

# 049 – FREEDOM OF CHOICE POLICY OPERATIONAL POLICY



<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>049 – FREEDOM OF CHOICE POLICY</b>		
<b>VERSION:</b>	003	<b>DATE EFFECTIVE:</b>	03/09/2019
<b>AUTHORISED BY:</b>	Chief Executive Officer	<b>DATE REVIEWED:</b>	18/03/2022

## PURPOSE

To ensure that all participants are provided with information about their right to choose the service providers they want and to provide evidence that ARC Disability Services Inc. (ARC) has informed them of their choices.

## SCOPE

All employees are responsible for maintaining freedom of choice for our participants.

## IMPLEMENTATION

ARC provides a range of services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). ARC is committed to minimising conflict of interest and most of all, enabling participants to exercise choice in the services they receive. To achieve this goal, ARC has the following processes in place:

- *Consent with the aim of ensuring informed consent upon entry into ARC's services*
- *Freedom of Choice Declaration*
- *Areas of service delivery have been isolated to further promote independence from each other*

As part of the Onboarding into ARC's NDIS funded services, each staff member who is working with the participant must explain that the participant has the right to freely choose service providers; and the services **do not** need to be provided entirely by ARC. The following is an extract from the Freedom of Choice Declaration:

*"As an NDIS Participant, you have the right to freely choose your service providers under your NDIS Plan. A staff member from ARC is obliged to explain how you can choose your providers for your NDIS Plan"*

## ARC UNDERTAKES TO:

- Explain to each participant that they can choose any service provider
- Ensure each participant has time to consider service options and not feel coerced
- Assist the NDIS participant to access service providers of their choice
- Provide suitable qualified staff for each of the services it provides
- Desist from paying bonuses, incentives or commissions for sourcing additional customers

## THE PARTICIPANT IS ASKED TO COMPLETE THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE FORM:

- So that evidence exists that the information has been provided; and
- To indicate the choices, the participant has made in respect of the services which ARC provides

The Freedom of Choice Declaration is included in the Onboarding kit, which the representative of ARC will provide to the participant prior to the commencement of their use of ARC's services. It is ARC's responsibility to explain freedom of choice and to ask the participant/participant's decision maker to sign the form.

It is important that the participant also has a choice not to complete the form and if that choice is made, services can continue as long as the staff member records that the Freedom of Choice Declaration has been provided.

## REFERENCES

*NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework*

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## AUTHORISATION

This Policy is approved and issued by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Keast', is written over a horizontal line.

**BENJAMIN KEAST**

Chief Executive Officer

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