



AA2	Accessible and Affordable Services	Service Fees Policy and Procedures
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What this policy aims to do	Make sure people who use MASS services understand clearly what fees they will pay and what services they can use at no cost
Who this policy applies to	People who uses any MASS service and all staff
Who is responsible for carrying out this policy	Managers responsible for service delivery
What words used in this policy mean	<p>A <i>'service fee'</i> is a monetary charge for a service that has been provided by an organisation</p> <p><i>'Income'</i> is money received on a regular basis from wages, social security or allowances</p> <p><i>'Residential statement'</i> means mandatory information (fees, charges, hours of support) for people receiving accommodation services</p>
Legislation this policy is based on	<p>National Disability Service Standards</p> <p>Victorian Human Services Standards</p>
Other relevant policies	<p>HS10 Financial Support</p> <p>A2 Decision-making and Choice</p> <p>HS9 Guardians and Administrators</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	20/5/2020	N Seymour	S. Reeves	Included Undue Financial Hardship Guidelines

Service Fees Policy

Broadly, MASS believes that people with disability and their families should accept the same responsibility as other people in the community to contribute to meeting the costs of services they use.

Where fees are set by government regulations (such as NDIS), MASS will not charge any more than the maximum set for the service.

Where MASS sets fees without regulation (such as school fees), we will be mindful of the fact that many people with disability have limited incomes and that families with a child or young person with ASD may face a range of additional costs and will consider individual capacity to pay. MASS will apply *Undue Financial Hardship Guidelines* (see Attachment 1) to assess if people say they cannot pay fees.

The fees MASS charge will be fair, visible and consistent across services. MASS will provide details of fee structures to all people who use MASS services in a format they can understand.

Fees will normally be invoiced fortnightly, with payment expected within 14 days, unless other arrangements have been agreed. Most services are GST-free, and MASS will give clear information if GST is required to be paid for any service.

Service Fees Procedures

- ☑ All people residing at a MASS residential service will be provided with a Residential Statement or Service Agreement on entry to the service and annually thereafter
- ☑ The residential statement or Service Agreement will include:
 - The period of time the statement relates to
 - Details of the residential service to be provided
 - The name and contact details of the disability service provider
 - The fees and charges and what they relate to
 - Any conditions which apply to the residential service (e.g. compliance with a behaviour support plan)
 - Complaints information including how to make a complaint to MASS or to external complaints bodies
- ☑ MASS will charge fees for services aiming to balance people's responsibility to contribute to the costs of services they use against their need to have enough money to meet basic needs and enjoy a good quality of life
- ☑ Where fees are set by government regulation (NDIS), MASS will not charge any more than the maximum set for the service
- ☑ Where MASS sets fees without regulation (school fees), the fees MASS charges will be fair, visible and consistent across services
- ☑ MASS will provide details of fee structures to all people who use MASS services, through Residential Statements, Service Agreements, other appropriate form in a format they can understand, as required by relevant authorities
- ☑ MASS will use its Undue Financial Hardship Guidelines to assess if people say they cannot pay fees (see Attachment 1)
- ☑ MASS has discretion in fee setting to make sure people/families with high support needs are not financially disadvantaged by their need for a higher level of support
- ☑ In residential services, MASS will use NDIS, DHHS and other funding to meet the costs of:
 - staff providing support
 - furniture in shared areas, including whitegoods and computers
 - maintenance of the house and garden
 - vehicle purchase and maintenance
 - utilities (electricity, gas, water, fixed phone)
 - insurance
- ☑ People using residential services that are not funded through the NDIS are expected to use their own money to pay for:
 - board at an agreed rate
 - furniture for their own room/any extra furniture or decorations they want in the house
 - recreational activities

Service Fees Procedures

- personal expenses such as clothing, footwear, toiletries etc
 - medical, dental and pharmaceutical costs
 - extra transport
 - personal spending money
 - insurance for their own items.
- Fees will normally be invoiced fortnightly, with payment expected within 14 days, unless other arrangements have been agreed
- MASS will give fair notice of any changes in fees or conditions.

Attachment 1 Undue Financial Hardship Guidelines

MASS acknowledges that clients will, for various reasons from time to time, be unable to pay fees when they become due and payable to MASS. It is not the intention to cause hardship to any client through MASS's debt recovery procedures and consideration will be given to acceptable arrangements to clear the debt prior to the end of the current financial year, where possible.

The MASS Board of Management has the delegated authority to approve or reject arrangement plans from any client after receiving the request. The MASS Board may in turn delegate the day to day responsibility for approving or rejecting payment arrangement plans to the Director, provided that they are in MASS's best interest.

The Director has the delegated authority to proceed with legal action to recover outstanding debt where an arrangement plan is in default or a suitable attempt has not been made to clear the outstanding balance within a time specified by MASS.

MASS recognises there are cases of genuine financial hardship requiring respect and compassion in certain circumstances. In these cases the Finance Manager will prepare a Bad Debt Request Form and present to the Director and Board of Management for approval. The debt is then written off.