



FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Complaints and other feedback made by all parties are welcomed, acknowledged, respected and will be well-managed.

Each Participant will be explained the process and enabled to utilise the complaints management and resolution system if they need to and will be able to do so anonymously if preferred.

Guidance will be given on how a complaint about My Abilities Support Team or a staff member can be made to the provider and/or made directly to the NDIS Commission in the participant welcome pack.

An easy and accessible process for making and resolving complaints will be implemented.

Appropriate support and assistance will be provided to any person who wishes to make or has made, a complaint.

My Abilities Support Team is committed to a complaints management system which:

- Follows the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
- Acknowledges the receipt of all complaints.
- Ensures complaints are assessed and resolved in a fair, efficient and timely manner and MAST will take appropriate action in relation to issues raised in complaints.
- Ensures reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any person who makes a complaint to the provider, and each person with disability affected by an issue raised in such a complaint, is advised how that complaint or issue may be raised with the NDIS Commission

- Provides appropriate support and assistance to any person who wishes to make a complaint to the NDIS Commission
- Takes reasonable steps to ensure that a person who makes a complaint, or a Participant affected by an issue raised in a complaint, is not adversely affected because of making the complaint.
- Keeps information provided in a complaint confidential and only disclosed if required by law or in the appropriate circumstances.
- Requires a complaint to be referred or notified to any other bodies in accordance with any requirements under relevant laws.
- Provides that appropriate records of complaints received by provider are kept for 7 years from the day that the complaint is made, and include the following where appropriate:
 - Information about the complaint
 - Any action taken to resolve complaint.
 - The outcome of any action taken

PROCEDURE FOR A PERSON MAKING A COMPLAINT:

1. On signing an agreement with MAST, all participants and family/ informal supports will be informed of the processes for providing feedback and complaints to MAST and will be encouraged to do so, whether formally in writing or verbally and informally. Participants will be assured that their concerns and feedback will be welcomed and handled professionally and taken seriously and without retribution of any kind. Participants will be given a copy of the Charter of Aged Care Rights in a format which they understand and will have it explained to them before being requested to sign it.
2. Translation services will be utilised if needed and/or requested.
3. Staff will be educated and informed of the importance of receiving all feedback positively and of the processes available for feedback to be given and managed. Staff will be educated on the importance of open disclosure and fostering a culture of openness and transparency and a willingness to acknowledge mistakes and to make improvements and resolve concerns and conflict.
4. All feedback and complaints whether verbal or written, informal or formal, will be received politely and appreciation expressed to the person providing the feedback. An open disclosure approach will be followed, and ownership and apologies expressed by M.A.S.T for their responsibilities relating to any matters raised. Where relevant,

family, and relevant parties will be notified of issues and an avenue described for further conversation and open and transparent dialogue to occur.

5. Feedback will be entered on MAST Complaints and Feedback Register and where an incident or near miss has occurred, details are also to be added to the MAST Incident Register and Incident Management procedures are to be followed.
6. If a Risk has been identified, then this will be added to the MAST Risk Register and the Risk Management Policy will be followed.
7. Receipt of the feedback is to be acknowledged within 48 hours where a participant name or contact has been provided and information will be provided for the person to also lodge a complaint with an external agency if they would like.
8. Individuals are supported to make a complaint directly to the NDIS at any time they wish to, without any repercussions.
9. The MAST CEO/Director will initiate investigations in a reasonable timeframe and manner according to level of risk and nature of risk identified.
10. Mandatory Reporting processes and timeframes will be followed as outlined in M.A.S.T' Incident Management Policy and Procedures.
11. Complaint outcomes are documented, and the complaint and feedback item closed off only when any issues identified have been resolved or appropriately managed.
12. M.A.S.T' management will tend to all complaints, and feedback forms as quickly and efficiently as possible. Wherever possible, complaints and concerns will be resolved within 28 days of receiving the feedback.
13. Should a complaint or grievance be unresolvable within 28 days, the complainant will be provided with a notification of the process completed so far, including the plan for the near future and the expected date for a full response. The notification of the update will be provided verbally and then validated in writing.
14. If the complainant is known, M.A.S.T will request feedback on the complaint-handling process to ensure all appropriate measures have been taken and opportunities for improvement are identified.
15. Assistance will be given in the form of interpreters, referrals to advocates, etc. where requested or beneficial to the participant or person lodging a complaint.
16. All feedback and complaints will be reported through the appropriate Governance processes and discussed at the highest level of governance including an analysis of any identified trends or re-occurring issues.
17. In addition, participants will be routinely asked for feedback using the 'Company feedback Form'.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – COMPLAINTS MADE TO THE NDIS COMMISSION

- A person may make a complaint to the NDIS Commission in relation to an issue arising out of, or in connection with, the provision of support or services provided by an NDIS provider
- A complaint may be made orally, in writing or by any other means which is appropriate in the circumstances; and may be made anonymously.
- The NDIS Commissioner must acknowledge receipt of all complaints (unless made anonymously, or where no contact details are provided)
- The NDIS Commissioner must take reasonable steps to ensure that appropriate support and assistance are provided to any person who wishes to make a complaint (incl. information about accessing an independent advocate)
- The complainant may ask the NDIS Commissioner to keep the identity of the complainant, the identity of a person identified in the complaint and any other details included in the complaint confidential
- The NDIS Commissioner must, in relation to each issue raised in the complaint, decide to:
 1. Take no further action, or defer acting, OR
 2. Give assistance and advice to the complainant, a person with a disability affected by the issue and the NDIS provider to which the issue relates, OR
 3. Undertake a resolution process.
- Before deciding, the NDIS Commissioner may do one or more of the following:
 1. Review documents provided to the NDIS Commissioner
 2. Visit the location at which the support or services are provided.
 3. Discuss the issues raised in the complaint with the complainant, a person affected by an issue raised in the complaint, the NDIS provider or any other person.
 4. Work with the complainant, a person affected by the complaint, the NDIS provider or any staff to provide advice and assistance; and where possible and appropriate, assist the persons involved in the complaint to come to a mutually agreed resolution.
 5. Request information relating to the issues raised in the complaint from any person.
 6. Take any other action that the NDIS Commissioner considers is appropriate in the circumstances.

- In dealing with the complaint, the NDIS Commissioner must seek to resolve the complaint as quickly, and with as little formality, as a proper consideration of the issues raised in the complaint allows.