



A2	Appropriate Services	Decision Making and Choice Policy and Procedures
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What this policy aims to do	Ensure that people who use MASS services can make decisions for themselves, as much as possible
Who this policy applies to	Every person who uses a MASS service and all staff
Who is responsible for carrying out this policy	The Director or responsible managers and service delivery staff
What words used in this policy mean	<p><i>'Major life decisions'</i> are those decisions that can affect your whole life, such as where you live, what job you do, who you have relationships with and your spiritual commitment</p> <p><i>'Guardian'</i> is a person who has been authorised to make certain decisions for a service user (where deemed not to have the capacity to make the decisions themselves)</p>
Legislation this policy is based on	<p>National Disability Service Standards</p> <p>Victorian Human Services Standards</p> <p><i>Guardianship and Administration Act 1986 (Vic)</i></p> <p>NDIS Practice Standards</p>
Other relevant policies	<p>HS13 Duty of Care</p> <p>A1 Person-centred Planning</p> <p>HS9 Guardians and Administrators</p> <p>A5 Communication Support</p> <p>A4 Inclusion and Relationships</p>

Version	Date	Author/Editor	Approved by	Notes
1.0	26/8/2016	Peter Lane		
1.1	31/5/2018	D Stephenson		Update format
1.2	27/5/2020	D Stephenson		Added NDIS references
1.3	23/7/2020	C Trenfield	S Reeves	Annual review, minor edits

Decision Making and Choice Policy

MASS will support adults using our services to have as much control as possible over all areas of their own lives and everything that affects them. This includes major life decisions like where to live, setting goals, having a job or starting a relationship. It also includes everyday decisions like clothing, food choices, television programs and activities.

We will provide support to adults using our services to make decisions and we will only provide the level of support people need to make their own decisions.

MASS staff will help make sure adults who need assistance to express their choices have access to augmentative communications and/or advocacy if required or if they wish. If an adult using services cannot express their choices by any means, MASS will respect the views of people in the person's natural support networks and/or their legally-appointed decision makers such as guardians and administrators.

If the person using the service is a child or has a guardian or administrator, their parent or guardian/administrator will be involved in all decision-making processes. However, children's wishes regarding everyday decisions like clothing, food choices and activities will be respected.

MASS staff will never make major life decisions on behalf of people they support.

MASS will listen to and respect the opinions and choices of people using services including about how MASS operates, the services offered and the staff providing support.

Decision Making and Choice Procedures

Facilitating choice

- ☑ People using MASS services will be given every opportunity to make choices and decisions in their day to day lives
- ☑ If the person using the service is a child or has a guardian or administrator, their parent or guardian/administrator will be involved in the decision-making process
- ☑ MASS staff will help the person and families or guardian where relevant to get as much information as possible about options, consequences and risks, to help them make decisions
- ☑ Staff will also help make sure that information is in a form that can be understood by the person making the decision (could include visits, seeing videos and talking to people who have tried alternatives, as well as information on paper)
- ☑ MASS staff will help make sure people who need assistance to express their choices have access to augmentative communications and/or advocacy
- ☑ Staff will help make sure the person has a range of options in making a choice and that the person has the time and support they need to make their decision
- ☑ Staff will be aware of the potential for them to unconsciously or inadvertently influence decisions, and should try as hard as possible not to
- ☑ MASS staff will never make a major life decision on behalf of a service user
- ☑ The person/family making the decision can have a third party (a parent, guardian or administrator, an advocate, a friend or family member or another person) involved in the process if they wish, whose contribution must also be respected by staff
- ☑ If a person using services cannot express their choice by any means, MASS will respect the views of people in the person's natural support networks and/or their legally-appointed decision-makers such as guardians and administrators
- ☑ If appropriate, MASS will apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for rulings on who can make decisions on the person's behalf. MASS staff will also help a person using services and people in their natural support networks if they want help applying to VCAT for such rulings
- ☑ MASS staff will assist clients to develop their choice making skills

Respectful service delivery

- ☑ MASS staff will listen to and respect the opinions, decisions and choices of people using our services
- ☑ MASS will listen to the ideas of people using services about how MASS operates, the services we offer and the staff providing support. This includes:
 - When new staff are being recruited, people using the relevant service will be consulted about what they want in staff

- A person using services may be asked to sit on a panel to interview new staff (for adult services)
 - Service users will be invited to contribute to staff performance reviews
- MASS will make sure our Board hears feedback directly from people using services
- As far as possible, all MASS committees will include a person who represents the people who use MASS services - people using services who sit on MASS panels and committees will be given the support they need to participate.