager and Program Officer are available to help and advise you on any client issues. If you have any queries or need help, this should be the first point of contact.

The NOSS Client Support Book contains information regarding that client including medication, allergies and other alerts and Personal Plan goals and is regularly updated. Each client's current support workers (including relief staff) will read and sign off the Client Support Book before supporting that client and whenever it is updated. It is the responsibility of support workers to ensure that the Client Support Book is checked for updates each day they support that client.

The Community Access Manager will ensure that essential confidential information not included in the Client Support Book will be signed off by each current support worker (including relief staff) prior to support.

Given the confidential nature of the Client Support Book (and any other client information such as medication charts or clients' banking), it is vital that they are kept secure and confidential (ie any material kept in a vehicle should be out of sight and the vehicle should be locked). Any confidential information no longer required must be brought to the office and shredded as soon as possible.

Whenever possible, staff supporting clients they are unfamiliar with will be 'buddied up' with an existing support worker. This will provide an opportunity to gather important support information.

4. Privacy

Employees will treat client information, both written and verbal, as confidential. Issues regarding a client should only be discussed with relevant stakeholders such as other NOSS support workers who work with that client, residential workers and the persons nominated on their Consent form. It is a condition of employment that employees protect confidential information in accordance with the NOSS Privacy Policy. Breaches of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

5. Interacting with Clients

Employees should ensure that they are at all times positive role models in term of dress, language and behaviour.

Whilst supporting clients, you must always:

- encourage clients to participate in activities ie role modeling
- remain client focused, ie avoid lengthy conversations with others unrelated to the client
- include clients in conversation where possible
- empower clients to make decisions
- interact in a professional manner, ie it is not appropriate to kiss and hug clients.
- speak appropriately to clients (and others), ie no swearing

6. Matching Staff and Clients

The level of support offered to clients is based on their individual strengths and needs. As detailed in the NOSS Client Support Policy, to ensure positive outcomes for both clients and staff of NOSS, it is important to match clients with appropriate support workers. To this end, when selecting support workers to support a client, the following criteria will be considered:

- Client needs/preferences
- Common interests
- Personalities
- Communication skills
- Behaviour management skills
- Relevant medical condition

When client support changes are necessary as a result of staff or client needs, staff and clients will be notified of any such changes, prior to implementation, with as much notice as possible.

Although staff input will be considered, client needs will take priority in determining which support worker will support each client.

7. Transporting Clients

Although public transport is not an option for some clients, it should be used whenever possible and/or practical.

Support workers may be required to transport clients in either their own or their client's vehicle in accordance with the NOSS Transport Policy. Support workers should particularly note that travel is to be confined to the Launceston metropolitan area unless prior permission is obtained from NOSS management. Bearing in mind that clients contribute to mileage costs, it is particularly important when planning client activities, to ensure that travel is minimised.

As a number of clients have incontinence issues, it is important that staff toilet clients regularly, particularly before transporting. It is also vital that support workers utilise the protective seat covers (either plastic or kyliques) for any client who may experience these issues. Protective covers are available at the NOSS Office. Reimbursement of your cleaning costs will only be made if staff have taken all the above precautions.

Staff will not take clients to their own home or visit friends unless authorised by Management.

Staff will not transport any persons other than staff and clients of NOSS during working hours without prior permission from management. This includes support workers' family and friends.

Smoking is not permitted in vehicles whilst a client is in that vehicle.

8. Decision Making and Choice

Employees will empower clients to make decisions and explain the consequences of such decisions. Gaining informed consent is extremely important, particularly when considering medical procedures, the use of medication, making financial decisions or when designing and implementing individual programs. The NOSS Client Consent Policy will assist support staff to better understand the concept of consent and the range of options open to them in relation to assisted decision making.

It is important that support staff ensure that clients are aware of their right to an advocate when making decisions. An advocate may be the 'person responsible', a friend, family member or a formal advocacy service (see Chapter 7 - Services in Close Liaison with NOSS).

9. Personal Plans

All clients are offered assistance and support in the development of a Personal Plan which aims to promote social, physical, intellectual and emotional life skills. Skills development will enhance self-esteem and increase competence.

The Community Access Manager and Program Officer, in consultation with the client and relevant stakeholders, will develop Personal Plans using information gained from Personal Plan meetings. A Personal Plan meeting will be held at least once a year with NOSS Management, all support workers who work with a particular client and other relevant stakeholders. The meeting will include:

- Ensuring that all support workers have up to date information regarding the client;
- Discussing client needs
- Prioritising/Reviewing the goals.
- Discussing strategies to achieve the goals, including timelines.
- Discussing any other relevant issues.

It is important that support workers attend Personal Plan meetings when scheduled and/or, if requested, write a report on the client and deliver it to the NOSS office before the scheduled meeting date.

The Personal Plan will include strategies to achieve individual client goals. The goals and strategies are incorporated into the Client Support Book. All support workers should familiarise themselves with the Personal Plan goals and incorporate the associated strategies during the course of the day. It is important that these strategies are carried out by all staff so the client can achieve their goal. If staff have any difficulties in following the strategies, see the Client Program Officer to discuss the issue as soon as possible.

Client case conferences may also be held to identify specific needs and strategies to improve the client's quality of life. Support workers may be asked to attend to provide specific client information.

Regardless of scheduled Personal Plan meetings, the Management team will be available to discuss any issue arising during the course of work or in the case of unexpected incidents.

10. Activities

Support time is used to provide clients with the opportunity for decision making, socialising, learning new skills and having fun.

It is part of the support workers' role to suggest and/or trial new activities which their client might enjoy. However, activities must be approved by the Community Access Manager who, together with the Program Officer, is available to offer assistance. It is important that any changes to programmed activities are discussed with the Community Access Manager prior to withdrawing the client from an activity.

It is important that, for the most part, clients participate in generic activities. However, NOSS runs a number of specific programs such as Music Program and Compic Bingo. A range of equipment is also available at the NOSS Office. These include:

- Art/craft materials
- Sewing machine
- Board games
- Esky, including BBQ tools, plates etc
- Sporting equipment, including badminton and cricket sets, Frisbee, footballs etc

Two activity rooms are available at NOSS to be used by support staff to run specific activities for their clients. These can be booked through the Program Officer. When the activity is over, it is important to leave the rooms in a clean and tidy state.

While it may occasionally be appropriate for more than one staff and their clients to meet for a specific activity, large groups of people can draw negative attention and can distract staff from focusing on clients. Group activities should always be approved by Management.

11. Medication

Residential staff (or parents/carers) are responsible for providing the correct medication and documentation to NOSS staff each morning. Medication should be pharmacy prepared and stored in a Webster pack or the original packaging. Medication should not be administered if not presented in a Webster pack or the original packaging. Medication charts (signed by the client's doctor) must accompany medication. NOSS employees are responsible for making sure the medication is correctly administered. Support workers will sign the medication chart, after administering any medications.

All permanent support workers will complete a Tasmanian Qualifications Authority (TQA) accredited training in medication management course. Staff are NOT permitted to administer medication unless they have completed the appropriate training. Please contact the office if there are any queries regarding medication.

The NOSS Library has a range of drug guides which list the side effects of a wide range of medications commonly prescribed to many of our clients.

It is important that clients are appropriately clothed with respect to the sun, including the use of sunscreen. However, clients are required to sign consent before having sunscreen applied. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the appropriate consent has been obtained prior to applying sunscreen.

12. Missing Clients

Whether a client is missing depends on his/her level of capability and self-reliance. It is therefore of the utmost importance that support workers are aware of the individual behaviour patterns and supervisory needs of the people they support.

When a client is missing, the NOSS employee should conduct a quick search of the immediate area and report to NOSS Management immediately. During the search, all staff involved will report back to Management regularly and the staff member locating the missing client is to report back to Management immediately. The staff member involved will submit an Incident Report within 24 hours.

For more information, see NOSS Client Support Policy.

13. Clients' Residences

Support workers should acknowledge that client's homes (including shared homes) are private residential settings and should be treated accordingly. With that in mind, any food or drink which is consumed from a shared home, or any telephone calls made, by support workers will be recorded on the appropriate forms in each house and payment left in the appropriate place.

14. Reporting

14.1. Incidents/Accidents

In accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy, employees must report any accident or incident to Management within 24 hours. It is the responsibility of the person responsible for the client to submit the report. Other witnesses may be asked to provide a witness statement.

Any major accidents or incidents must be reported immediately, by phone or in person.

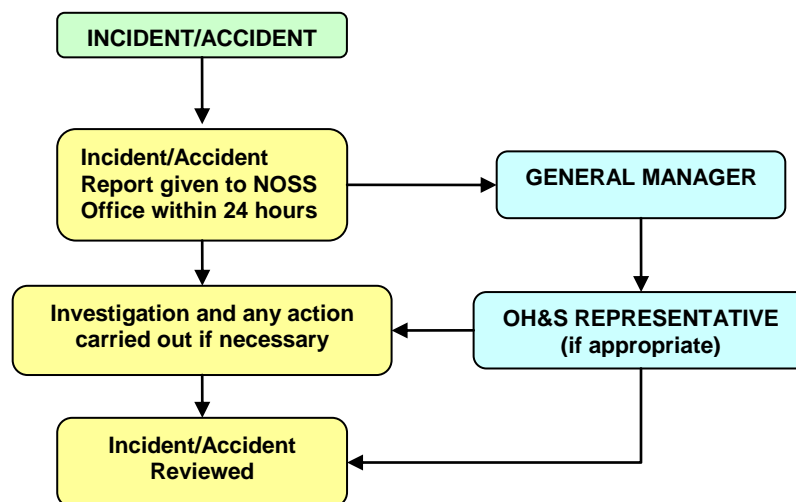


Figure 2: Incident/Accident Reporting And Control Process

14.2. Client Support Book

The Client Support Book is a communication tool between residential services/ parents and NOSS. It is therefore important that support workers read any comments by residential/parents which may impact on the client's support (ie behaviours, appointments etc.)

Support workers are also required to document any incidents, achievements and money spent etc in the Client Support Book daily. It is important that the information written in the Client Support Book is accurate and objective. When writing up reports, remember to comply with the following basic rules:

- Quality not quantity: You don't have to write pages to get your message across.
- Record accurate information - be precise - use facts
- Be objective - if recording your opinion, say so;
- Be logical - start from the beginning going right through to the end
- Include signature and date

14.3. Abuse

Any allegations of abuse must be reported to the General Manager immediately and recorded on an Abuse Form in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy. Abuse may include:

- Physical abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

The Complaints Policy contains more detailed explanations.

Services in Close Liaison with NOSS

1. Advocacy

Two disability advocacy agencies operate in Launceston:

Tas Advocacy
Shop 8, 216 Charles Street
Launceston
Phone: 6331 0740

Dominique Vittori
Speakout
59d Amy Road
Newstead
Phone: 6343 2022

2. Disability Services (North)

Disability Services (North) is a division of the Department of Health and Human Services. They provide support for disability agencies and clients through a Disability Assessment and Advisory Team (DAAT).

The team is a group of Allied Health professionals with specialist skills and knowledge in disability. The team includes Specialist Nurse (Disability), Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Social Workers.

3. Gateway Service

The Gateway Service is a single point of contact (by phone or visit) for people with a disability and for families with children aged up to 18 years seeking support and services. The Gateway provides information, advice, referral and assessment and helps families and individuals access a service that will meet their needs, including referral into disability and/or family specific services.

4. Independent Services

Independent Services operates from 233B Charles Street. They offer a variety of activities and skill development programs for people with disabilities. A number of NOSS clients attend programs at Independent Services.

5. New Horizons

New Horizons is based at 292-294 Invermay Road, Mowbray and provides sporting and recreational opportunities for persons with a disability including Athletics, Rowing, Craft, Tennis, Bingo etc.

6. Residential Support Services

There are several accommodation services operating shared homes in the Launceston area. Their aim is to support people with a disability to exercise their right to live in the community and to participate in community life. Many residents living in shared homes receive full or part-time day support from NOSS and the Services therefore maintain close contact.

- Able Australia
- Anglicare
- Devonfield (Ellison House)
- Livienne
- Multicap
- Optia
- St Giles
- St Michaels Association

7. Wattle Group

Wattle Group operates from 26 Mangin Street, Mowbray, offering activities to both younger persons with a disability and the frail aged. In addition to a day program (crafts etc) they offer both woodwork and aqua fitness courses.

Wattle Group also run a Transport Service operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week to transport people in their client group. Charges apply.

Policies

The NOSS Board of Governance have approved a number of policies, all of which are available to peruse at the NOSS office or on the NOSS website at www.nossinc.org.au. Employees should ensure that they understand and abide by all the policies. These include:

- Anti-Discrimination Policy (**Appendix 1**)
- Client Consent Policy (**Appendix 2**)
- Client Support Policy (**Appendix 3**)
- Complaints Policy (**Appendix 4**)
- Counselling & Discipline Policy (**Appendix 5**)
- Decision Making Policy
- Entry Policy
- Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy
- Exit Policy
- Human Resources Policy
- Human Rights Policy (**Appendix 6**)
- Individual Needs Policy (**Appendix 7**)
- Media and Communications Policy (**Appendix 8**)
- Work Health & Safety Policy (**Appendix 9**)
- Pandemic Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy
- Rehabilitation Policy (**Appendix 10**)
- Reporting Policy (**Appendix 11**)
- Risk Management Policy
- Transport Policy (**Appendix 12**)

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

1. Under federal and state legislation, discrimination in employment is against the law. Discrimination also undermines proper working relationships and may cause low morale, stress related illness, absenteeism or resignations.
2. Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) is an Equal Opportunity Employer with a positive awareness of the spirit and intent of the Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination laws.
3. NOSS adopts the principle of Equal Employment Opportunity regarding selection and promotion within NOSS underpinned by the merit principle and the elimination of discrimination.
4. NOSS will not tolerate any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment.
5. NOSS acknowledges that all employees and clients have the right to enjoy an environment free of discrimination and harassment and expects all employees to behave in a professional manner and to treat each other with dignity and respect.
6. All employees at all levels are responsible for adherence to this Policy.

DEFINITIONS

1. Discrimination

1.1 Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfavourably because of one of his or her personal characteristics including, but not confined to, the following areas:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability
- Physical characteristic
- Parental status
- Family responsibilities
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Religious belief
- Sexual preference
- Political belief and activity
- Marital status
- Race
- Irrelevant criminal record
- Irrelevant medical record
- Lawful industrial activity
- Lawful sexual activity

1.2 Discrimination may involve, but is not confined to, the following:

- (i) 'jokes' or comments about another workers racial or ethnic background, sex, sexual preference, age, disability or physical appearance.
- (ii) displaying pictures or posters which are offensive or derogatory, expressing negative stereotypes of particular groups.
- (iii) judging someone on their beliefs, origins, appearance, sex rather than their work performance.
- (iv) undermining a person's authority or work performance because you dislike one or some of their personal characteristics.

2. Equal Employment Opportunity

2.1 Equal Employment Opportunity is

- (i) Recruiting all employees on the basis of merit regardless of personal characteristics which do not impede their ability to perform duties safely and effectively.

- (ii) Treating all staff according to their job performance and their skills, qualifications, abilities and achievements regardless of their personal characteristics which do not impede their ability to perform duties safely and effectively.
- (iii) Providing opportunities for promotions, transfers, vacancies and career progression on the basis of merit.

3. Bullying and Harassment

3.1 Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour, which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended.

3.2 Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or group of workers. It creates a risk to personal and workplace health and safety.

- (i) Differences of opinion, conflicts and personality clashes can happen in the workplace and they are not bullying. If the behaviour goes beyond a one-off disagreement, if it increases in intensity or becomes offensive or harmful to someone, it is bullying.
- (ii) Bullying can be verbal, physical, written or electronic (such as emails and texting) including:
 - insults and constant criticism that makes you feel humiliated or intimidated
 - cruel and malicious rumours, gossip and innuendo
 - deliberately and repeatedly being ignored, excluded or undermined
 - behaviour or language that frightens or degrades you. This might include swearing, threats, yelling.
- (iii) Bullying may be linked to work tasks and duties. For example, as an employer or manager, you are bullying a worker if you deliberately:
 - give them work that is unreasonably above or below their ability
 - give them meaningless work that is unrelated to their job
 - give them inconvenient rosters, or change their hours on a whim or to inconvenience them
 - deny them information or resources to do their job
 - scrutinise their work excessively and unreasonably.

4. Sexual Harassment

4.1 Sexual Harassment is a legally recognised form of sex discrimination

4.2 Acts of sexual harassment can take many different forms, including but not confined to:

- unwanted physical contact such as kissing, patting, touching, grabbing;
- sexual propositions;
- sexual intercourse under threat of loss of employment;
- unwelcome remarks or insinuations about a person's sex or private life;
- suggestive comments about a person's appearance or body;
- sexually explicit conversations;
- sexual or smutty jokes;
- inferences to sexual morality i.e. prude, tart, slut;
- offensive telephone calls;
- gender-based insults or taunting;
- being followed home from work or repeated requests for dates or drinks particularly after prior refusal;
- offensive hand or body gestures
- offensive, humiliating or intimidating displays of sexually graphic material including posters, pictures, cartoons, graffiti or messages left on boards, desks or lockers.

4.3 Behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment is illegal during any work-related function and will be subject to disciplinary action.

- 4.4 Sexual harassment is not consensual sexual behaviour between two people who are attracted to each other. However, such behaviour is still inappropriate in the workplace.

PROCEDURES

1. NOSS Responsibilities

- 1.1 Do all that is reasonable to prevent discrimination from occurring at the workplace or work related environment;
- 1.2 Treat all employees on their merits without regard to race, age, gender, marital status, sexual preference, disability, religion or political conviction.
- 1.3 Investigate complaints of discrimination in the workplace professionally, confidentially and in a non judgemental manner ensuring there is no presumption of guilt.
- 1.4 Provide information and support to complainants and advise on available options
- 1.5 Implement training and raise the awareness of appropriate standards of conduct;
- 1.6 Not tolerate any victimisation or reprisals for making complaints;
- 1.7 Maintain confidentiality of all matters relating to a complaint
- 1.8 Not tolerate any misuse of this policy.

2. Employees' Responsibilities

- 2.1 Report any form of discrimination observed within the workplace.
- 2.2 Offer support to victims by directing them to the most appropriate channel for help
- 2.3 Maintain confidentiality of all matters relating to a complaint

3. Action in response to an Incident

- 3.1 If possible, the victim should tell the offender of their objection to the behaviour and that it should not be repeated.
- 3.2 If the matter cannot be resolved, the victim should submit a Complaint Form as soon as possible.
- 3.3 The incident will be dealt with in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy.

4. Penalties

- 4.1 Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who discriminates against another person in the workplace or work related environment in accordance with the NOSS Counselling and Discipline Policy.
- 4.2 Anyone who harasses or victimises a person who makes a complaint under this policy will face disciplinary action.
- 4.3 Any person who, without authorisation from the Manager, passes on confidential information regarding an investigation under this policy will face disciplinary action.
- 4.4 Disciplinary Action may involve a warning (verbal or written) or termination of employment.
- 4.5 Serious breaches of this policy may result in employment being terminated without notice.

CLIENT CONSENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed to assist support workers and supervisors to clearly understand the concept of consent and the range of options open to them in relation to assisted decision making.

Gaining informed consent is extremely important, particularly when considering medical procedures, the use of medication, making financial decisions, negotiating relationships or during the design and implementation of individual programs.

DEFINITIONS

Consent

Consent is 'an agreement to do or to act' or 'compliance with a request or instruction' given by one person to another. It may be explicitly stated or implied.

The essential elements of the law about consent for the purposes of this document are as follows:

- The person who is giving consent must have the intellectual capacity and maturity to understand the situation they are consenting to, the choices that are available and the consequences of their decision (ie the likely risks and benefits). This applies to all people, regardless of age and whether or not they have a disability;
- In order for a person to provide informed consent, the person must be given sufficient accurate information about the matter or procedure and that information must be presented in such a way that the person can fully understand it;
- Any consent must be freely given and must not be obtained by force, threat, deception or undue influence.
- A person may be able to make decisions and give valid consent in some areas of their life but not in others depending on their skills and experience.

Person Responsible

- In the specific instance of medical treatment, a 'person responsible' is able to give consent to certain procedures or treatments where the client lacks the capacity to do so.
- The Guardianship and Administration Act (1996) specifically excludes paid staff or paid carers from being a 'person responsible'.
- To qualify as a 'person responsible' the individual must be a family member, close friend or unpaid carer of the client and must maintain a close personal relationship through frequent personal contact and have a personal interest in the welfare of the person with a disability. A legally appointed guardian can also be the 'person responsible'.
- NOSS will accept the 'person responsible' nominated by the client, residential service or parent unless that person appears to be inappropriate. NOSS may require that person responsible to sign a Statutory Declaration declaring that they are the person responsible or produce a guardianship certificate.
- If there is a dispute about the identity of the 'person responsible' or there is disagreement about appropriate consent, NOSS will contact the GAB who will, if necessary, make a determination.

GUIDELINES

Determining capacity to consent

When deciding whether or not a client has the capacity to consent, staff must consider the knowledge and skills (decision making, communication etc) of the client (assessed through direct past experience, file notes and other documentation) and the complexity of the issue in question.

Staff must check to see if the person can demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the issues, proposed actions, benefits and risks, other alternatives.

Staff must check that there are no external pressures influencing the person which may affect the person's decision.

The complexity of the process should reflect the seriousness of the issue in question. In complex situations where there is doubt about whether or not a person is able to consent, staff must refer the matter to the NOSS General Manager who may seek advice from the Guardianship and Administration Board (GAB).

Good practice entails not only enabling the 'person responsible' to provide informed judgment about consent but actively involving and encouraging the 'person responsible' to participate in the process.

Consent and Privacy

All clients are requested to sign a consent form, on an annual basis, authorising NOSS to collect and release certain personal information in order to safely provide a quality service. For more information regarding release of information refer to the NOSS Privacy Policy.

Consent and Lifestyle issues

Lifestyle issues are those areas of a person's life relating to decisions about accommodation, accessing services, leisure activities, relationships, work, transport, day programs etc. It does not include consent to medical treatment or major financial decisions.

- Staff members should endeavour to gain consent from the client, (taking into account their level of understanding) before planning any activity such as when and where to have lunch.
- If a client is unable to provide informed consent about an important issue (e.g. community access program, finances, relationships) consultation and agreement would need to occur between the key people involved with that issue (e.g. residential staff, family members, advocates, other service providers). Staff should refer these matters to the Community Access Manager.
- For day-to-day decision making (e.g. what to eat, choice of activities) it may be possible to make a decision based on the implied consent of the client. Factors to take into account in this situation would be knowledge of the person, evidence of preference through documentation and reactions.
- Where the proposed activity or issue involves an element of risk, staff members should consult with the Community Access Manager.
- Where there is any conflict about a proposed course of action which cannot be resolved, consultation must occur with the NOSS General Manager who may consult the Guardianship and Administration Board (GAB).

Consent and medical treatment

Written consent must be obtained from the client (or their 'person responsible') who will receive the proposed medical treatment or intervention, unless the treatment is **urgent** or **minor** (see below).

- Consent is not required where the treatment is urgent (e.g. necessary to save a person's life) or minor (e.g. non-intrusive examination, first aid, administering non-prescription drugs).
- Further information about consent to medical and dental treatment can be obtained from the Guardianship and Administration Board's Fact Sheet 'Consent for Medical Treatment' or from their web-site (http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/guar/info_3.htm.)

Consent and financial issues

- Staff members should, if possible, obtain consent from a client (taking into account their level of understanding) before planning any use of funds on their behalf.
- If the client is unable to provide informed consent about a financial issue (e.g. going to Launceston Show) consultation and agreement would need to occur between the key people involved with that issue (e.g. residential service, family members, advocates). In these instances, staff should refer the matter to the Community Access

CLIENT SUPPORT POLICY

Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) support staff to assist clients to pursue their chosen social, leisure, pre-vocational and vocational activities.

1. The level of support offered to clients is based on their individual strengths and needs.
2. NOSS will provide staff with sufficient relevant, up to date information to enable safe, quality support.
3. All staff will ensure that client and employee safety is the highest priority when making decisions in relation to client support.
4. All client information will be dealt with in a private and confidential manner in accordance with the NOSS Privacy Policy.
5. Medication will be administered in accordance with the Disability Services' Guidelines for the Administration of Medication for People with Disabilities Receiving Community Based Disability Services July 2010.
6. NOSS adopts the Aversive, Restrictive & Intrusive Practices in Services for People with a Disability, May, 2010 (copy attached).
7. NOSS adopts the Disability Services' Personal Relationships and Sexuality Policy, July, 2006.
8. Employees will be positive role models in term of dress, language and behaviour at all times.

PROCEDURES

1. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

In accordance with the principles and standards of the Disability Services Act 2011 (Tas), people with a disability have the right to receive services in a manner which results in the least reasonable restriction of their rights and opportunities. NOSS acknowledges that there may be occasions when some form of restrictive practice may be necessary.

- 1.1. NOSS adopts the Aversive, Restrictive & Intrusive Practices in Services for People with a Disability Policy and Guidelines, May, 2010 which includes:
 - (i) Programs and Services are to be designed and administered so as to be as free as possible from aversive, restrictive and intrusive practices.
 - (ii) Restrictive and intrusive practices should only be used as part of a challenging behaviour intervention plan except in emergency situations where duty of care provisions apply.
 - (iii) Emergency situations are occasions where a restrictive practice may be necessary to avoid harm. These are most commonly the result of challenging behaviours. When the behaviour of a person has the potential to harm themselves or others, there is a need to balance the duty of care obligations of the service against the rights of the person with a disability. The challenging behaviour must be of such intensity and duration that it is highly likely that it will cause injury to the client, support worker or others without the use of restraint or seclusion. The 'least reasonable alternative' should always be used.
 - (iv) The 'least reasonable alternative' is a practice that:
 - is not more restrictive or intrusive than is necessary to prohibit the person from inflicting harm on themselves or others
 - is applied no longer than necessary to prevent harm or danger

- (v) Physical restraint in order to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of any part of a person's body without their consent may be necessary in an emergency situation.

This is a summary only and employees should ensure that they familiarise themselves with the full policy (copy attached).

2. CLIENT INFORMATION

- 2.1. NOSS Management will request all relevant client information during the referral process.
- 2.2. Any written or verbal information in the possession of staff will be handled in a private and confidential manner in accordance with the NOSS Privacy Policy.
- 2.3. Personal client information (eg medication charts, Client Support Books) must be kept secure and confidential. Any material kept in a vehicle should be out of sight and the vehicle should be locked.
- 2.4. The Community Access Manager will ensure that essential and up to date information (other than highly confidential issues) is recorded in a Client Support Book:
 - Daily Activities
 - Current medication details
 - Alerts relating to allergies, behaviour management, communication, meal time management plans etc
 - Personal Plan
- 2.5. Each client's current support workers (including relief staff) will read and sign off the Client Support Book before supporting that client and whenever it is updated. It is the responsibility of support workers to ensure that the Client Support Book is checked for updates each day they support that client.
- 2.6. The Community Access Manager will ensure that essential confidential information not included in the Client Support Book will be signed off by each current support worker (including relief staff) prior to support.
- 2.7. New support workers supporting clients will be "buddied up" with an existing support worker whenever possible in order to provide an opportunity to gather practical hands-on information.

3. DECISION MAKING AND CHOICE

- 3.1. Employees will empower clients to make decisions and explain the consequences of such decisions when appropriate. The NOSS Client Consent Policy explains the concept of consent and the range of options open to employees in relation to assisted decision making.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1. NOSS recognises that work related stress can be detrimental to ones health. Should any employee feel that they are becoming stressed at work, this should be immediately reported to Management so it may be addressed. Management are available at all times if any assistance is needed during the day. In addition, the Community Access Manager will from time to time visit support workers in the community.
- 4.2. It is the responsibility of the residential service, parent or carer to support clients when they are unwell (this includes any infections such as head lice, scabies etc). Support workers should make an assessment when they pick up a client to ensure that they are well enough to access the community. If not, or if a client becomes unwell during the day, they should contact the NOSS office for further advice.
- 4.3. Management will decide whether or not to support based on the severity and symptoms of the illness and the resulting impact on any other clients' support.

5. MATCHING STAFF AND CLIENTS (Community Access)

- 5.1. To ensure positive outcomes for both clients and staff of NOSS, it is important to match clients with appropriate support workers. To this end, when selecting support workers to support a client, the following criteria will be considered:
 - Client needs/preferences
 - Common interests
 - Personalities

- Communication skills
- Behaviour management skills
- Relevant medical condition

5.2. When client support changes are necessary as a result of staff or client needs, staff and clients will be notified of any such changes, prior to implementation, with as much notice as possible.

5.3. Although staff input will be considered, client needs will be given priority when determining issues relating to client support.

6. MEDICATION

6.1. Medication will be administered in accordance with the Disability Services' Guidelines for the Administration of Medication for People with Disabilities Receiving Community Based Disability Services July 2010 (the Guidelines).

6.2. All permanent support staff will undertake training in the administration of medication (including First Aid)

6.3. No staff will administer medication until such training has been completed.

6.4. Residential staff or parents/carers are responsible for providing support staff with the correct medication in accordance with the Guidelines.

6.5. The Community Access Manager will ensure that medication details are updated regularly. The client's residential service or parent/carer is responsible for informing NOSS of any change to medication.

7. MISSING CLIENTS

7.1. Criteria for determining when a client is missing depends on his/her level of capability and self-reliance. It is therefore of the utmost importance that support workers are aware of the individual behaviour patterns and supervisory needs of the people they support. This awareness will allow staff to accurately assess the situation.

7.2. When a client is missing, the NOSS employee should:

- (i) Conduct a quick search of the immediate area.
- (ii) Report to NOSS Management immediately.
- (iii) Management in consultation with the staff member involved will assess the situation and coordinate the search.
- (iv) All staff involved will report back to Management regularly.
- (v) Management will inform the missing client's family and/or residential service if and when deemed appropriate.
- (vi) Management will request external assistance, such as the police, when deemed appropriate.
- (vii) The staff member locating the missing client is to report back to Management immediately.
- (viii) The staff member involved will submit an incident report within 24 hours.
- (ix) Management will offer debriefing to all staff and clients involved.

8. PERSONAL PLANS

8.1. The Community Access Manager and Program Officer, in consultation with the client and relevant stakeholders, will develop Personal Plans using information gained from Personal Plan meetings in accordance with the NOSS Individual Needs Policy.

8.2. It is the responsibility of all support workers to familiarise themselves with the Personal Plan goals and incorporate the associated strategies during the course of the day when appropriate.

9. PRIVACY

9.1. Employees will treat information about clients, both written and verbal, as confidential. Issues regarding a client should only be discussed with relevant stakeholders such as other NOSS support staff who work with that client, their residential workers and the persons nominated on their Consent form.

10. REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

10.1. Employees must provide a written report all accidents and incidents within 24 hours of its occurrence in accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy.

10.2. Any significance incidents/accidents such as major injuries, seizures or challenging behaviours must be reported to Management immediately.

11. RELATED POLICIES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with

- Employee Manual
- Client Consent Policy
- Decision Making Policy
- Individual Needs Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Reporting Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

COMPLAINTS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) aims to provide a positive and open environment where complaints can be resolved in a fair and equitable manner.

NOSS recognises that within any service, conflict and complaints will inevitably arise. However, early attention to such complaints will result in the simplest and quickest resolution.

This policy sets out the avenues available to resolve any complaint related to any aspect of NOSS, its services or management. Feedback will enable NOSS to improve the quality of its service delivery.

OBJECTIVES

NOSS will:

- foster open communication between employees, clients and management in an atmosphere within which people feel comfortable to raise issues of concern.
- make every effort to achieve a resolution in the shortest possible time.
- ensure that employees and service users are familiar with their right and responsibility to make complaints about anything which they believe to be wrong or unjust.
- ensure that complaints are taken seriously and are addressed quickly and fairly.
- not tolerate any victimisation or reprisals for making complaints;
- ensure that the outcomes of all complaints are always considered with respect to improving the quality of service provided by NOSS.

COMPLAINTS

Any employee who witnesses or is informed about any complaint, criminal act or act of abuse has an ethical and professional obligation to immediately report the alleged incident to the General Manager.

Complaints may include:

- allegations of abuse (see below)
- dissatisfaction with working conditions
- allegations of theft
- poor workmanship by the Workcrew
- behaviour of a client or employee
- unsatisfactory employee performance

Abuse

Abuse is a particular complaint which involves a person who has either a formal or implied bond of trust for the provision of services to another person. It does not include harm caused by a client, either to a staff member or to another client. Although such incidents may be serious and require intervention, they would not, in the general circumstances, be considered a breach of trust or an abuse of power. Forms of abuse may include:

Physical

- The infliction of physical pain or injury
- The inappropriate use of physical coercion or restraint (including confinement)
- The inappropriate use of medication

Psychological

- Any conduct which causes mental anguish, fear or isolation, feelings of shame, humiliation and powerlessness or loss of dignity. For example, emotional blackmail, threats, intimidation

Financial

- Improper use of a person's property or finances
- Unauthorised denial of access to, or control over, personal finances

Neglect

- Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, hygiene, medical/dental care and personal safety

Sexual

- Sexually abusive or exploitive behaviour, including rape, indecent assault and sexual harassment.

RESOLUTION

Steps should always be taken to resolve complaints in the simplest manner. For this purpose the following informal process should, if possible, be followed in the first instance.

Informal Complaints Procedure

All complaints should be raised directly with the person concerned in order to promptly resolve the issue. The General Manager, Community Access Manager or Occupational Health & Safety Representative may assist if necessary.

Formal Complaints Procedure

In the event that the issue can not be resolved informally, the following procedure should be followed:

1. A signed written report of the complaint should be submitted to the General Manager as soon as possible. In a complaint against the General Manager, the report should be submitted to the Board of Governance which will take the place of the General Manager in the following procedure.
2. If a client requires additional support to complete this process, they may contact a staff member or independent advocate:

Tas Advocacy	Speakout
Shop 9, 216 Charles Street	59d Amy Road
Launceston	Newstead
Phone: 6331 0740	Phone: 6343 7090
3. In the case of an alleged criminal offence, the General Manager will refer the matter to the Police for investigation.
4. In the case of alleged Abuse, NOSS adopts the Department of Community and Health Services Guidelines Relating to the Preventing and Responding to Abuse in Services (2009) (copy attached)
5. In the case of a complaint which may involve disciplinary action, this policy should be read in conjunction with the NOSS Counselling and Discipline Policy.
6. In the case of any other complaint, the General Manager will:
 - advise the parties concerned that an investigation is to take place.
 - Set a time frame for the resolution of the complaint will be set and reviewed as appropriate.
 - investigate the complaint, taking formal statements from all relevant parties and allowing each party the opportunity to respond to any allegations.
 - consider all evidence and make a determination.
 - will inform all parties of the determination.

APPEAL PROCESS

Any person dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaints procedure may appeal to the Board of Management by submitting a written complaint.

The Board of Management will:

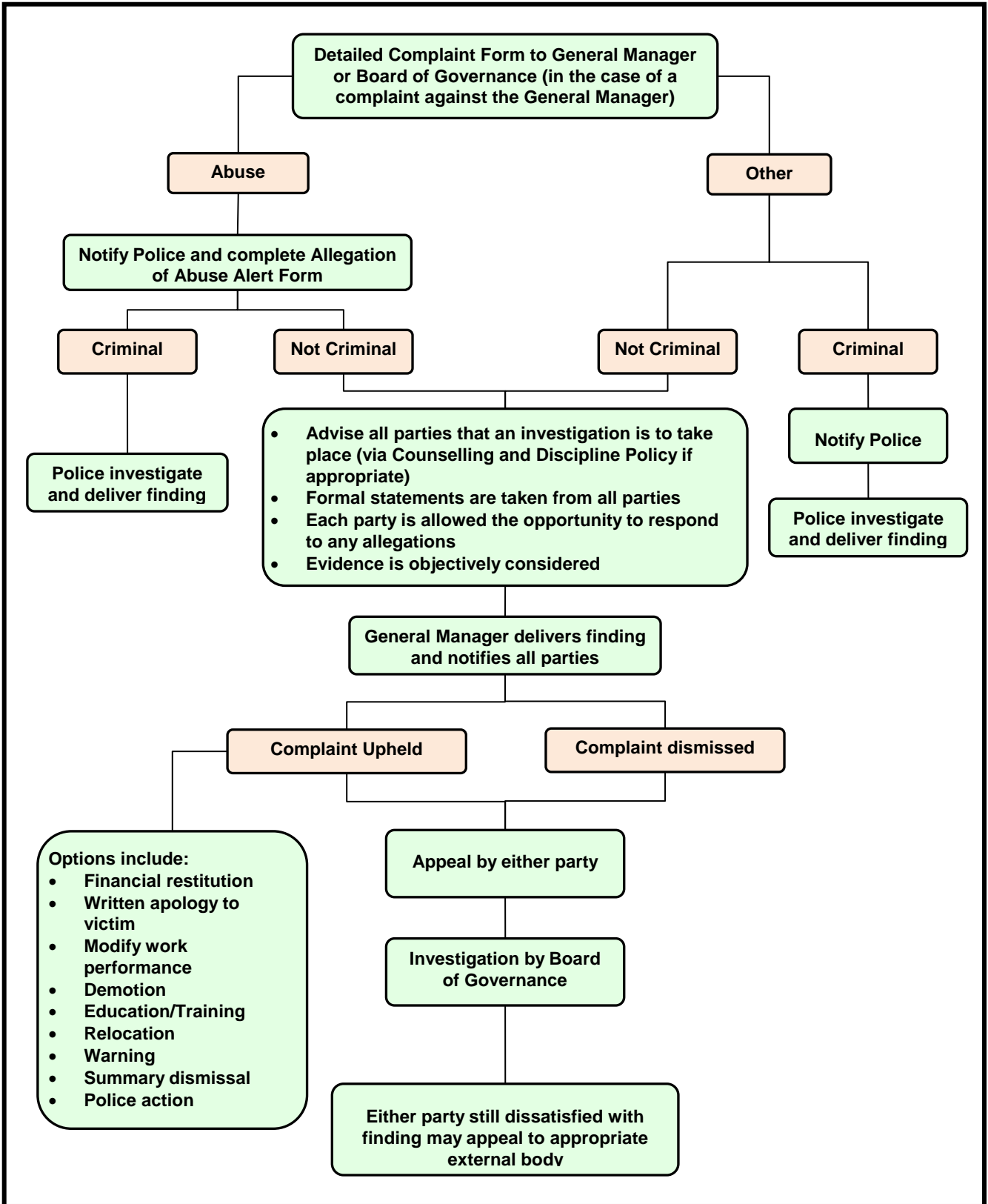
- investigate the matter, consider all evidence and make a determination.
- inform all parties in writing of that determination.

If any person is still dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal process they may appeal to the relevant external body such as Tasmanian Industrial Commission, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Family and Community Services, Federal Privacy Commissioner, Anti-Discrimination Commission and the Human Rights Commission.

Workcrew members are also encouraged to use the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) if they feel their complaint has not been adequately dealt with:

Phone:	1800 880052 (freecall)
National Relay Service:	1800 555 677
Fax:	(02) 9318 1372

COMPLAINTS FLOW CHART



COUNSELLING & DISCIPLINE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

NOSS Tasmania (NOSS) is committed to ensuring the provision of a workplace that guarantees all employees equity, fairness, justice and privacy in all aspects of their working relationships.

Inherent within this commitment is an acknowledgment that NOSS is a service delivery organisation and therefore its single most valued asset is its workforce. To this end the commitment by NOSS is to:

1. maximise the effectiveness of all employees;
2. provide a management style designed to encourage optimum work performance and conduct;
3. respect and acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of all employees;
4. provide a mutually supportive work environment founded on mutual trust and respect; and
5. provide a fair and equitable process for the identification, handling and resolution of all areas of conflict or grievance within the workplace.

In any workplace, matters will inevitably arise that will require processes to improve an individual's work performance or conduct.

This policy is designed to:

- provide the foundation for all counselling and discipline related matters arising within NOSS;
- ensure that any unsatisfactory work performance or conduct is remedied to allow the employee to perform at an acceptable level as a valued member of the team;
- provide consistency and fairness in procedures to deal with such circumstances;
- identify matters of concern at an early stage; and
- place maximum emphasis on conciliation and negotiation of mutually acceptable outcomes with imposed outcomes being the exception rather than the rule.

DEFINITIONS

The term counselling refers to the discussion and analysis of issues which affect an employee's work performance or conduct in an attempt to find solutions to work related issues and avoid disciplinary action.

The term discipline is a process to ensure that any unsatisfactory work performance or conduct is remedied by the utilisation of clear and fair procedures.

Counselling

1. In accordance with the objectives of counselling the primary focus of the counselling is to identify the shortcoming in work performance or conduct and to jointly resolve the issue.
2. Conducting counselling interviews is a management responsibility.
3. All counselling will be strictly confidential and handled in a consistent and fair manner.
4. NOSS may recommend an employee to an appropriate specialist if the issue is outside the expertise of NOSS staff.

Discipline

1. It is important that this discipline policy be directed towards the improvement of an employee's work performance or conduct and not primarily a punitive approach.

2. Disciplinary action will be instituted for any serious breach of NOSS policies or procedures, or work performance and conduct which does not meet an acceptable level.
3. Other than in cases of misconduct that warrants instant dismissal, the disciplinary procedures will aim to the identify and rectify the unsatisfactory work performance or conduct.
4. NOSS will offer the employee the option to bring a support person to all disciplinary meetings.
5. Copies of all relevant documents will be provided to the employee.
6. All matters arising during a disciplinary interview will be kept in the strictest confidence.

PROCEDURES

These procedures are to be read in conjunction with NOSS Complaints Policy.

Counselling

When a shortcoming in work performance is identified, the following steps will be followed:-

1. The employee will be invited to attend a counselling meeting;
2. The General Manager and/or another member of the management team will conduct the meeting and assist in the recording of the interview.
3. At the meeting:
 - The employee will be informed of the purpose of the counselling session in reasonable detail at the beginning of the meeting.
 - Acceptable levels of work performance or conduct will be identified.
 - Methods to achieve such, including time frames and review dates (if necessary) will be notified by NOSS.
4. As soon as possible following the meeting, both the interviewer and employee will sign and date the Record of Interview. If the employee refuses to sign, a notation should be made to that effect.
5. If requested a copy of the Record of Interview will be provided to the employee and a copy will be placed on the employee's personal file.

Discipline

The disciplinary process will be conducted by the Board of Governance, General Manager, or a person delegated by the General Manager. All references to "General Manager" will include the Board of Governance, General Manager or a person delegated by the General Manager.

Depending on the severity of an employee's unacceptable work performance or conduct and any previous Warnings, the disciplinary process will commence at either First Warning, Final Warning or Misconduct.

1. First Warning

If an allegation is made of unacceptable work performance or conduct, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The employee will be given the option of at least 24 hours notice to attend a disciplinary interview, together with written details of the allegation. Failure to attend, without a valid reason, will be considered grounds for dismissal.
2. The employee will be offered the opportunity to have a support person present. If the employee declines this offer they must sign at the appropriate place on the Record of Interview or a notation made to this effect.;
3. The General Manager will make provision for a person to record the interview.

4. The employee will be given all details relating to the allegation, including provision of any witness statements and documentation.
5. The employee will be invited to present his or her version of events. An employee will be given up to 24 hours if they wish time to prepare a defence.
6. The General Manager will evaluate the employee's response and carry out any further investigations to ensure that all relevant facts have been verified to their satisfaction.
7. The employee will be asked to acknowledge on the Record of Interview that it is a fair and accurate account of the interview. If the employee refuses to sign, a notation should be made to that effect.
8. If, following the investigation, the General Manager determines that the allegation is proven, the employee will be issued with a first warning, and asked to sign to acknowledge receipt. If the employee refuses to sign, a notation should be made to that effect.
9. A review date may be set to monitor the employee's work performance or conduct.
10. The General Manager will determine whether the employee should undertake counselling and/or additional training.
11. Copies of completed documentation will be given to the employee if requested and a copy will be placed on the employee's personal file.

2. Final Warning

If an employee's work performance or conduct continues at an unacceptable level or should a further allegation be made of unacceptable work performance or conduct, the following procedure will be followed:

1. If the General Manager determines suspension is warranted, the employee will be suspended on full pay to allow the General Manager to fully investigate all of the circumstances relating to the alleged unacceptable work performance or conduct.
2. The employee will be given at least 24 hours notice to attend a disciplinary interview together with written details of the allegation. Failure to attend, without a valid reason, will be considered grounds for dismissal.
3. The employee will be advised that if the allegation against the employee is proven a final warning will be issued which could lead to termination of employment.
4. The employee will be offered the opportunity to have a support person present. If the employee declines this offer they are to sign at the appropriate place on the record of Interview or a notation made to this effect.
5. The General Manager will make provision for a person to record the interview.
6. The employee will be given all details relating to the allegation, including provision of any witness statements and documentation.
7. The employee will be invited to present his or her version of events. An employee will be given up to 24 hours if they wish time to prepare a defence.
8. The General Manager will evaluate the employee's response and carry out any further investigations to ensure that all relevant facts have been verified to their satisfaction.
9. The employee will be asked to acknowledge on the Record of Interview that it is a fair and accurate account of the interview. If the employee refuses to sign, a notation should be made to that effect.
10. If, following the investigation, the General Manager determines that the allegation is proven the employee will be issued with a final warning and asked to sign to acknowledge receipt. If the employee refuses to sign, a notation should be made to that effect.
11. The General Manager will determine whether the employee should undertake counselling and/or additional training.
12. A review date may be set to monitor the employee's work performance or conduct.
13. Copies of completed documentation will be given to the employee if requested and a copy will be placed on the employee's personal file.

3. Termination of Employment

If an allegation is made of unacceptable work performance or conduct, following a Final Warning or an allegation of misconduct an employee may be dismissed.

Any action of an employee that amounts to misconduct may lead to summary dismissal without any prior warning being given. The first and final warning procedure of this policy does not apply to misconduct.

The following matters are considered by NOSS to be acts of misconduct:

- Any form of abuse, including: sexual, physical, emotional and verbal abuse of employees or clients of NOSS or the general public;
- Theft of monies or property of NOSS or any associated parties;
- Conduct that causes imminent and serious risk to the health or safety of employees, clients or the general public whilst on duty;
- Attending work intoxicated by drugs and/or alcohol;
- Sexual activity whilst on duty;
- Fighting whilst on duty; and
- Any other matter considered to be misconduct that justifies summary dismissal at Common Law.

In the case of alleged misconduct, the following procedure will be followed:

1. If the General Manager determines suspension is warranted, the employee will be suspended on full pay to allow the General Manager to fully investigate all of the circumstances relating to the alleged unacceptable work performance or conduct.
2. The employee will be given at least 24 hours notice to attend a disciplinary interview together with written details of the allegation. Failure to attend, without a valid reason, will be considered grounds for dismissal.
3. The employee will be offered the opportunity to have a support person present. If the employee declines this offer they are to sign at the appropriate place on the record of Interview.
4. The employee will be advised that if the allegation against the employee is proven this could lead to termination of employment.
5. The General Manager will make provision for a person to record the interview.
6. The employee will be given all details relating to the allegation, including provision of any witness statements and documentation.
7. The employee will be invited to present his or her version of events. An employee will be given up to 24 hours if they wish time to prepare a defence.
8. The General Manager will evaluate the employee's response and carry out any further investigations to ensure that all relevant facts have been verified to their satisfaction.
9. The employee will be asked to acknowledge on the Record of Interview that it is a fair and accurate account of the interview. If the employee refuses to sign, a notation should be made to that effect.
10. If following the investigation the General Manager determines that the allegation is proven, the employee will be issued with a Letter of Dismissal explaining the reasons behind the decision.
11. Copies of completed documentation will be given to the employee if requested and a copy will be placed on the employee's personal file.

HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

NOSS Tasmania is committed to protecting the human rights including freedom from abuse of all its employees and clients through its policies and the practices of its employees.

NOSS adopts the Principles and Standards of the Tasmanian Disability Services Act, 2011 and Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986 (see Appendix 1 and 2).

1. Examples of human rights are:
 - Respect for human dignity
 - Privacy
 - Protection against discrimination, and
 - Equal opportunity in employment
2. All employees are responsible for upholding the human rights of clients and coworkers and ensuring that all allegations of abuse are reported.
3. The General Manager will take action in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy to ensure that any allegations of human rights abuse are documented and investigated immediately, appropriately and fairly.
4. All new employees will be familiarised with this policy, as part of their Orientation.
5. The Bluegum Manager will ensure that all crew members receive training on their rights as documented in the Bluegum Employment Manual.
6. NOSS will ensure that all crew members and clients are given information regarding the role of advocacy support and advice on services available to them. Individual crew members or clients will be referred to advocacy support services that are best able to meet their cultural, religious and linguistic requirements.
7. Organisations who may be able to assist include:

Advocacy Tasmania
107/287 Charles Street
Launceston
1800 005 131 (client freecall)
or (03) 6224 2240
Email:
advocacynorth@advocacytasmania.org.au

Speakout
59d Amy Road
Newstead
6343 2022
Email:
launceston@speakoutadvocacy.org

National Disability Services Abuse and Neglect Hotline
Telephone 1800 880 052

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
Level 8, Piccadilly Tower
133 Castlereagh Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 9284 9600 or 1300 369 711

Related Policies:

Complaints Policy;
Anti-Discrimination Policy;
Counselling and Discipline Policy;
Privacy Policy;
Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy.

Human Rights Principles **as stated in Tasmanian Disability Services Act 2011**

PRINCIPLES

- (a) the needs and best interests of persons with disability are to be promoted;
- (b) so far as is practicable, and having regard to the intellectual capacity of the person with disability, decisions or actions that may directly affect a person with disability –
 - (i) should only be taken after the person has been consulted; and
 - (ii) should take into account the wishes of the person, to the extent that they are consistent with the needs and best interests of the person and the safety of the person and others; and
 - (iii) should only result in the restriction of the freedom of decision and action of the person, if at all, to the smallest extent that is practicable in the circumstances;
- (c) the inherent dignity of persons with disability and their individual autonomy, including the freedom to make their own choices and their right to independence, is to be respected;
- (d) persons with disability are not to be discriminated against;
- (e) persons with disability are to be given the opportunity for full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- (f) there is to be respect for persons being different, and acceptance of persons with disability, as part of human diversity and humanity;
- (g) persons with disability are to be given opportunities that are equal, or equivalent, to the opportunities available to persons without disability;
- (h) specialist disability services are to be as physically and technologically accessible as possible to persons with disability;
- (i) equality between men and women is to be promoted;
- (j) the fact that the capacities of children with disability may evolve as they mature, and the right of children with disability to preserve their identities as equal citizens, are to be respected.

Human Rights Principles and Objectives

as stated in Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986

PRINCIPLES

1. People with disabilities are individuals who have the inherent right to respect for their human worth and dignity.
2. People with disabilities, whatever the origin, nature, type and degree of disability, have the same basic human rights as other members of Australian society.
3. People with disabilities have the same rights as other members of Australian society to realise their individual capacities for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.
4. People with disabilities have the same right as other members of Australian society to services which will support their attaining a reasonable quality of life.
5. People with disabilities have the same right as other members of Australian society to participate in the decisions which affect their lives.
6. People with disabilities receiving services have the same right as other members of Australian society to receive those services in a manner which results in the least restriction of their rights and opportunities.
7. People with disabilities have the same right of pursuit of any grievance in relation to services as have other members of Australian society.

OBJECTIVES

1. Services should have as their focus the achievement of positive outcomes for people with disabilities, such as increased independence, employment opportunities and integration into the community.
2. Services should contribute to ensuring that the conditions of the every-day life of people with disabilities are the same as, or as close as possible to, norms and patterns which are valued in the general community.
3. Services should be provided as part of local co-ordinated service systems and be integrated with services generally available to members of the community, wherever possible.
4. Services should be tailored to meet the individual needs and goals of the people with disabilities receiving those services.
5. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to meet the needs of people with disabilities who experience a double disadvantage as a result of their sex, ethnic origin, or Aboriginality.
6. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to promote recognition of the competence of, and enhance the image of, people with disabilities.
7. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to promote the participation of people with disabilities in the life of the local community through maximum physical and social integration in that community.
8. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to ensure that no single organisation providing services shall exercise control over all or most aspects of the life of a person with disabilities.
9. Organisations providing services, whether those services are provided specifically to people with disabilities or generally to members of the community, should be accountable to those people with disabilities who use their services, the advocates of such people, the Commonwealth and the community generally for the provision of information from which the quality of their services can be judged.
10. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to reach goals and enjoy lifestyles which are valued by the community generally and are appropriate to their chronological age.
11. Services should be designed and administered so as to ensure that people with disabilities have access to advocacy support where necessary to ensure adequate participation in decision-making about the services they receive.
12. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to ensure that appropriate avenues exist for people with disabilities to raise and have resolved any grievances about services.
13. Services should be designed and administered so as to provide people with disabilities with, and encourage them to make use of, avenues for participating in the planning and operation of services which they receive and the Commonwealth and organisations should provide opportunities for consultation in relation to the development of major policy and program changes.
14. Programs and services should be designed and administered so as to respect the rights of people with disabilities to privacy and confidentiality.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS POLICY

1. Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) recognises the importance of identifying client strengths and needs and developing appropriate individual personal or employment plans to address those needs and enhance a person's quality of life.
2. NOSS actively support the involvement of clients and the use of independent advocates in developing individual plans.
3. Training in living and social skills will be carried out as an integral part of all client support.
4. Client support will aim to enhance the self image of clients and promote their acceptance as valued and productive members of their community.
5. Wherever possible, NOSS will provide opportunities for people with a disability to integrate into their community.
6. The Community Access Manager and/or Workcrew Manager, in conjunction with the individual client and other stakeholders, will develop an individual plan for each client, including specific goals.
7. NOSS encourages and will facilitate, where possible, clients undertaking nationally accredited courses in areas such as Horticulture through external registered training organisations.

PROCEDURES

Community Access

- 1.1 The Community Access Manager and/or Program Officer, in conjunction with the client and relevant stakeholders, will develop an individual plan for each client, including specific goals as follows:
 - (i) A Review Meeting will be held within three months of a client's commencement date to discuss support issues and identify specific client goals. The meeting will involve the client (where appropriate), NOSS support workers, family, relevant stakeholders and Program Officer and/or Community Access Manager.
 - (ii) An Individual Personal Plan (IPP) will be developed, including:
 - Personal details
 - Client support information
 - Current activities
 - Client goals
 - (iii) Client goals will be documented in Schedule 2 of the Client Support Agreement, including:
 - Strategies to achieve the goals
 - Responsibilities
 - Review dates

- (iv) The IPP will be explained to the client and endorsed by:
- NOSS General Manager;
 - client's support workers
 - client or nominated family members
- (v) Review meetings will be held when necessary (but at least prior to the expiration of the Client Support Agreement) to:
- Review goals
 - Discuss client support needs
 - Discuss any other relevant issues.
- (vi) Support workers are responsible for carrying out goals and recording progress in Client Support Book.

Bluegum

1.2 The Workcrew Manager, in conjunction with the crew member and other key stakeholders, will develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) in accordance with the following procedures. See also Appendix 1, IEP Process Flowchart.

1.3 Skills Assessments

- (i) Skills Assessments provide an ongoing record of crew members' progression in the safe and effective operation of equipment, such as lawn mower, brushcutter, hedge trimmer and ride on mower.
- (ii) The Workcrew Manager will complete Skills Assessments for each item of equipment used by the crew member, as follows:
- Observe and record crew member's ability to safely use equipment in accordance with steps outlined in Skills Assessment sheet.
 - From the above assessment, identify any goals required to safely use the item of equipment.
- (iii) The initial Skills Assessment will be conducted on completion of three months employment with further assessments on an annual basis.

1.4 Crew Member Support Form

- (i) The Crew Member Support Form contains information on the support required in the areas of social, behavioural, cognitive, vocational, physical assistance, personal care, communication and safety.
- (ii) The Workcrew Manager and Supervisors, will complete and sign off a Crew Member Support Form for each crew member. The Report will be discussed with, and endorsed by, the individual crew member and/or their person responsible.
- (iii) The initial report will be conducted on completion of three months of employment and annually thereafter.

1.5 Individual Employment Plans (IEPs)

- (i) Upon commencement, the Workcrew Manager will develop an IEP for the crew member setting out goals for the first three month period.
- (ii) Upon completion of three months of employment, the Workcrew Manager will hold a meeting with each crew member to identify and prioritise IEP goals and complete an Individual Employment Plan. Client's advocates will be invited if appropriate.
- (iii) The IEP goals will include the following areas:
 - Work Skills (based on Skills Assessment)
 - Vocational including work ethic, career goals etc (based on Crew Member Support Form)
 - Social (including appropriate communication and behaviour and any personal goals)
- (iv) Further meetings will be held to review the IEP on an annual basis.
- (v) The IEP (or Review) will be signed off by:
 - Crew member and/or advocate
 - Workcrew Manager
- (vi) A copy of the IEP will be given to the crew member and/or person responsible when completed.

1.6 Disability Maintenance Instrument (DMI) Process

- (i) Crew members will sign Consent forms consistent with FaHCSIA requirements on an annual basis.
- (ii) The Workcrew Admin Officer will enter information on FOFMS after sighting signed Consent form.
- (iii) Upon commencement and prior to any DMI review, a Crew Member Support Form will be completed (weekly for those working two days or twice weekly if a worker works more than two days) for a period of 13 weeks.
- (iv) The Workcrew Manager will complete and authorise the DMI once 13 weeks of evidence has been completed and immediately after achievement of employment outcome (13 weeks at 8 hours per week).
- (v) All staff associated with DMI process will undertake training and be kept updated with any changes to ensure they have comprehensive understanding of the processes and terminology used in the DMI evidence collection process

1.7 Training Programs

- (i) The Workcrew Manager will develop a Training Program for each goal as required.

(ii) The Training Program will document:

- Long and short term goals (identified in IEP)
- Criteria for achieving goal
- Frequency of training
- Strategies to achieve the goals, including reinforcers
- Review dates (no more than six months)

The Training Program will be signed off by:

- Crew member and/or advocate
- Workcrew Manager
- Bluegum Supervisors

(iii) Training Programs will be reviewed to consider whether the goal has been achieved. If so, then a new Training Program will be developed around the next prioritised goal. If not, then a revised review date will be set or the Training Program will be modified.

(iv) The Workcrew Manager will be responsible for developing Training Records for each Training Program as follows:

- Task analyse goal and record individual steps on Training Record.
- Determine appropriate recording code ie number of minutes, verbal prompts etc.
- Arranging training sessions with crew member in accordance with criteria and frequencies set in Training Program.
- Record progress on each step using specified recording code.

1.8 Awards

(i) In recognition of crew members achieving individual goals a Certificate will be issued and presented at the next Bluegum function.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

Introduction

While NOSS is aware that mobile phones and social media are an integral part of communication for many employees, overuse of mobile phones and the use of social media can adversely affect the quality of support offered to clients. Social media is particularly open to abuse and misinterpretation. Despite the existence of privacy options, many items published in social media are publicly accessible and it can be difficult to guarantee that sites are fully private.

The following policy will therefore apply to all employees.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phone use during work hours will be kept to a minimum. Personal calls should be restricted to emergencies.

Social Media

Social media is any online technology tool that enables people to socially interact via the internet to share information. Social media includes:

- Social networking sites (eg Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Bebo)
- Blogging sites (including Twitter)
- Video and photo sharing sites (eg Flickr, YouTube)
- Weblogs (including personal blogs and blogs hosted by the media)
- Forums and discussion boards (eg Yahoo! Groups or Google groups)
- Online encyclopaedias (eg Wikipedia)

With regard to social media, NOSS employees will not:

- access social media or games during work hours.
- discuss any work issues on social media at any time. This includes:
 - any personal information about NOSS clients or employees;
 - any client related issues (whether or not the client is identified);
 - any inappropriate, false or malicious comments regarding NOSS, its clients or employees.
- speak on behalf of NOSS unless authorised by the General Manager to do so.

Disclosing any form of organisational information in a social network environment is a breach of the NOSS Privacy Policy, which may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Media Releases

No staff member should communicate with the media about NOSS unless authorised by the Public Officer.

All policy statements provided to the media will be approved by the General Manager.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tasmania).

Achieving safety in the workplace relies on management and staff working together to create a safe working environment through the prompt reporting and investigation of potential and existing hazards and the strict adherence to safe working practices.

NOSS Responsibilities

NOSS will ensure that all steps are taken to:

1. identify hazards and risks related to NOSS operations in accordance with the NOSS Risk Assessment Policy
2. remove or reduce identified health and safety risks associated with the operation of NOSS so far as is reasonably practicable and in a timely manner
3. regularly review the operation of this policy through workplace inspections and audits.
4. facilitate the election of a Health and Safety representative
5. identify and provide all appropriate information, instruction and training to equip employees, contractors and visitors with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet their Work Health and Safety responsibilities.
6. Provide and maintain procedures for the safe use, handling, storage and transportation of plant, equipment and substances.

Employee/Contractor Responsibilities

All NOSS employees/contractors will:

1. take reasonable care of their own health and safety
2. take reasonable care that their conduct does not adversely affect the safety of others
3. comply with all NOSS health and safety policies, procedures, guidelines and other instructions.
4. follow all reporting procedures relating to work, health and safety issues in a timely manner, including Incident Reports, Hazard Reports and risks assessments in accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy.

Manager's Responsibilities

In addition to their duties as employees, all NOSS Managers will proactively exercise due diligence in their area of control through the following:

1. Acquiring and updating their knowledge of work, health and safety matters, in particular the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tasmani) and associated Codes of Practice.
2. Gaining an understanding of the operations of NOSS and their associated hazards and risks, including carrying out risk assessments of all processes within their area of authority.
3. Identifying, documenting and recommending strategies and resources required to, so far as is reasonably practicable, remove or reduce identified health and safety risks.
4. Identifying and documenting the underlying causes of any accident or incident and implementing strategies to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.
5. Maintaining the workplace in a safe condition at all times and ensuring the implementation and monitoring of all workplace procedures relevant to each workplace.
6. Ensuring that all subordinate staff are aware of their obligations and responsibilities under this policy.
7. Identifying the training needs of subordinate staff and ensuring that training is carried out whenever there is an assessed risk, including the following areas:
 - Orientation on NOSS work health and safety policy and procedures, upon commencement
 - Emergency evacuation procedures, including annual fire drills
 - Manual Handling
 - First Aid
 - Any necessary certificates, licences and/or training to ensure that duties can be carried out safely including the administration of medication and safe operation of machinery, equipment and vehicles.

PROCEDURES

1. Training

1.1 All new employees will undergo an orientation which will include, but not limited to:

- Workplace rules and any specific hazards
- Protective equipment and practices
- First Aid procedures
- Reporting of incidents, accidents and hazards.
- Manual handling
- Bullying and Harassment
- Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs
- Emergency evacuation procedures

1.2 All staff will satisfactorily complete and maintain First Aid Training (Level 2).

1.3 All staff required to administer medication will satisfactorily complete an accredited course in Administration of Medication and subsequent refreshers.

1.4 All staff will complete a manual handling refresher annually

1.5 All crew members will carry out basic First Aid and manual handling training annually.

2. Workplace Safety Audits and Assessments

Safety Audits

2.1 Six monthly workplace safety audits will be carried out at both the NOSS Office and the Bluegum workshop. Inspections will be undertaken by the General Manager and Health and Safety Representative and cover an extensive range of areas within the work environment, including fire safety, electrical

lighting, storage, chemicals, first aid, floors, machines and equipment etc. The audit will be documented on a Work Health and Safety Audit form (OHS06).

- 2.2** The Bluegum Manager is responsible for ensuring that the workshop is maintained in a safe condition at all times and complete a Workplace Inspection Form (OHS05) six monthly (three months prior to safety audits).

Risk Assessments

- 2.3** The Bluegum Manager will undertake a safety assessment for each significant job undertaken and/or piece of machinery operated. The safety assessment will identify perceived risks and measures taken to alleviate those risks. Safety assessments will be recorded and signed by all employees carrying out that work.

- 2.4** The Bluegum Manager and Community Access Manager will complete annual risk assessments of safety needs for each client upon commencement and arrange appropriate training for staff. Risk assessments will be reviewed annual at IEP/Personal Plan meetings. The assessment will be recorded on a Client Risk Assessment form (OHS10). Areas of risk may include:

- Behaviour management
- Manual handling
- Dietary issues
- Medication

- 2.5** NOSS will arrange an independent annual audit of Essential Safety and Health Features for the NOSS Office and Bluegum workshop in accordance with the Building Act, 2000 and regulations and display a current Annual Maintenance Statement (Form 56) at each workplace.

- 2.6** All audit and assessment results will be documented and actioned through the Quality Assurance Database.

3. First Aid

- 3.1** After completing their probation, community access staff will be issued with a basic first aid kit to be kept in the support worker's vehicle whenever transporting clients and used only for work related incidents. This kit remains the property of NOSS and will be returned to NOSS upon leaving the Service.

- 3.2** A first aid kit will be kept in the foyer of the NOSS Office, at the Bluegum Workshop and in each NOSS vehicle. When items are used from these first aid kits, it will be noted in the book provided in the kit and an Incident Report (OHS02) completed.

- 3.3** All employees will ensure that all kits under their care are replenished when necessary.

4. Accidents and Incidents

Immediate Action

- 4.1** In the event of a minor injury to any person, employees will administer first aid and notify the office.

- 4.2** In the event of a serious injury (including any admission to hospital) or fatality:

- (i) the NOSS employee will first notify urgent medical services (ie Ambulance) and then NOSS Management.
- (ii) the surrounding area must be isolated and remain untouched, except where it is necessary to apply first aid or to prevent further injury to person or damage to property, until the incident has been investigated by the Workplace Standards Authority and the Police.
- (iii) NOSS Management will notify the next of kin, Board of Governance, the Workplace Standards Authority and the relevant funding body

- 4.3** In the event of a dangerous incident as a result of which a person could have been killed or could have suffered serious injury or illness NOSS will notify a Workplace Standards Tasmania inspector immediately.

Injuries to Workers

In the event of injury to an employee:

- 4.4** Following the administering of immediate first aid, the employee will immediately contact the Return to Work (RTW) Coordinator.
- 4.5** The RTW Coordinator will arrange an appointment with the Treating Medical Practitioner and accompany the employee to that appointment.
- 4.6** Should medical treatment not be required at the time, but significant symptoms develop later, the employee should contact the RTW Coordinator to arrange an appointment with the Treating Medical Practitioner.
- 4.7** If time off work is required, then the NOSS Rehabilitation Policy will take effect.

Reporting

In accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy:

- 4.8** All accidents or injuries, including near misses, will be reported to your supervisor immediately.
- 4.9** All incidents and accidents must be recorded on an Incident Report by the responsible staff member and submitted to NOSS Management within 24 hours in accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy.
- 4.10** All Incident Reports relating to employee injuries will be signed off by the Health and Safety representative.
- 4.11** Failure to report accidents immediately may prejudice any Workers Compensation claim.

Investigation of Accidents and Incidents

- 4.12** Upon receipt of all Incident Reports, the supervisor will assess the factors which contributed to the incident and recommend strategies for prevention. The actions put in place to prevent a reoccurrence will be documented on the Incident Report and actioned through the Quality Assurance Database.
- 4.13** In the event of any serious incident (including all incidents resulting in time off work):
 - (i)** a risk assessment will be carried out by the General Manager to identify the underlying causes of the accident or incident and identify strategies to prevent reoccurrence. The risk assessment will be documented on a Risk Assessment Form (OHS03).
 - (ii)** Identified strategies to prevent reoccurrence will be actioned through the Quality Assurance Database.
 - (iii)** Relevant stakeholders will be informed of the outcome of any Risk Assessment.
- 4.14** Work Health and Safety meetings will held fortnightly between the Health and Safety representative, Community Access Manager or Bluegum Manager and General Manager to discuss and review all active Incident Reports.

5. Protective Equipment and Practices

- 5.1** NOSS will provide employees with any protective clothing, equipment and practices necessary to safely carry out their duties. It is the responsibility of all employees to wear or use any such protective clothing, equipment and practices.
- 5.2** Employees will use appropriate means to protect themselves and others from infectious diseases such as the flu, including safe cough methods, hand washing, distancing etc.
- 5.3** Employees will follow any specific guidelines issued as a result of a pandemic.
- 5.4** All hazards will be recorded on a Hazard Report Form (OHS09) and submitted to NOSS Management in accordance with the NOSS Reporting Policy. Hazards include:
 - unsafe equipment
 - unsafe environment
 - unsafe work practices

- 5.5** All staff will ensure that clients/crew members are appropriately protected with respect to the sun, including the use of sunscreen, if authorised.
- 5.6** All employees will ensure that both they and their clients consume adequate fluids during the day.
- 5.7** Any concerns relating to personal health issues, in particular stress, must be reported to NOSS Management immediately. Management will treat all such concerns with the utmost confidentiality and work with the employee to achieve a positive outcome.

6. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

- 6.1** NOSS will ensure that Emergency Evacuation procedures are in place for the NOSS Office and Bluegum Workshop and ensure that all employees made aware of that information.
- 6.2** All employees accessing the NOSS office and/or the Bluegum workshop will familiarise themselves with the relevant Emergency Evacuation Plan and Procedures displayed on notice boards at each site.
- 6.3** The following items will be included in the Emergency Evacuation Procedures and Plan.
- Emergency contact number for Fire Brigade, Police and Ambulance
 - Location of exit points from the building
 - Location of outside assembly point following the evacuation
 - Instructions for evacuation including the nominated firewardens who will contact emergency services if required, ensure that all people have left the building and assembled in the designated area
- 6.4** The Bluegum Manager and Community Access Managers will ensure that all emergency exits are kept clear of obstructions.
- 6.5** NOSS management will be notified immediately upon discovery of a fire or other threatening situation.
- 6.6** All fire extinguishers located in the NOSS office and those at the Bluegum workshop and each Bluegum Vehicle will be tested and tagged on a six monthly basis.
- 6.7** A fire evacuation drill will be conducted at the Bluegum workshop and the NOSS office annually.

7. Smoking

- 7.1** NOSS does not support smoking and strongly encourages staff to quit. Details of the Quit program are available at the NOSS Office.
- 7.2** The duration and number of any smoke breaks should be kept to a minimum.
- 7.3** Employees will not smoke in the proximity of clients ie keep a safe distance (at least 3 metres) from any client whilst smoking. If this is not feasible, then smoking should be stopped until it is possible to do so.
- 7.4** Smoke breaks away from clients must only be taken when it is safe for another support worker to supervise the client.
- 7.5** Support workers will avoid accessing unhealthy environments and ensure that clients are not subjected to passive smoking.
- 7.6** There will be no smoking:
- (i) during organised client programs such as music, compic bingo, bowling or Independent Services programs
 - (ii) whilst at the NOSS Office, inside or out, including the car park area and Vincent Street.
 - (iii) at public pick up and drop off points
 - (iv) in vehicles whilst a client is in the vehicle.
 - (v) at the Bluegum workshop except in those areas designated by the Workcrew Manager.
 - (vi) at Bluegum worksites except when authorised by the Workcrew Manager.

8. Alcohol and Drugs

- 8.1** To promote the safety of both clients and employees, alcohol and ‘recreational’ drug use will not be tolerated during support hours (with the exception limited alcohol at authorised work functions).
- 8.2** During support hours, staff must not consume, distribute or be under the influence of alcohol (ie a blood alcohol level of 0.0) or other ‘recreational’ drugs. An employee will not be permitted to work whilst taking any prescription drugs which have the potential to compromise safety. Employees must advise Management of the use, type and possible side effects of any such drug.
- 8.3** If any employee believes another person may be unsafe or unable to properly perform their duties because of alcohol or other drug use, Management must be informed immediately.
- 8.4** Any proven allegations may result in termination of employment.
- 8.5** Any employee under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will not be permitted to work.
- 8.6** If an employee appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, Management will take the following action:
- (i)** conduct a test for alcohol or other drugs (see below).
 - (ii)** make arrangements for the employee’s safe transport home (transport to be at the employees’ expense);
 - (iii)** suspend the employee for the remainder of the shift (on personal leave).
 - (iv)** conduct an investigation and follow disciplinary process in accordance with the NOSS Counselling and Discipline Policy.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

- 8.7** NOSS may require an employee to be tested for alcohol or other drugs if the employee appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, or at any other time requested by Management.
- 8.8** Testing will be undertaken at the Launceston Police Station (blood, breath or urine testing). The employee may choose to have another person present during testing provided that waiting for such a person does not hold up the testing procedure.
- 8.9** An employee must consent to testing unless the employee admits that they are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. If an employee refuses testing, and does not admit that they are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, NOSS will act on the evidence of witnesses.
- 8.10** Any tampering with test equipment or samples given for the purpose of testing will result in dismissal.

Authorised Work Functions

- 8.11** The consumption of alcohol may be permitted at functions authorised by Management. Authorised functions (both on and off the premises) are considered to be part of the work environment, and therefore, staff must adhere to all NOSS policies during work functions. This extends to NOSS’ duty of care obligations in relation to safe levels of alcohol consumption by employees. Therefore at any authorised work function:
- (i)** staff must at all times drink responsibly
 - (ii)** non alcoholic alternatives and adequate food must be available
 - (iii)** staff who intend to drive must ensure they do not exceed the legal blood alcohol limit for driving (.05)
 - (iv)** staff must ensure that they arrange safe transport
 - (v)** the authorised function will end at a time designated by Management prior to the function and those employees who choose to continue to consume alcohol following the function shall do so at their own risk.

- 8.12** This does not limit in any way the responsibility of the employee to ensure that they only consume safe amounts of alcohol.

9. Manual Handling

- 9.1** No employee will be required to lift a load heavier than they can safely do so. It is the responsibility of each employee to inform their supervisor if they consider they are required to lift a load which is too heavy.
- 9.2** Individual risk assessments will be carried out in relation to the manual handling needs of each client upon commencement (see clause 2.4 above).
- 9.3** Any support workers working with clients requiring specific manual handling skills will undergo appropriate training.
- 9.4** All employees will undergo an annual manual handling refresher.

10. Plant, Machinery and Vehicles

- 10.1** All areas are to be kept clear of slipping and tripping hazards, eg, waste materials or electric leads.
- 10.2** All machinery will be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and Australian Standards. The Workcrew Manager will arrange for all vehicles and equipment to be regularly serviced to ensure their safe operating condition.
- 10.3** The Bluegum Manager will ensure that Safe Operating Procedures are available for each item of machinery. All employees will follow the Safe Operating Procedures.
- 10.4** Any machinery or equipment found to be defective, unsafe, or in need of repair must be reported to a supervisor immediately, who will arrange for it to be tagged and placed in the designated repair bay to prevent its use.
- 10.5** A Maintenance Log will be maintained at the Bluegum workshop for all pieces of machinery and vehicles, including the date, details, repairer and cost of each service and repair. The Bluegum Manager will regularly analyse the Maintenance Log and make recommendations for replacement or repair of machinery to ensure optimum performance and safety.
- 10.6** Workcrew members will not perform maintenance on machinery unless supervised by staff member.
- 10.7** Employees will not wear loose clothing around machinery.

11. Hazardous Substances

- 11.1** A register will be kept at the Bluegum workshop and NOSS Office of all hazardous substances that are used and stored on the premises.
- 11.2** All hazardous substances will be kept in a locked storage cabinet.
- 11.3** Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) will be available for every hazardous substance used on the premises and attached to the substance storage container.
- 11.4** Employees must follow manufacturer's instructions on the product and refer to MSDS before using a hazardous substance.

12. Electrical Safety

- 12.1** All electrical equipment will be inspected, tested and tagged in accordance with Australian Code of Practice.
- 12.2** Any electrical fault or damage to cables or equipment (including contamination by water) must be tagged and reported immediately to a supervisor to be sent for testing and repair.
- 12.3** Electrical cables must not be left where they can be damaged or be subjected to hazards such as water.

13. Contractors

- 13.1** All contractors working on a NOSS worksite are required to do so in accordance with NOSS policies and in a manner which does not adversely affect their own health and safety or that of others. They must immediately report any matter which may affect their own or other persons' health and safety to the appropriate contact person.
- 13.2** All Managers who engage a contractor to work on site will ensure that they undergo an induction which covers:
- (i) all risks they may encounter at NOSS, including the unexpected behaviour of the client group
 - (ii) NOSS Work, Health and Safety Policy
 - (iii) the name of a contact person to deal with any health and safety issues which may arise
 - (iv) Contractors will sign to confirm their understanding.
- 13.3** All contractors will report to the contact person prior to commencing work, and at the completion of the works, or when leaving the site.

14. Health and Safety Representative

NOSS will facilitate the election of a Health and Safety Representative as follows:

- 14.1** Call for nominations for the position of Health and Safety Representative, giving at least two weeks notice, by placing a notice on the notice boards at each workplace.
- 14.2** If there is more than one nominee:
- nominate a closing date for ballot papers to be returned and a returning officer
 - distribute ballot papers to all employees
 - the returning officer will count all ballots and inform the nominee and all other employees of their election in writing
- 14.3** NOSS will arrange appropriate training for the Health and Safety Representative.

15. Related Policies

- Client Support Policy
- Pandemic Policy
- Rehabilitation Policy
- Reporting Policy
- Risk Management Policy

REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy is in accordance with the provisions of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1998 and Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Amendment Act 2009.

NOSS recognises that:

1. Rehabilitation aims to help an injured person recover with the least possible delay, to minimise the effect on their usual life style and to enable a return to normal working duties
2. Rehabilitation following injury or illness benefits all parties.
3. The rehabilitation of employees following injury or illness is a shared responsibility.

PROCEDURES

1. NOSS will operate in accordance with the Injury Management Program developed by the relevant workers compensation insurer.
2. NOSS will appoint a Return to Work (RTW) Coordinator and assign any employee who sustains a significant injury to the appointed Return to Work Coordinator as soon as practicable.
3. Within 14 days of being informed by a worker of an injury, NOSS will give the employee notice in writing advising them of their right to claim workers compensation.
4. NOSS will notify the insurer within three working days of being informed of any injury which causes partial or total incapacity for work.
5. Upon receipt of a claim for workers compensation, NOSS will notify the insurer within three working days and lodge the claim with the insurer within five days of receipt.
6. NOSS will appoint a Treating Medical Practitioner who will work with NOSS and the insurer to facilitate the employee's treatment, recovery and return to work.
7. The RTW Coordinator will attend all medical appointments with the Treating Medical Practitioner.
8. The RTW Coordinator will maintain regular contact with employees who are absent from work due to injury or illness and keep the employee informed of decisions regarding their injury management and support them to achieve a rapid return to work.
9. NOSS will ensure that the worker is notified in writing within 28 days of the status of the claim
10. When an employee is likely to be incapacitated for more than 5 working days (but less than 28 days) NOSS will formulate a Return to Work Plan. The Plan must be developed within five working days of the employee becoming totally or partially incapacitated for work.
11. Where the injured worker is likely to be incapacitated for more than 5 working days, a Rehabilitation Coordinator may be appointed by the insurer.
12. Where the injured worker is likely to be incapacitated for more than 28 days an Injury Management Plan must be developed within five working days of the employee becoming totally or partially incapacitated for work.
13. Any Return to Work Plan or Injury Management Plan will be in writing and include the objective of the plan, the course of action, the names of the people involved and the review date. Such plans will be made in consultation with the employee, the treating medical practitioner, the RTW Coordinator, the rehabilitation provider and the insurer.
14. An injured employee must take all reasonable steps to comply with any requirements of the approved Return to Work or Injury Management Plan.
15. Before returning to work, the employee must provide a clearance from the Treating Medical Practitioner specifying that they are fit to return to their pre-injury duties.

REPORTING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the NOSS Occupational Health and Safety Policy it is vitally important that all employees promptly report any incidents (including accidents or near misses) and potential or existing hazards to NOSS Management. It is also important that any suggestions, complaints or records of conversation are recorded promptly to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

A clear reporting process and early resolution of any issues are essential components of an effective organisation and promote confidence and safety for all stakeholders.

PROCEDURES

1. Reporting

1. All incidents and accidents must be recorded on an Incident Report and submitted to NOSS Management within 24 hours. All serious incidents must be reported to NOSS Management immediately.

Incidents include:

- accidents (including vehicle accidents)
- seizures, falls and other medical issues
- challenging behaviours
- injury to any person
- uncharacteristic client behaviour
- altercation between clients or crew members
- missing client
- discrimination or harassment
- issues with residential service
- issues in the community

2. All hazards (and near misses) must be recorded on a Hazard Report Form and submitted to NOSS Management.

Hazards include:

- unsafe equipment
- unsafe environment
- unsafe work practices

3. All complaints about the Service must be recorded on a Complaint Form and reported to the General Manager immediately in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy. Complaints may be reported by clients, crew members, other Services, members of the public or staff and could include:

- client support issues
- conduct of NOSS employees
- standard of Bluegum work

4. Any allegations of abuse must be reported to the General Manager immediately and recorded on an Abuse Report Form in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy. The General Manager will report any allegations of Abuse to the funding body using the appropriate form in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy. Abuse may include:

- physical abuse
- psychological abuse
- financial abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse

The NOSS Complaints Policy contains more detailed explanations.

5. Any suggestions for the improvement of the Service are encouraged and should be recorded on a Suggestion Form and submitted to NOSS Management or placed in the suggestion boxes at the NOSS office and Bluegum workshop. Suggestions may include:

- policy improvements
- ideas for client activities
- changes to forms or procedures.

Any suggestions regarding possible safety issues should be submitted on a Hazard Report.

6. All Incidents, Hazards and Complaint Forms will be submitted to NOSS Management within 24 hours (by fax if necessary).
7. In accordance with the NOSS Occupational Health and Safety policy, in the event of serious injury or fatality:
 - the NOSS employee will notify firstly medical services (ie Ambulance, doctor) and secondly NOSS Management.
 - the surrounding area must be isolated and remain untouched, except where it is necessary to apply first aid or to prevent further injury to person or damage to property, until the incident has been investigated by the Workplace Standards Authority and the Police.
 - NOSS Management will notify the next of kin, Board of Governance, the Workplace Standards Authority and the relevant funding body.
8. A Workers Compensation Claim Form should be completed and submitted to Management for any accident or incident where an employee is injured. Failure to report accidents may prejudice Workers Compensation.

2. Processing of Complaints

1. Upon receipt of any Complaint, the General Manager will:
 - record any immediate action taken, further action required and expected completion time
 - ensure that the Complaint is entered on to the Quality Assurance Database (QAD)
2. The General Manager will investigate and resolve any Complaints within the nominated completion time in accordance with the NOSS Complaints Policy.

3. Processing of Incidents, Hazards and Suggestions

1. Upon receipt of any Incident, the Community Access Manager or Workcrew Manager will:
 - ensure that the Incident is entered on QAD
 - record any immediate action taken and further action required
 - investigate and record what factors caused the incident and actions to prevent reoccurrence
 - record Type of Incident
 - record Severity Code in accordance with the following matrix

Likelihood	Consequence		
	Critical	Significant	Minor
High [probably will occur]	Extreme (1)	Serious (2)	Medium (3)
Medium [possibly will occur]	Serious (2)	Medium (3)	Low (4)
Low [unlikely to occur]	Medium (3)	Low (4)	Negligible (5)

2. Incident Reports will be investigated and resolved within the nominated completion time.

3. Review meetings will be held monthly between:
 - General Manager and Community Access Manager
 - General Manager and Workcrew Manager

to review all active Incidents, Hazards or Suggestions.

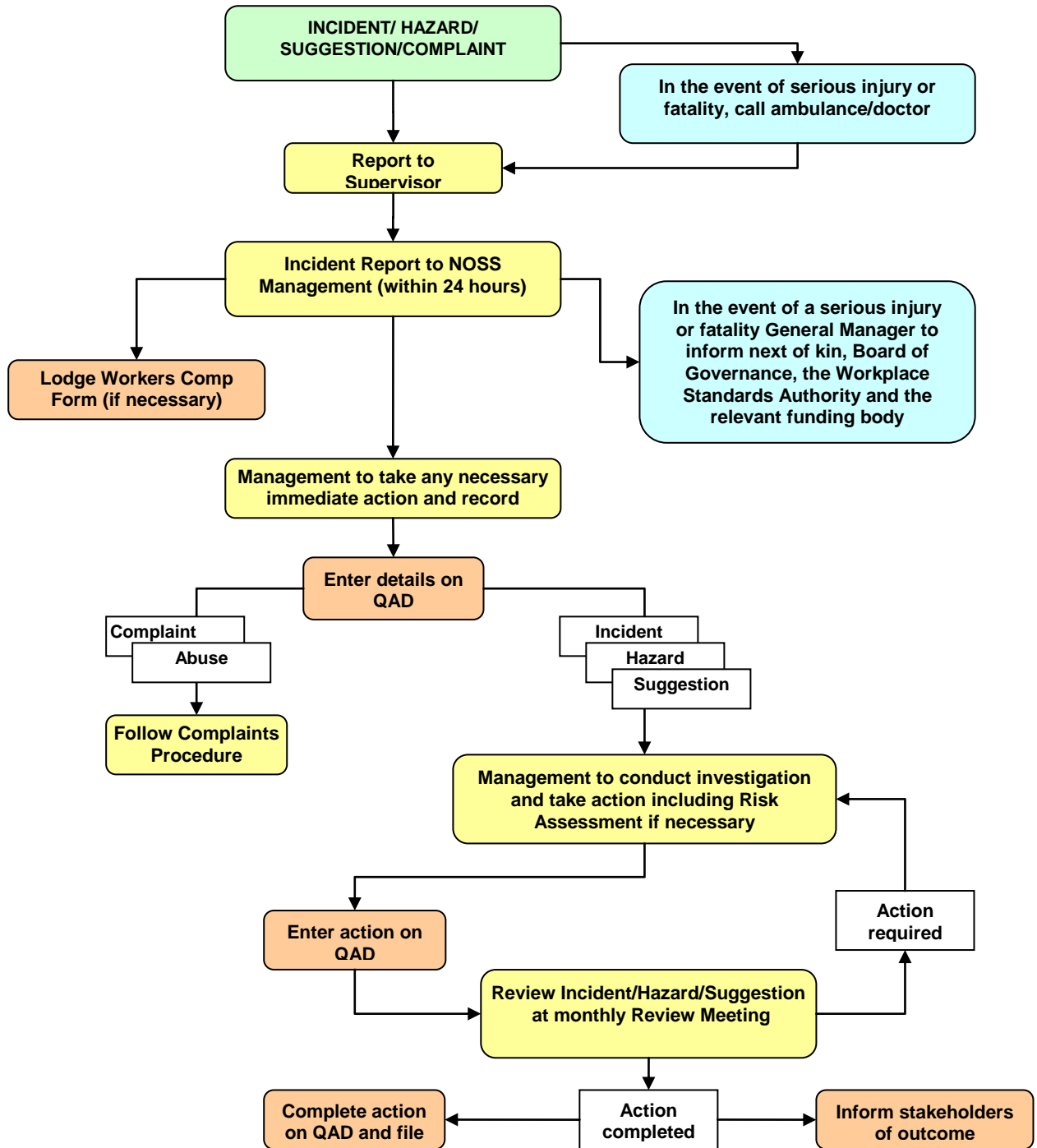
The Occupational Health and Safety Representative will review all employee and safety related Incident and Hazard Reports.

4. When action has been recorded, the Report will be returned to the Administrative Officer to record action taken on QAD and file.

4. Risk Assessment

1. In the event of any serious incident, a Risk Assessment will be carried out by the General Manager to identify the underlying causes of the accident or incident and recorded on a Risk Assessment Form.
2. Recommendations for appropriate action to prevent reoccurrence will be made and appropriate action taken.
3. Relevant stakeholders will be informed of the outcome of any Risk Assessment.

5. Reporting Flow Chart



TRANSPORT POLICY

NOSS recognises that public transport is not an option for many of its clients. However, public transport will be used whenever possible and/or practical.

1. All Vehicles

- 1.1 All NOSS employees will be appropriately licensed
- 1.2 Employees will give all due care and attention when transporting clients to avoid accidents and to ensure that no damage is caused.
- 1.3 Employees will be personally liable for any infringements which may be incurred for any accidents/incidents or breaches of traffic laws, including any speeding or parking fines.
- 1.4 To minimise mileage expenses, travel will be confined to the Launceston metropolitan area. For longer trips, permission must be obtained from NOSS Management.
- 1.5 The vehicle log book will be completed with date, destination, odometer reading and total kilometres.
- 1.6 Should a vehicle be damaged during the course of work, an Incident Report Form will be completed and handed to NOSS Management within 24 hours.
- 1.7 Smoking is prohibited in any vehicles whilst a client is in that vehicle.
- 1.8 Staff will not transport any persons other than staff and clients of NOSS during working hours without prior permission from management. This includes support workers' family and friends.

2. NOSS Vehicles

- 2.1 There will be no unauthorised use of NOSS vehicles
- 2.2 NOSS vehicles will be maintained in a clean and tidy state.
- 2.3 Smoking is prohibited at all times in NOSS vehicles.

3. Residential Vehicles

- 3.1 In some cases, community access workers will have access to a residential vehicle, which is to be used in preference to a private car.
- 3.2 Residential vehicles must be used solely for the purpose of clients' transport
- 3.3 Support workers and clients are responsible for interior and exterior cleaning of a vehicle soiled during NOSS use.
- 3.4 Smoking is prohibited at all times in residential vehicles.
- 3.5 In the case of an accident in a client owned vehicle, any excess will be paid by the client unless the support worker is at fault.

4. Private Vehicles

- 4.1 Vehicles used to transport clients must be roadworthy and registered.
- 4.2 Employees will provide a road safety check certificate upon commencement and annually thereafter.
- 4.3 It is recommended that vehicles are fully insured for business purposes.
- 4.4 Should a vehicle be damaged during the course of work, NOSS will accept no responsibility for damage incurred.

- 4.5** Should a vehicle be damaged by a client, an Incident Report form must be completed and handed to NOSS Management within 24 hours. The incident will be investigated and, if appropriate, NOSS will reimburse you for the excess and recover that amount from the client.
- 4.6** Smoking is prohibited at all times in private vehicles whilst a client is in the car.

5. Mileage Rates

- 5.1** Employees are reimbursed for use of their vehicle at a rate per kilometre specified in the appropriate award. This rate covers all vehicle costs, including fuel, registration, maintenance and insurance.
- 5.2** Mileage will be paid from the initial client pickup point unless the client pickup point is greater than 20km from both the employees home, and the NOSS Office in which case Clause 5.3 will take effect.
- 5.3** Mileage will be paid on the lesser of:
- 5.4** The number of kms from the NOSS Office to the client pick up point minus 20km; or
- 5.5** The number of kms from the employees home to the client pick up point minus 20km.
- 5.6** Clients travelling in a vehicle owned by NOSS or an employee of NOSS will be charged at a rate approved by the Board of Governance.
- 5.7** Clients travelling in a residential vehicle, other than their own, will reimburse the owner at the same rate as if they were travelling in a private vehicle.

Contact Details

General Manager: Neville Willis
Email: nwillis@nossinc.org.au

Office Manager: Helen Payne
Email: hpayne@nossinc.org.au

Admin Officers: Rostering - Nicole Young
Training - Kimbilli Johnson
Activities - Mitch Stoddard

Admin Assistant: Julie Bonar

Phone: 6334 4911
Fax: 6334 4613
Email: admin@nossinc.org.au

Community Access

Community Access Manager: Maria Campbell

Phone: 6334 4911
Mobile: 0408 139 171
Email: mcampbell@nossinc.org.au

Bluegum

Workcrew Manager: Mike McOwan

Phone: 6326 5305
Mobile: 0417 039 313
Fax: 6331 2992
Email: bluegum@nossinc.org.au

Website: www.nossinc.org.au