

Client Participation Policy

KEY POLICY AREA: CLIENTS SERVICES

POLICY: CLIENT PARTICIPATION

APPROVED DATE: SEPTEMBER 2005

MODIFIED DATE: 12 MARCH 2019

STANDARDS, PROTOCOLS AND POLICY LINKAGE

DHHS STANDARDS

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED HOUSING AGENCIES

ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

RESEARCH POLICY

SERVICE SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICY

CLIENT PARTICIPATION PROCEDURE

POLICY

Wayss is committed to providing quality services to clients and recognises that to achieve this, clients need to participate in how the organisation delivers services. To enable clients to participate in how services are delivered, Wayss will utilise a number of mechanisms. Client participation is a developmental process. The degrees of participation that Wayss undertakes with clients will evolve over time.

Wayss will use client feedback to change and improve services as part of its organisational planning and service evaluation processes.

CLIENT RIGHTS

Clients have the right to give feedback and make decisions about the services they receive from Wayss. Clients will have an opportunity to provide feedback in a variety of ways and be assured of anonymity. Clients will be informed when giving feedback how their comments may be used within the organisation. Clients can choose not to provide feedback.

RESPONSIBILITY

Enabling clients to participate in organisational improvement is the responsibility of all Wayss employees. Direct service staff will be asked to collect feedback from clients on an individual basis. Staff will also be asked to identify clients to participate in specific focus groups and interviews as part of Wayss accreditation process.

The Client Rights Group has an active role in ensuring client participation occurs and an ongoing monitoring role for all client feedback received. Feedback may be received via various methods such as complaints, feedback forms and participation forums. The Client Rights Group will ensure that relevant issues are brought to the attention of the Quality Assurance Manager and will make recommendations for actions for service or systems improvement.

The General Manager of People, Places and Quality is responsible for incorporating client feedback into organisational planning and service evaluation.

SCOPE

As with all Wayss policies, this policy uses the word client to mean any person receiving services from Wayss.

This includes:

- Rooming House Tenants
- Case managed clients

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- Clients receiving one off assistance
- Clients seeking information and referral only
- Clients who have brief contact with Wayss.

PARTICIPATION

Wayss will facilitate a client's right to participate in the organisation's decision making. The client will be informed of how they can contribute to organisational improvement. All staff will respect the client's decision not to participate. Levels of participation will vary amongst Wayss services. It is expected that some of Wayss services will have clients give feedback while in the service and when they exit. Other services will undertake annual surveys or consult clients on specific issues.

Wayss will seek feedback from lesbian, gay, bi, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) clients. Questions specific to the clients changing needs, access, experiences whilst in the service and how organisational policies and procedures and their impact on LGBTI clients. Wayss will collect information from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds clients, and clients with disabilities on their specific experiences.

Wayss will hold regular client participation forums and actively encourage participation from LGBTI, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and culturally and linguistically diverse people. Wayss will ensure access to client forums for clients with disabilities. Wayss may also seek client involvement on working parties or as part of a consultation on a specific issue. Clients will be recompensed for their time.

ACCREDITATION REVIEW CLIENT INTERVIEWS

As part of the Wayss Accreditation review process clients may be asked to participate in an interview with an external assessor. If a client agrees to participate in an interview they will be asked about their experiences with Wayss in relation to the service they receive from the organisation only. Written consent will be obtained prior to the interview. Clients will be recompensed for their time.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At any given time a past client of Wayss may be a member of the Board. This person would be required to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of a Director as defined by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC), and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). They will be afforded the same support and information given to any volunteer Board member.

REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The rights of clients will be reflected in the development and review of all Wayss policies and procedures. Client feedback gained from a variety of mechanisms may be used to inform policy and procedure changes.

PLANNING

When Wayss undertakes any planning and evaluation processes the views of clients will be sought. Feedback from clients will be incorporated into organisational planning and used for service improvement.

FEEDBACK

It is important that Wayss has an ongoing measure of how well it is meeting the needs of the clients to whom it provides service. To be able to ascertain this Wayss will regularly seek feedback on service delivery. All clients will be provided with the opportunity to give feedback at any point whilst they are receiving service or on exit from the service via the Client Feedback form.

BARRIERS

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Wayss recognises that barriers exist which can limit the involvement of clients in the organisation. Wayss will endeavour to address these barriers when seeking client participation.

STAFF SUPPORT

Wayss acknowledges client participation as part of an organisational culture. Management supports participation by encouraging staff to develop the skills to seek client's views. Staff will be assured that client feedback will be used to strengthen the service and develop practices that benefit clients.

MONITORING

The Client Rights Group will monitor the level of client participation and how the information is used in the organisation. To monitor client participation the following will be taken into consideration:

- The amount of participation.
- The quality of information being provided from clients.
- What information is being used.
- The experiences of clients giving feedback.
- Staff experiences of obtaining feedback from clients.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of the formal review process in accordance with the **Document Development and Review Procedures** and based on experiences of staff and clients who have used participation tools.