



# PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

## ARC DISABILITY SERVICES INC.

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## GET HELP TO READ

The National Relay Service is a free Australia-wide phone solution for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment.

- For TTY/voice:           call **133 677**
- For Speak & Listen:    call **1300 555 727**
- For SMS relay:           message **0423 677 767**

The Translation and Interpreting Services (TIS National) is an interpreting service provided by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection for people who do not speak English and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients.

- Phone:           **131 450**
- Visit:           **[www.tisnational.gov.au/](http://www.tisnational.gov.au/)**

## WORDS WE USE AND WHAT THEY MEAN

KEYWORD	MEANING
<b>Staff</b>	This means everyone who works for us, including the CEO, managers, employees, contractors, people from other companies that help us and our volunteers.
<b>Participant, Nominee, Representative or Advocate</b>	This is you! It also includes your family, anyone who takes care of you, or someone who speaks up for you.
<b>Workplace or environment</b>	These are the places where we provide our help. It could be in your own home, while you're getting around, in community areas or any other places we might need to visit.
<b>Service(s)</b>	This refers to all the help and activities we offer you, which are all part of the agreement and plan we've made together.
<b>ARC, we, us and our</b>	This is us, ARC Disability Services Inc.

## WELCOME TO ARC DISABILITY SERVICES INC.

Welcome to ARC! Joining us means being part of a community where we all work together to help you achieve your goals. In this handbook, you'll find useful information about our services, as well as your rights and responsibilities.

At the core of our values are collaboration, creativity and respect, and they shape the way we support you. We believe in making your experience both rewarding and enjoyable. Here's to a journey filled with growth, empowerment, and a bit of fun along the way.

## ABOUT US

ARC Disability Services Inc. is a community-focused organisation with a long history in Cairns and the Far North of Queensland. Established by a parent committee, ARC started as a small toy library in 1976. Over the years, ARC has

responded to the needs of the community, continuously seeking to expand and provide additional services. As of now, we've been supporting children and adults with a disability to reach their individual goals for almost 50 years! Our approach is centered on empowering individuals by recognising their strengths, promoting independence and active participation within the community. We are committed to delivering quality support and enhancing the lives of the people and community we support.

## **VISION**

That people who have a disability are empowered to reach their full potential, by assisting them to achieve their goals and aspirations.

## **MISSION**

As a Lead Service Provider, we influence change. We work collaboratively with our service users, their support networks and the community to facilitate a range of options and opportunities which promote active participation for all.

## OUR SERVICES

**Direct Supports:** We can offer personalised support at home and in the community, tailored to your NDIS plan and personal goals. Our services adapt to your changing needs, focusing on enhancing your daily independence and quality of life.

**ARC Programs:** Our programs put you in control, focusing on skill development, independence and social connections. We support your journey towards a positive future, empowering you in work, health and personal achievements.

**Plan Management:** We can manage your NDIS funds, handling financial tasks and budget tracking. This service simplifies your financial management, giving you peace of mind and more time to focus on your goals.

**ARC Holiday House:** Our accessible Cairns-based location offers peaceful breaks for up to 14 days. It's a perfect spot for relaxation and rejuvenation - a home away from home.

**ARC Duplex:** Our duplex units offer Short-Term and Medium-Term Accommodation (STA/MTA) for individuals needing urgent respite. This option is ideal for those preparing to move into Supported Independent Living (SIL), providing a supportive and transitional living space.

**Supported Independent Living (SIL):** SIL provides tailored support for living independently, based on your unique needs. We ensure your living environment is comfortable and conducive to your personal growth.

**Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC):** The IERC lends out educational resources and specialised equipment, supporting inclusive learning for all children. It's a valuable resource for families, educators and therapists.

**Coordination Of Supports:** We can help you make the most of your NDIS Plan, connecting you with services that match your goals. Our support ensures a smoother journey in navigating your plan and achieving your objectives.

## ACCESS TO SERVICES

### NDIS ACCESS AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To access NDIS supports, you need to request access to the NDIS and meet specific criteria regarding your age, disability and residency in Australia. Upon approval, you'll become a participant and get a tailored Support Plan.

For comprehensive details on eligibility and joining the NDIS, visit <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis>

To use our NDIS services, you need to:

- Qualify for the NDIS by meeting their eligibility requirements.
- Have a NDIS plan that lists the services you need.
- Require services that match what we offer
- Have enough funds in your NDIS plan to cover the cost of our services.

### ACCESSING OUR SERVICES

ARC, as a Registered NDIS Provider, mainly offers support to those with NDIS funding. However, when it's suitable, we also provide services to people without NDIS funding, using other sources of funding. This decision is made by our Chief Services Officer, and we ensure that all participants, regardless of funding source, receive the same high-quality service and are afforded the same rights as other participants.

When you contact ARC for services, we guide you through a detailed enquiry and intake process. We carefully review your request to see if we're the best fit: checking if we have the necessary resources and skills to meet your identified needs. Sometimes, you might ask for something we don't offer. In those cases, we'll help you find other services that might be better suited to your needs.

At ARC, we are committed to fair treatment for everyone. Our decisions are not influenced by gender, relationship status, parenthood, age, ethnicity, religion, political views, personal life, gender identity, who you love, or your associations. In this way, we ensure equality and respect for all individuals.

We're committed to keeping both our staff and participants safe and well. This means we respect your right to make choices, even if they involve some risk, as long as it doesn't compromise safety. We'll always work with you to find the best way to support your choices and needs.

## HOW MUCH WILL IT COST

The NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits guides how we price our services for NDIS participants, ensuring you get good value when buying the supports you need. <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/pricing-arrangements>

**Please note:** There are annual changes in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits, these will automatically adjust your costs of services.

Our quotes are tailored to your NDIS goals. You'll see a breakdown of services, costs per unit and total costs in each quote.

You and your chosen decision-maker can look over the quotes, ask us any questions, and get more information if you need it. By accepting a quote and the service agreement that comes with it, you're agreeing to let ARC provide the services and bill for them after they're delivered.

Services provided to participants under different funding arrangements are typically priced in line with the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits. However, where the funding source specifies alternative guidelines, ARC align support costs with these guidelines.



## **SERVICE AGREEMENTS**

After you've accepted a quote for our services, ARC will provide a service agreement, which outlines the terms, specific services provided, as well as provider and participant responsibilities required under the agreement.

It covers payment details, how to change or end the agreement, and how to give feedback or handle disputes. You'll get help to understand the agreement, including interpreter services if needed. A copy of the signed agreement will be given to you and your decision-maker.

Once everyone accepts the terms of the service agreement, we'll make sure you and your decision-maker get a signed copy of this document. If you decide you don't want one, we'll note down why you didn't receive a copy of your agreement, for future reference.

## **WORKING WITH YOU**

### **PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENTS AND CHOICES**

Once we have agreed what services you would like to receive, it's now time to work out how we will deliver these services.

You're the most important part of our work at ARC. Together, we'll find out what you're good at and what you like, so we can create the best Support Plan for you.

We want to hear from you about what help you need, as well as how and when you'd like it. Our goal is to help you keep living your life the way you want, becoming more independent, and getting involved in your community.

As a participant with ARC, you are at the centre of your Support Plan. It's a team effort with you, your family or someone who speaks for you, our staff, and any

other professionals you need. We'll have a meeting before you start getting help from ARC.

Your plan can change if needed, based on how your supports are going or other reasons. We'll check in with you regularly to make sure your plan is still right for you, and we always want to know what you think about our services.

If you have questions about your Support Plan, just ask your coordinator. You'll get a copy of the plan, but if you need more info or have questions, you can contact us at any time.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH YOU**

After our first meeting, once we know how you like to communicate, we'll make sure to keep in touch in the way that works best for you, whether that's through writing, speaking, or in another language.

If there's a specific way you prefer to communicate, just tell our team. We'll note your preferred method in your Support Plan, so our staff know the best way to talk with you. If you ever want us to sit down with you and clarify documents or agreements, just let us know. We're here to make sure communication is clear and comfortable for you.

## **HELPING WITH YOUR MEDICATION**

Your coordinator will talk to you about how we can help you with your medication. If there are any concerns about managing your medication safely, we'll discuss them with you and your family, or carer.

We'll need to complete some forms to make sure we help you with the right medication at the right times. Our staff will record when they help you with your medication.

If you need help with medication, please have it ready in a Webster Pack or its original packaging to ensure safety.

## **SMOKING**

For the health and safety of our team, please don't smoke around our support workers while they're helping you.

## **INTERPRETER SERVICES**

If English isn't your first language and you'd prefer to use an interpreter, we can arrange one with your permission. The interpreter can join meetings with you and help in emergencies over the phone.

## **YOUR MONEY AND PROPERTY**

Your money, or other property, will only be used with you and for the purposes you request.

If you require ARC to provide financial assistance, you, your family, or decision maker must approve the arrangement. This approval will then be documented in our Individual Risk Assessment.

If your Support Plan requires ARC staff to be involved in handling your money, strict procedures will be followed to protect you from financial abuse. Your Support Plan and Individual Risk Assessment will outline the assistance you need relating to your money and property.

Our staff are not permitted to provide you with financial advice or information other than what is documented as 'required' under your Support Plan.

ARC undertakes regularly audits, relating to your money and property supports (that are provided by ARC) and will provide you with a copy of this report for your records, unless advised otherwise.

We regularly audit our financial support services and will share the results with you, unless you prefer not to see them.

## **GIFTS**

We appreciate your gratitude, but there's no need for gifts. If you wish to give something, please choose an item that can be shared by our team, like flowers or chocolates. Please **NEVER** offer or provide money to an ARC staff member.

## **TRANSPORT**

We'll talk about your transport needs during our first meeting to find the best options for you, considering your NDIS funding and any additional services you might need.

## **CHANGING YOUR AGREEMENT**

If your needs change, we might need to update your service agreement or schedule of supports. We'll help make any changes you need, whether it's adjusting the type or amount of support you receive.

# CHARTER OF RIGHTS

## YOUR RIGHTS

As an individual, you have many rights, and we support and assist you in identifying and exercising these rights so you can achieve your goals. ARC adopts a policy of non-discrimination regarding eligibility and entry to our services and when providing support services to you.

You have the right to:

- Be treated equally and respectfully.
- Be fully involved in planning and decisions about you and your supports.
- Privacy within your personal space.
- Have your information stored securely and only released with your consent.
- Get help or information to help you in making decisions.
- Have an advocate of your choice.
- Access an interpreter.
- Choose how you spend your money and funding.
- Receive safe services that help you reach your goals.
- Practice your culture and religion.
- Choose the people or community with which you spend your time.
- Receive accurate, relevant and up-to-date information in a format that suits you.
- Intimacy and sexual expression.
- Provide feedback or make a complaint and receive a timely and appropriate response.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

As individuals using our support services, you have a few essential responsibilities. The information below explains those responsibilities.

We ask that you:

- Tell us about the services you want and how you want to receive them.
- Respect our workers and other participants.
- Be polite to others.
- Act safely at all times.
- Tell us as soon as possible if you need to cancel an appointment.
- Tell us of any changes in your life that may affect our services.
- Pay for our services on time.

Please contact us if you are unhappy with our services or if you feel there is a problem with the way in which your services are provided.

You must also tell us if:

- You want to stop receiving our services.
- Your NDIS plan changes.
- You stop using the NDIS.

## **ARC'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

At ARC, we want to ensure that our services are tailored to your needs and preferences. Here are our commitments to you, your family and your community:

- We will provide the supports you need, at the times you prefer.
- We will regularly check in with you to review the support we provide and make sure it's working for you.
- We will always communicate openly, honestly and in a timely manner.
- We will treat you with courtesy and respect.
- We will involve you in decisions about your supports and how they are delivered.
- We are here to listen to your feedback, complaints and concerns and will address any issues that may arise.
- If there's a need to change a scheduled support, we'll give you as much notice as possible and work with you to ensure you are well-supported.
- Your personal information will always be kept confidential.
- We will support your culture, community and any other specific needs you may have.
- Our policies and procedures are designed to ensure your safety and the safety of others while receiving our services.

## **STOPPING SERVICES**

ARC has the right to stop providing services to you if you do not meet your responsibilities. You will never be excluded from service provision because of a 'dignity of risk' choice. In all cases, we will speak with you and discuss the reasons for any withdrawal of service. Where you agree, we will support you to find another service provider.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

At ARC, we want to make sure that our actions and decisions are always fair and unbiased. Sometimes, a staff member might have a situation where their personal interests could affect how they do their job or the choices they make. When we identify these situations, steps are taken to ensure that they don't impact the services, activities, or decisions related to you or our organisation.

All our staff members are required to tell us about any other work-related activities they're involved in outside of ARC. This helps us discuss and manage any potential conflicts of interest. The ARC team handles the declaration and management of conflicts of interest.

As a participant, if you ever feel like there might be a conflict of interest, please let us know. We'll give you a form called the Conflict-of-Interest Declaration Form to fill out.

Once you've declared a conflict, our coordinator will look into it to see if there's a real conflict or if it just looks like there might be one. We'll set up a meeting to talk about the conflict.

After the review, the coordinator will let you know what they found, and if there is a conflict, we'll explain how we're going to manage it while still respecting your privacy and the privacy of our staff.

We keep a record of all potential and actual conflicts in our Conflict of Interest Register to ensure they're monitored and reviewed.



## **NDIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

ARC employees follow the NDIS Code of Conduct by:

- acting with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making following relevant laws and conventions.
- respecting your privacy.
- providing supports and services safely and competently with care and skill, and acting with integrity, honesty and transparency.
- promptly taking steps to raise and act on concerns regarding matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to you.
- taking all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse towards you.
- taking all reasonable steps to prevent sexual misconduct towards you.

## **YOUR ADVOCACY RIGHTS**

An advocate is someone you trust, like a family member or friend, who speaks for you and makes sure to look after your rights. An advocate can also be someone from outside your life who is independent of ARC. They help with decisions about your care and services. They will join in meetings and planning with ARC to ensure your needs are met. Advocates ensure your voice is heard and your best interests are always considered.

You can have your advocate with you for any talk with ARC, including assessments and feedback. If you change your advocate, let ARC know so they can update their records.

You may also want to use an advocate if an incident occurs, or if you make a complaint. ARC can assist in finding an advocate if you ask us.

## **PRIVACY AND DIGNITY**

Everyone has the right to privacy, dignity and intimacy. At ARC, we respect your privacy. Our staff will always knock before entering your bedroom or bathroom. We encourage everyone to respect each other's privacy in the same way.

Personal care is done privately, in your bedroom or bathroom, not where others are around. You have the right to private visits and phone calls with family and friends. Our staff will always use respectful language and behaviour to make sure your privacy and dignity are protected.

## **YOUR INFORMATION**

ARC will ask for your consent to collect personal and sensitive information about you. We will ask you to sign a consent form to release your personal information.

Personal information can be:

- Your name.
- Your contact details.
- Your health history.
- Your religion, nationality, or culture.
- Photographs or videos of you.

We collect this information from you, or people and providers you consent to, so that we can deliver services to you. We also use it to improve our services and to follow the law. You do not need to give us your personal information. However, if you do not, we may not be able to deliver services to you.

We will always ask for your permission and explain the reasons for accessing your information when providing it to support worker/s or another service provider.

However, sometimes - by law - we must share your information without your consent. This can be to keep you or others safe. If we lose your information or if someone steals it, we will inform you in line with the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme.

ARC respects your privacy by complying with privacy laws and handling your personal information carefully. We have systems in place for the collection, use, disclosure, quality, security, accuracy and correction of personal information relating to you, as our participant.

Your data is securely stored and backed up, with files kept for seven years, or - for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander participants - indefinitely.

If you would like more information, please speak to us or ask for copies of our policies relating to privacy and information management.

You can access your personal records at any time through a request process, and we'll help you understand the information provided. If you have questions or concerns about your privacy, you can write to our Chief Services Officer.

## **CONSENT**

When you provide consent, you give your permission or say that it is okay for something to happen. You must always fully understand why a person requires your consent. If you have any doubt about this, you should ask your coordinator or your advocate for help.

You can withdraw your consent at any time. If you feel that you cannot consent about issues in your life, we can talk to your family or advocate and ask them to assist.

If you do not have family who can assist with making decisions, we will help you apply to the court, or other government bodies, to appoint a Guardian who can legally help you make these decisions.

## **WHAT IS A GUARDIAN?**

A Guardian is usually a person who has been legally appointed by a court to make decisions on your behalf. This person may be a friend, a family member, or a person from your State Government Advocate.

# YOUR SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

## FAMILY ASSISTANCE

ARC encourages and supports families to maintain contact with you. Your family is welcome to contact us for information and support with your permission. Your family or advocate can be involved in planning the services you will receive through your person-centred support planning meeting.

We can help your family by:

- communicating in a way they understand.
- providing information regarding available services, including those offered by other agencies.
- helping to build trust and respect between ARC team members, you, and your family.
- providing them with the opportunity to take part in service delivery planning.
- creating opportunities to develop links with you.
- assisting them to access counselling and support services.
- providing them with access to effective complaint procedures.
- helping them to access advocacy services where required.

## NETWORKING

We will engage with your networks and community to ensure you are offered the opportunity to be involved in activities and areas of interest.

With your permission, we will access networks like religious groups, local ethnic groups, community groups, or others you request. We believe that it is essential that you are part of your community, so we work with you to ensure that this happens.

## CONTINUITY OF SUPPORT

The coordinator will arrange your support schedule, so you know who will be working with you to deliver your services and support. We will provide you with a support worker who has the skills and knowledge you require.

Wherever possible, we will meet your support requests.

**e.g.** You would like a worker who speaks the same language, is from the same culture or meets other specific criteria.

Support workers are allocated to you regularly so that you can feel comfortable with them and receive predictable and continuous support. The supports we provide are linked to your Support Plan and will demonstrate consistency with your needs and requests.

### What will happen if your worker is absent?

- We'll find qualified support workers who can step in.
- Priority goes to support workers who have experience working with you and know your needs.
- We'll always make a genuine attempt to let you know about the replacement support worker.
- Your feedback on the replacement support worker's performance is important to us.
- The replacement support worker will respect your needs and preferences.
- We'll always ask for your approval before assigning any staff member to support you. Your comfort and satisfaction matter to us.

## EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PLANNING

If you agree to it, we will discuss emergency and disaster planning with you and other relevant support networks. Planning will consider your living arrangements,

the support you receive from ARC, your needs, strengths and the ability for family or friends to help you during an emergency or disaster.

Based on this information, we will work with you to determine how you will be supported during times of emergency or disasters. This planning is detailed within your Individual Risk Assessment.

During this process, we may decide with you, based on identified risk factors, that a specific Emergency Plan is required. This is typically undertaken when ARC supports you within a SIL arrangement, you have critical health supports or your support network would be unavailable or unable to support you during an emergency or disaster.

## **VACCINATIONS**

Our team will support you in gaining any vaccinations that you request. We will work out a plan with you. We will look at how you will get to the vaccination location, the types of support you need, and support you during and after the process. It is not a requirement of ARC that participants have particular vaccinations but encourage individuals to maintain their vaccines, in line with Queensland Health recommendations.

## **INFECTION MANAGEMENT**

Your wellbeing is essential, and we will take all measures required to reduce any contamination in your environment, at the time. The types of infection control we use may include wearing masks or gowns, cleaning surfaces, handwashing and use of antibacterial gels. Please make sure that you keep yourself and your environment as clean as possible.

## **TAKING RISKS**

You have the right to take part in activities that might have some risks involved. We respect your dignity and choice to take reasonable risks. Our focus is on the activity itself, not on judging you. If you want to do something that involves risks, we'll talk with you about it. For potentially dangerous activities, we may ask you to confirm that you're willing to take the risk. We always assume that you can make your own decisions.

We'll work closely with you, discuss your options, and help you make informed choices about the activity.

To ensure your safety, we'll assess both your individual risk factors and the safety of your environment. This assessment includes considering risks when you're not at home. Where activities present a risk to the safety of our staff, we'll discuss our concerns with you and, if necessary, help you find an alternative service for those activities.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

We'll conduct an individual risk assessment and, if you receive in-home support, a home safety check. After the initial assessment, we'll review your risk factors every six months or earlier if needed. If we believe a review is necessary, we'll work with you. Your review might be prompted by changes in your health, living arrangements, or physical environment. Your safety is our top priority, and we'll involve you in the risk assessment process.



## **WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY**

ARC is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all staff working with you, in compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Here are some things you can do to help:

- Inform our coordinators/support workers of any safety concerns in your home.
- Participate in safety assessments of your home.
- Arrange repairs for any hazards identified during our safety assessment.
- Ensure your pets are well-behaved during our services.
- Maintain a smoke-free environment.
- Create a workplace that is free from any form of abuse.
- Treat our support workers with dignity and respect.
- Notify our support workers if you're unwell or need assistance.
- Inform our support workers if your doctor has diagnosed you with a contagious illness.
- Provide suitable and well-maintained cleaning equipment and non-toxic cleaning products.
- Ensure your mobility equipment and other items needed for independent living are available and well-maintained.

During our first service, we'll conduct a safety check and discuss any identified risks with you. We'll continue to review the safety of our services with you in accordance with State and Federal occupational health and safety laws.

## CRITICAL INCIDENT

In the rare event of a serious issue, ARC is here to help you stay safe and well. A serious issue, called a 'critical incident,' can happen during our services and may affect your health, safety, or wellbeing. If it does, we will quickly get the right people involved to support you.

Critical incidents might include things like:

- A bad accident or unexpected death while we are helping you.
- Serious allegations of wrongdoing by one of our staff members.
- Situations where you or someone else is hurt during our services.
- Major emergencies like fires or natural disasters.

At ARC, we have plans to handle these situations:

- Our staff will report any incidents to their supervisor.
- We will fill out a report to understand what happened.
- Our leaders will report serious incidents to the NDIS and other agencies.
- We will help you and your family if you are negatively impacted.
- We will look into the incident and work with you to make things better.
- We'll also review actions taken during the incident and make changes to prevent it from happening again.

Your safety and wellbeing are very important to us. If something serious happens, we will respond quickly to make sure you get the help you need.

## **VIOLENCE, ABUSE, NEGLECT, EXPLOITATION OR DISCRIMINATION**

At ARC, your safety and well-being are our top priorities. You have the right to live in a safe environment free from any kind of harm, including abuse, neglect, or discrimination.

We encourage and fully support anyone who witnesses or suspects any form of abuse towards our participants to report it without fear of reprisal. Abuse can take various forms, such as financial, emotional, social, psychological, sexual, or physical harm, as well as neglect.

You can report any concerns to someone you trust, whether it's one of our staff members, our Chief Services Officer, a family member, an advocate, or a friend you rely on. If you prefer to seek help outside of ARC, you can contact the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. We have included their details at the end of this handbook.

ARC is committed to preventing abuse and neglect. We ensure that all our support workers are skilled, respectful of your rights, and knowledgeable about relevant laws and policies.

If abuse, harm, or neglect has occurred, we will respond swiftly and effectively to protect you from further harm. We will also provide access to counselling, medical and legal support as needed.

If you're reporting any form of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, or discrimination, it's your right to have an advocate accompany and assist you during the process. At ARC, we're committed to providing you with the necessary advocacy support to navigate this process and can arrange an advocate at your request.

# FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT

## COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

We value your feedback, it helps us improve our services. Feedback could be a suggestion, compliment, or complaint. You have the right to give feedback about any part of our services and you can give feedback in the way that is most comfortable for you.

You can submit feedback via the following methods:

METHOD	DETAILS
Visit our website	<a href="https://www.arcinc.org.au/feedback">https://www.arcinc.org.au/feedback</a>
Send an email to	<a href="mailto:feedback@arcinc.org.au">feedback@arcinc.org.au</a>
Send a letter to	Feedback, ARC Disability Services, PO Box 942N North Cairns, 4870

You can also

- Talk to your Coordinator, a Team Leader or Manager at ARC.
- Complete a hard copy form available at reception.
- Ask an advocate or support person to make a complaint for you.

If you are from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CALD) background, you can make a complaint in your primary language with the use of an interpreter.

You can choose to make a complaint anonymously but this may mean you will not hear about the outcome of your complaint. If you choose to provide your name/contact details, we will treat you with respect and dignity.

If the complaint is not anonymous, it will be referred to a designated person who will contact you either by phone or in writing. This will occur within 2-5 business days of receiving the complaint. We may ask you for more information and ask how you would like the problem to be fixed.

We will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint and tell you what we did to fix it. We will ask you for feedback about how you felt your complaint was managed and use this information to help improve our services.

When making a complaint to ARC, your services will not be stopped, and you will not be treated differently.

If you are not happy with the outcome or feel that you are unable to talk with ARC about your feedback or complaint, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission can help with a resolution.

### **NDIA Quality and Safeguards Commission**

You can reach out to the commission by:

<b>METHOD</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>
Filling in an online complaint form	<a href="https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF">https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF</a>
Phone	1800 035 544
National Relay Service:	TTY 133 677 - Ask for 1800 035 544

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

You have the right to give us feedback: positive and negative. We will use any negative feedback to improve our services. Positive feedback lets us know what we are doing well.

We will ask you to tell us your thoughts about our services. We may do this by sending you a survey or asking you to participate in meetings to talk about what you think we can do better.

Sometimes we will ask for your thoughts on a particular part of our service.

For example:

- How we fix complaints.
- How we fix incidents.
- How we respect your rights.

Our service will be audited by an independent audit team to ensure we are meeting the NDIS Practice Standards.

You will be provided the opportunity to participate in the audit process, meaning that you may be asked for your feedback by the audit team. However, your participation in the audit process is not mandatory, and you can choose to withdraw your consent at any time.

We aim to continuously improve the services and supports we offer. The following are some of the tools we use to guide our improvement process:

- Surveys
- Feedback
- Complaints
- Incidents
- Audits

## **CHANGING PROVIDERS OR COMING BACK**

Your needs and interests may change while working with our service, which may mean you need to transition (move) to another provider.

ARC will assist and support you during this process. We will work with the other service providers to ensure your transition is smooth and meets your needs with your approval.

If you leave our service and want to return, we would be pleased for you to come back. Please don't hesitate to contact us through our intake process to discuss.

During temporary absences, such as a hospital visit or a trip away, our team will make a contact plan with you and keep in touch. We can then assist you to planning your re -entry to or exit from our service.

## NDIS COMMISSION

The role of the NDIS Commission is to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services.

Contact the NDIS Commission on **1800 035 544**

Alternatively, you can write to them at:

- [contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au](mailto:contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au)
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission  
PO Box 210  
Penrith NSW 2750

Further details about contacting the NDIS Commission are available on their website: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/contact-us>

## THE OFFICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

The role of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) is to ensure that personal information is protected. The OAIC will investigate complaints about breaches of privacy.

Contact the OAIC on **1300 363 992**

Alternatively, you can write to them at:

- [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner  
GPO Box 5218  
Sydney NSW 2001

Further details about contacting the OAIC are available on their website:

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/>



## HOW TO CONTACT US?

If you need help finding the right person to speak with, contact our general enquiries phone and our team of reception staff will help direct your call to the right person. ARC's general office hours are 8:30pm – 4:30pm, Monday to Friday.

ARC know that emergencies can and do happen outside of business hours. To make sure you always have a way of reaching us, we have setup a dedicated contact number for out-of-hours emergencies. This number also acts as an out-of-hours contact for support cancellation.

CONTACT TYPE	CONTACT INFORMATION
General enquires phone	07 4046 3600
Emergency & Cancellations Phone	0499 111 432
General enquiries email	<a href="mailto:info@arcinc.org.au">info@arcinc.org.au</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.arcinc.org.au">www.arcinc.org.au</a>

## WHERE TO FIND US?

NAME	ADDRESS	CONTACT DETAILS
ARC Head Office	92 Little Street, Manunda	07 4046 3600
ARC Community Hub	92 Little Street, Manunda	07 4046 3613
ARC Community Hall	52 McNamara Street, Manunda	07 4031 8960
ARC City Hub	69 Aumuller Street, Portsmith	07 4243 3241
ARC Aumuller Office	5/90 Aumuller Street, Portsmith	07 4046 3600
ARC 51	51 Louie Piccone Way, Edmonton	07 4046 3651
ARC Holiday House	3 Waratah Drive, Manunda	07 4053 6136