

Mansfield Autism Statewide Services

Service Access Policy and Procedures

AA1	Accessible and Affordable	Service Access Policy and Procedures
------------	----------------------------------	---

What this policy aims to do	<p>This policy is to ensure that all persons wishing to access MASS services are treated fairly and equitably while also enabling those with autism to access services and supports that are right for them. The policy provides direction to staff to promote consistency in the process of accessing services.</p>
Who this policy applies to	<p>All clients and their families who access our services. All staff responsible for service access</p>
Who is responsible for carrying out this policy	<p>MASS staff responsible for receiving and assessing service referrals.</p>
What words used in this policy mean	<p>The Act means the Disability Act 2006</p> <p>Access is the process through which a client enters into a service agreement with MASS</p> <p>Schedule of Support sets out the services that the client wishes to access from MASS and how they will pay for the services</p> <p>Service Agreement sets out the responsibilities of the provider and the client in agreeing to service. This includes cancellations, feedback, complaints and communication.</p> <p>Enrolment Agreement (Education services) means the Agreement forming part of these Enrolment Terms and Conditions by which the Applicant agrees to be bound.</p> <p>Application for Enrolment (Education services) means the Enrolment Application Form the Applicant will need to complete as a condition of enrolment.</p> <p>Conditions of Enrolment (Education services) means these Enrolment Terms and Conditions including any subsequent amendments made by The School.</p>

	<p>Student means the student named in the Enrolment Agreement.</p> <p>CEO means the Chief Executive Officer, or the CEO's authorised representative.</p> <p>"the School" means Mansfield Autism Statewide Services – Mansfield Campus and Dookie Campus (ABN 14 006 171 580)</p> <p>The enrolment register is a permanent record of the students admitted to the school.</p>
Legislation this policy is based on	<p>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Services Act 1986 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)</p> <p>National Standards for Disability Services 2014 (Cth)</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</p> <p>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</p> <p>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Act 2006 (VIC)</p> <p>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)</p> <p>NDIS Practice Standards for Disability Services</p> <p>Victorian Human Services Standards</p> <p>Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)</p> <p>Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)</p> <p>Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards</p> <p>Equal Opportunity Act (Vic.) 2010</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth.)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth.)</p> <p>Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth.)</p> <p>Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth.)</p> <p>Education and Training Reform Act (2017)</p>
Other relevant policies	<p>HS7 Privacy and Information Sharing</p> <p>A1 Client Rights and Responsibilities</p> <p>HS13 Duty of Care</p> <p>HS11 Client Feedback</p> <p>HS12 Incident Management</p>

Version	Date	Author/Editor	Approved by	Notes
1.0	26/08/2016	Peter Lane		

1.1	31/5/2018	D Stephenson		Update format
1.2	24/2/2019	KGrant /S Binzer		Reword
1.3	19/5/2020	K Grant	S Reeves	Update to NDIS standards
1.4	3/11/2021	K Grant		Update to reflect new Intake Process
1.5	8/02/2022	K Grant / T de Vries	S Reeves	Update to refer to Guidelines for using MASS Client Risk Assessment Tool
1.6	24/08/2022	K Grant	S Reeves	Update to Enrolment Record
1.7	28/06/2023	K Grant /S Binzer		Change to MARS, updated access procedures

Contents

Specific Program Entry Criteria	3
Service Exit (Client)	3
Service Exit (MASS)	3
Client Service Access: External Process.....	5
Expression of Interest	7
Referral Form & Autism Diagnosis	7
Phone Pre-access risk assessment and Access Interview schedule	7
Initial Access Interview	7
Risk Assessment process (refer to Guidelines for using the MASS Client Risk Assessment Tool).....	8
Service Agreement and Schedule of Support	9
Existing Clients – All Services	9
Permanent Care.....	10
Mansfield Campus Day School and Dookie Campus - Additional Education Enrolment Procedures	10

SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

Mansfield Autism provides a range of services for individuals and families living with autism. MASS services and supports recognise that people with a disability have the same right as other members of the community to participate actively in the decisions that affect their lives and be provided the information and support necessary to enable this to occur.

The following principles underpin our services:

- To provide a service that is **fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory**.
- Promote **dignity** and **respect for privacy** for all clients accessing MASS services.
- To be **person centred, flexible and responsive** to the individual needs and goals of people with autism.
- Maximise the **choice, participation, inclusion, and independence** of people with autism.
- Acknowledge the important role **families** have in supporting people with autism.
- Preserve and promote **healthy relationships** amongst families.
- Respect **cultural diversity, values, and beliefs**.
- Provide information that is **clear, concise, and transparent** so potential clients can make an informed choice on services.
- To **communicate** in a mode that best suits the individual.
- Have regard for any potentially increased disadvantage which may be experienced by persons with a disability because of their gender, language, cultural or indigenous background, or location.

MASS ensures that all clients wishing to access any of its services are treated **in a manner that is fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory including** in relation to gender, age, race, culture, religion, sexual preference and disability which is consistent with human rights and legislative framework.

MASS will ensure that:

1. Where an autistic person or a person on their behalf has made a request for MASS services, information is gathered to determine:
 - the appropriateness of MASS to provide support
 - the needs of the person and the types of supports required
 - if a person is considered a priority for access
 - If a person has made a request on behalf of a person with autism, then MASS will ensure, where appropriate, that the person with autism agrees to the request
 - health, wellbeing, safety, and security for all clients

SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

2. Entry criteria to all MASS services, supports and educational facilities will be:
 - Transparent and freely available online and in print.
 - Will include specific eligibility criteria and associated costs.
 - Service descriptions will be clearly outlined to help users make an informed choice.
3. The information is communicated to each client using the language, mode of communication and terms the client is most likely to understand.
4. Reasonable adjustment to the support delivery environment is made and monitored to ensure it is fit for purpose and each client's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence are supported.
5. Each client is supported to understand what circumstances supports can be withdrawn.
6. MASS feedback and complaints system is accessible to all and information how to make a complaint is provided to all clients.
7. When service is refused, families will be provided with reasons that are specific to the entry criteria of the program, support, or educational facility. MASS will provide the individual or family with information about why it made that decision, the process to have the decision reviewed or appealed and contact details for other relevant services both within MASS and external agencies.
8. Services are culturally sensitive and respond appropriately to the diversity of needs of the community and those accessing services.
9. MASS will provide information on the services and supports it can provide and the terms for providing them, prior to commencement of service. These are provided in the form of a schedule of support and service agreement (NDIS).
10. For NDIS services the **Service Agreement and Schedule of Support** are signed by the client prior to service
11. Each client accesses the most appropriate supports that meet their needs, goals, and preferences.
12. If there are limited availability of spaces for the requested service, then families will be notified and placed on a wait list. The wait list will be reviewed regularly, and families contacted when places become available.
13. Where MASS services have a limited capacity, availability of service may consider:
 - a. Age of client
 - b. Availability of specific resources to deliver quality service
 - c. Assessed needs
 - d. Funding available to achieve goals
 - e. Severity of situation, including safety

SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

Specific Program Entry Criteria

- MAPs: all Victorian clients, ages 0 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available).
- Therapeutic Residential Placement: 6 – 16 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Respite: 6 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Family Camps: 3 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available).
- Outreach: Local to Mansfield. All ages. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Adult Services: Limited capacity. 18 years +
- Dookie Campus Secondary School: 11 – 18 years, no significant intellectual disability. Fees Apply (No Funding available for families).
- Mansfield Campus Day Students: up to age 18 years. Fees Apply (No Funding available for families).

Service Exit (Client)

An individual may leave MASS for several reasons, including but not limited to:

- Relocation to an area outside of service delivery
- Where the schedule of support and service agreement is no longer able to meet the person's needs or assist in achieving the person's goals
- Transfer to another service provider
- The death of a person using the service
- Exercising a person's individual choice and control

As per MASS Service Agreement all NDIS clients are required to provide four (4) weeks' notice of intention to exit, in writing.

As per MASS Enrolment Agreement all education clients are required to provide notice of intention to exit the school a full term in advance, in writing. MASS needs to be made aware if the student has enrolled in another school, is being home schooled or is exempt from enrolling at school before removing student from enrolment register.

On exit, to support a client to transition to another provider, clients may request copies of any reports and / or behaviour support plans if not already provided. MASS will approve the incoming implementing provider access, on request, to the RIDS BSP as per RIDS requirements.

Service Exit (MASS)

MASS reserves the right to withdraw services in situations where:

- its duty of care to other clients, families or staff is demonstrably compromised.
- Continued non-payment of service delivery fees incurred during service.
- There has been no contact from the client over the scheduled delivery times.

SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

Under normal circumstances, withdrawal of service by MASS would only be contemplated where there are serious risks posed by the service placement to the duty of care to other clients, staff or the community and reasonable efforts to rectify the issues have been made and shown to have failed.

If efforts to sustain the place are unsuccessful, MASS must arrange a meeting with the individual, family and/or any support people or advocates they nominate to discuss the decision. MASS should also discuss issues with relevant funding authorities.

These meetings may produce further agreed strategies to attempt to consolidate the service. If these also are unsuccessful, MASS will write to the client, family and advocates outlining the reasons behind the decision and advising them of their rights under MASS' policy on complaints and disputes (including providing contact details for advocacy organisations and the Disability Services Commissioner). See HS11 Client Feedback Policy.

All clients exiting the service will be exited in a professional, planned, and collaborative manner. Where needed the client will be supported in the referrals to other services that could offer supports or services to meet the client's needs.

- Where a service agreement has ceased, and MASS no longer delivers service. MASS will exit clients from our 'active' database in MARS to 'inactive'.
- All information regarding the client will be retained, secured, and stored according to our privacy policy.