

Mildura Disability Support Services| **Governance and Operation Management Policy**

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Governance and Operation Management Policy is to provide clear guidance to the governing body and key personnel about their responsibilities, duties, and the need for continuous improvement in management practices. The policy supports the inclusion of people with disabilities in the governance of the organisation and ensures that strategic business planning meets legislative, financial, regulatory, and contractual requirements while focusing on the needs of the participants and workers. Its aim is to ensure Mildura Disability Support Services maintains a high level of governance in compliance with the Governance and Operational Management NDIS Practice Standard.

1.2. Scope

This Policy is applicable to all Workers affiliated with Mildura Disability Support. It is the responsibility of every individual, regardless of their employment status, to fully comprehend and comply with the commitments outlined in this policy. All Workers must acknowledge that they have read, understood and will comply with the contents of this Policy.

1.3. NDIS Indicators (Objectives)

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Outcome: Each participant's support is overseen by robust governance and operational management systems relevant (proportionate) to the size, and scale of the provider and the scope and complexity of supports delivered. To achieve this outcome, the following indicators should be demonstrated:

- a) Opportunities are provided by the governing body for people with disability to contribute to the governance of the organisation and have input into the development of organisational policy and processes relevant to the provision of supports and the protection of participant rights.
- b) A defined structure is implemented by the governing body to meet a governing body's financial, legislative, regulatory and contractual responsibilities, and to monitor and respond to quality and safeguarding matters associated with delivering supports to participants.
- c) The skills and knowledge required for the governing body to govern effectively are identified, and relevant training is undertaken by members of the governing body to address any gaps.
- d) The governing body ensures that strategic and business planning considers legislative requirements, organisational risks, other requirements related to operating under the NDIS (for example Agency requirements and guidance), participants' and workers' needs and the wider organisational environment.

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- e) The performance of management, including responses to individual issues, is monitored by the governing body to drive continuous improvement in management practices.
 - f) The provider is managed by a suitably qualified and/or experienced persons with clearly defined responsibility, authority and accountability for the provision of supports.
 - g) There is a documented system of delegated responsibility and authority to another suitable person in the absence of a usual position holder in place.
 - h) Perceived and actual conflicts of interest are proactively managed and documented, including through development and maintenance of organisational policies.
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2. Policy Statement

Mildura Disability Support Services is committed to robust governance in line with the NDIS Practice Standards. We engage people with disabilities in governance, maintain a defined structure to meet obligations, and address skills gaps through training. Our strategic planning encompasses legislative requirements, risks, NDIS guidelines, and stakeholders' needs. A system is in place for role delegation during absences, and we consistently monitor management performance. Actual and perceived conflicts of interest are managed and documented, underscoring our commitment to the highest standards of governance.

2.1. Relevant legislation

All relevant legislation to this Policy is outlined in the Legislation Register.

2.2. Related documents

- a) Business Plan
 - b) Delegation of Authority
 - c) Management Meeting (Agenda and Minutes)
 - d) Governing Personnel Skills and Performance Review
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3. Responsibilities and Roles

- a) Narelle Margaret Fraser is responsible for the development and review of this policy. It is expected that Narelle Margaret Fraser ensures this Policy remains compliant with all applicable laws, regulations and standards.

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- b) Key Management Personnel play a vital role in ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy throughout Mildura Disability Support. It is the responsibility of all Key Management Personnel to not only assist Workers in understanding and complying with this policy but also to comply with it themselves. By leading by example, they demonstrate the importance of adherence to the policy and foster a culture of compliance within the organisation.
 - c) Workers are responsible for understanding the contents of this policy and complying with all procedures applicable to them.
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4. Definitions

Mildura Disability Support Services means AUS DISABILITY SUPPORT PTY LTD ABN 61 684 083 574.

Key Management Personnel means Narelle Margaret Fraser and other key management personnel involved in Mildura Disability Support Services from time to time.

Director means Narelle Margaret Fraser.

Worker means a permanent, fixed term or casual member of staff, a contractor or volunteer employed or otherwise engaged by Mildura Disability Support Services and includes the Director.

Governing Body means the Board of AUS DISABILITY SUPPORT PTY LTD.

5. Procedures

5.1. Governance Structure and Business Planning

- a) The governing body will establish and adhere to a clear, documented structure outlining roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships. This includes defined roles for the Director, board members, and other key positions.
- b) The governance structure and individual roles within it will be periodically reviewed and refined to ensure they meet the changing needs of the organisation and the participants we support.
- c) Regular meetings will be held, with schedules published in advance. Agendas will be circulated prior to meetings to enable all members to prepare and contribute effectively.
- d) The meetings will include reviewing financial performance, strategic planning, ensuring compliance with legislation and regulatory requirements, and addressing quality and safeguarding matters. Comprehensive minutes of these meetings will be recorded, approved, and archived for transparency and future reference.
- e) These meetings will be structured and facilitated in a way that encourages open discussion, innovative thinking, and constructive challenge.

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- f) Each year, prior to the start of the financial year ending on 30 June, the governing body will prepare a budget for the upcoming period. All efforts will be made to adhere to the approved budget.
- g) The financial performance of Mildura Disability Support Services will be reviewed in these meetings, keeping the budgetary considerations in mind.
- h) The governing body will also ensure that a Strategic Business Plan is prepared every five years. The first plan will commence on 1 July 2024, and each subsequent plan will cover a period ending on 30 June.
- i) The Strategic Business Plan will outline the organisation's purpose, vision, values, objectives, and performance indicators, taking into consideration legislative requirements, organisational risks, NDIS requirements, participants' and workers' needs, and the broader organisational environment.
- j) Any developed strategic plans will be translated into operational plans with clear objectives, measures, and timeframes. This will include identifying the resources required to implement the plans and assigning responsibilities for key actions.
- k) The governing body will oversee the implementation of the strategic and operational plans, monitoring progress against objectives and addressing any issues or obstacles that may arise.
- l) To ensure the governing body remains informed about and responsive to quality and safeguarding matters, it will receive regular reports and updates from relevant personnel, such as managers or other assigned roles.
- m) The governing body will maintain a robust system of internal control and self-evaluation to manage risks and ensure compliance. This includes, but is not limited to, internal audits and policy reviews.
- n) A continuous dialogue will be maintained with stakeholders, including participants, Workers, funders, and regulatory bodies. This open communication aims to ensure the governing body is aware of and responsive to the needs, concerns, and suggestions of all parties involved in and affected by the organisation's work.

5.2. Skills Development

- a) To ensure the effectiveness of our governing body, an annual skills review will be conducted to identify existing skills, capabilities, and areas for improvement. The review will cover key areas of governance such as strategic planning, financial management, risk management, and knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements.
- b) Individual members will receive feedback on their personal skills and areas for improvement.

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- c) A tailored training and development plan will be created for the governing body. This could include internal training sessions, external workshops, seminars, or online courses.
- d) We will ensure that training and development opportunities are accessible, relevant, and of high quality. This could involve sourcing training from recognised institutions or experienced professionals.
- e) The governing body members will be required to undertake the identified training programs to enhance their skills and knowledge. The completion of these programs will be monitored and recorded.

5.3. Performance Monitoring

- a) The governing body will establish a clear set of performance indicators for management that align with our strategic goals and operational objectives. These indicators will be used to measure and monitor management performance on an ongoing basis.
- b) Any performance issues will be addressed promptly and effectively, in accordance with our commitment to continuous improvement. This may involve additional training, mentoring, or other support as appropriate.
- c) Any improvements made will be recorded within the Continuous Improvement Register.
- d) Management and Workers will be encouraged and supported to enhance their skills and capabilities in order to improve their performance.

5.4. Management Structure Procedure

- a) Clear job descriptions will be developed for all roles including managerial positions, outlining responsibilities, authority levels, and accountability. These descriptions will be reviewed regularly and updated as needed to ensure they remain relevant and accurate.
- b) All Workers will be suitably qualified and/or experienced for their roles. The hiring process will include checks of qualifications, references, and relevant experience. Ongoing professional development will also be supported to enhance operational competence.
- c) The lines of reporting and accountability will be clearly defined and communicated to all Workers. Regular performance reviews will be conducted to hold personnel accountable for their responsibilities.
- d) Delegation of authority will be managed carefully to ensure tasks are assigned to the most suitable individuals. Managers will be trained in effective delegation techniques and the principles of accountability.

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- e) A procedure for managing absences of key position holders will be developed and implemented. This will include the identification of suitable individuals who can take on responsibilities during such absences, ensuring continuity of service provision and management.
- f) Managers will be encouraged to participate in decision-making processes and contribute to the development of organisational strategies, promoting a sense of ownership and engagement in Mildura Disability Support's success.

5.5. Director' Duties

- a) Director will comply with their duties under the Corporations Act 2001 and Company rules, including acting with care, diligence, and in good faith.
- b) Director will avoid and manage conflicts of interest, not misuse their position or company information, and ensure the company does not trade whilst insolvent.
- c) Director will take steps to comply with financial record keeping and reporting obligations, disclose personal interests related to the company, and lodge requisite information with ASIC.

5.6. Director' Skills

- a) Director will maintain an up-to-date understanding of the company's activities, and actively participate in governance meetings.
- b) They will confidently perform their roles, seek professional advice when needed, and actively engage with managers and Workers.

5.7. Key Personnel Duties

- a) Key Personnel will ensure the organisation has appropriate governance and management systems in place.
- b) They will handle tasks ranging from:
 - 1) Forward planning;
 - 2) Risk management;
 - 3) HR management;
 - 4) Stakeholder communication;
 - 5) Financial management;
 - 6) Operational oversight;

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- 7) Performance management;
 - 8) Business planning; and
 - 9) Regulatory compliance.
- c) Key Personnel will also:
 - 1) Conduct regular internal reviews to ensure compliance;
 - 2) Assist in external audits; and
 - 3) Report compliance violations to the relevant agencies as required.

5.8. Key Personnel's Skills

- a) Key Personnel will cultivate a broad array of skills, including
 - 1) Leadership;
 - 2) Financial knowledge;
 - 3) IT competency;
 - 4) Business acumen;
 - 5) Knowledge of disability issues; and
 - 6) Familiarity with applicable legislation and NDIS standards.
- b) They will stay up to date on all:
 - 1) Policies;
 - 2) Registration conditions;
 - 3) Practice standards; and
 - 4) Worker screening requirements.

5.9. Delegation of Responsibility Procedure

- a) The governing body will establish a comprehensive delegation of authority framework, defining which powers and responsibilities can be delegated, to whom, and under what circumstances. The framework will align with the overall organisational structure and roles of Mildura Disability Support.

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- b) The delegation of authority will be clearly documented, indicating the delegator, the delegatee, the extent of the authority, and the time period for which the delegation applies. This documentation will be accessible to all relevant Workers.
- c) The governing body will ensure that anyone to whom authority is delegated is suitably qualified and experienced to take on the delegated responsibility. This may involve providing additional training or support to the delegate.
- d) There will be a clear mechanism for the governing body or other relevant person to monitor the use of delegated authority and to intervene if necessary. This may involve regular reporting, performance reviews, or other forms of oversight.
- e) All Workers will be informed about the delegation of authority procedure, ensuring they understand how it applies to them and what they need to do if they are given delegated authority.
- f) The governing body will ensure that the delegation of authority is used appropriately and effectively to support the effective governance and management of Mildura Disability Support.

5.10. Participant Involvement

- a) Mildura Disability Support Services will periodically invite participants to attend governing body meetings or special participatory forums designed to enable them to voice their opinions and provide valuable insight into the policy-making process.
- b) To ensure the meaningful participation of people with disabilities, we will make reasonable adjustments, such as providing assistive technologies, sign language interpreters, or easy-read versions of documents, based on individual needs.
- c) Special focus groups will be organised with participants on various topics to garner their views and suggestions. These discussions will be facilitated in a manner that ensures the comfort and ease of participants, with emphasis on creating a safe and respectful environment where everyone's voice is heard.
- d) We will implement an ongoing system of feedback collection from participants, using a variety of channels. This includes surveys and feedback forms, which will be made available both digital and in paper format to accommodate different needs.
- e) All participant feedback and suggestions will be seriously considered by the governing body and will form an integral part of decision-making processes. Any changes to policies or procedures resulting from participant input will be communicated back to them, closing the feedback loop and ensuring transparency.
- f) We will monitor and review the effectiveness of these participant involvement procedures regularly to ensure that they are facilitating meaningful contributions from the people we

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support. Improvements will be made based on the outcomes of these reviews, feedback from participants, and changes in best practice or NDIS requirements.

5.11. Conflict of Interest Management

- a) The governing body has developed a comprehensive Conflict of Interest Policy that clearly defines what constitutes a conflict of interest, both perceived and actual, and outlines the procedures for managing such conflicts.
- b) A conflict of interest register will be maintained, documenting all disclosed conflicts of interest. The register will be reviewed and updated regularly by the governing body.
- c) Each disclosed conflict of interest will be assessed to determine the level of risk it poses to the integrity of the decision-making process or the reputation of Mildura Disability Support.
- d) Where conflicts of interest are identified, steps will be taken to manage the conflict. This could involve the individual recusing themselves from related discussions or decisions, implementing controls to manage the conflict, or, in extreme cases, the individual stepping down from their position.
- e) Regular training will be provided to all Workers and members of the governing body on conflict of interest management, to ensure they understand the Conflict of Interest Policy and procedures and can apply them effectively.
- f) All conflicts of interest and the actions taken to manage them will be transparently reported, upholding the principles of accountability and transparency.

5.12. Financial Management

- a) Mildura Disability Support Services will maintain regular and proactive engagement with its accountants to ensure professional advisory support is consistently available, particularly for compliance and monitoring of all financial legislation, regulations, and standards that impact Mildura Disability Support.
- b) To facilitate this, we:
 - 1) Keep comprehensive financial records of all accounting transactions to enable the compilation of financial statements as required under tax law compliance requirements.
 - 2) Utilise financial and accounting software to support current and future business practices, including individual invoicing and claiming.
 - 3) Retain financial records for at least 7 years following each financial year end.

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- 4) Ensure the governing body has regular and sufficient updates of financial information, enabling them to monitor the business conduct, compile financial statements, and comply with their obligations under legislation.
- 5) Regularly review financial statements and performance, understanding and responding to any changes in financial legislation, regulations, and standards.
- 6) Ensure all necessary actions recommended by the accountants are considered and implemented appropriately and efficiently, subject to feasibility and suitability.

6. Policy Review and Updates

This Policy is to be amended and updated according to the requirements to comply with the applicable law.

Approval Authority: Narelle Margaret Fraser

Version: 1

Approval Date: February 2025

Review Date: February 2027