

## 1. Introduction

Wayss is committed to the rights of clients who use Wayss services. This policy outlines how Wayss will support clients to exercise their rights and to provide feedback or complain if they feel their rights have not been respected.

## 2. Overview

Wayss recognises that many of its clients have complex needs and have experienced trauma, and Wayss has a responsibility to deliver services that are responsive to the individual needs of each client and accompanying children. Wayss will work with clients to identify the services that can be accessed, within funding parameters, so that clients can be confident in exercising their rights and meeting their responsibilities.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff (including temporary or casual staff), volunteers, and students who may be on placement at Wayss, and clients of Wayss.

## 4. Policy Principles

### 4.1. Client Rights

People who access our services have the right to:

- be shown respect for their individual human worth and dignity without discrimination
- be treated with courtesy
- be assessed for access to services without discrimination
- be informed and consulted about available services and other relevant matters
- make choices and participate in decisions made about the service they receive and the services they use
- a culturally safe and inclusive service where beliefs are accepted and there is access to communication aids such as interpreters and Auslan translators
- respect in relation to their sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status and relationships
- pursue any complaint about service provision without retribution
- involve an advocate of their choice
- receive quality services by professional staff
- request privacy and confidentiality, and expect information collected about them is relevant and stored securely
- be safe, feel safe and have their voices heard including the voices of accompanying children
- provide feedback with anonymity at any time about our services
- inform service design, delivery, and evaluation

### 4.2. Wayss Rights

Wayss has the right to:

- provide services in an environment free from violence and abuse
- make recommendations about service provision based on knowledge and experience in the housing support (homelessness), youth services and family violence sectors

## Client Rights and Responsibilities Policy

- exercise its legal rights to ensure ongoing operation of the organisation and the safety of clients and employees
- refuse to condone, collude, or engage in activities it believes are illegal or unethical or that may compromise safety of employees or clients
- refuse to provide a service at its discretion if providing that service is not suitable or appropriate at the time

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1. Client Responsibilities

People who access our services are expected to:

- treat staff and clients with respect, human worth and dignity
- respect the diversity of other clients accessing Wayss
- take responsibility for the choices they make
- to fulfil any agreements and legal obligations

Where a client is unable to meet their responsibilities, the ability of Wayss to provide a service to them may be affected.

### 5.2. Wayss Responsibilities

In providing services, Wayss has a responsibility to:

- provide a safe work environment for employees and enable them to provide clients with safe services informed by their circumstances
- enhance and respect the independence and dignity of the client
- ensure that client access to a service is based on need and the capacity of the service to meet that need
- inform clients about the various programs and services that are offered.
- inform clients of their rights and responsibilities in relation to Wayss services
- respect each client's sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status and relationships
- involve the client in shared decision making about the services they receive
- Discuss any changes to the provision of services with a client prior to making a change
- Ensure staff are culturally competent and responsive to the diverse social, cultural, and physical experiences and needs of clients
- inform the client about the service to be delivered, any fees charged and other Wayss programs and services offered
- inform the client of the standards to expect in relation to services they may receive
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of the client, whilst complying with any mandatory information sharing requirements
- allow the client access to information held by Wayss whilst respecting legal requirements, privacy and safety
- refer clients to more appropriate services when necessary
- respect a client's refusal of a service and ensure any future attempt by the client to access a Wayss service is not prejudiced because of that refusal
- provide clients with opportunities to provide feedback at any time, in ways that are accessible for them, and to acknowledge that feedback in a timely manner
- deal with client complaints fairly, promptly and without retribution and to be transparent about Wayss processes for managing client complaints

## Client Rights and Responsibilities Policy

- mediate and attempt to negotiate a solution if conflict arises between the client, Ways or others who might be impacted
- accept the client's choice and involvement of an advocate to represent his or her interests
- provide information to clients about their rights and responsibilities
- educate employees about these rights and responsibilities and ensure employees assist clients to understand these rights and responsibilities
- provide this policy in different formats or languages if needed
- ensure front line service staff are trained in trauma informed practice to better support client discussions

## 6. Review

Ways will review this policy every two years or sooner if there are legislative changes or Ways receives feedback or complaints about service delivery that may impact on this policy.

## 7. Related Resources

[To be added]

## 8. Change History

Date	Version	Summary of changes	Authoriser
3/11/20	2.0	New format, updated language.	CEO