

Advocacy Support Policy and Procedure - New South Wales

1.0 Purpose

121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd recognises the importance of ensuring the participant's right to use an advocate or representative of their choice is maintained. All actual and potential participants can select and involve an advocate or a chosen representative to participate or act on their behalf.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all participants, staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

3.0 Definition

Advocacy is the active support for a cause or position, and, in this context, it is an expression of support for a person who may find it difficult to speak for him or herself. It may include achieving social justice, improving a person's well-being, preventing abusive, harmful and discriminatory treatment, or stopping unjust and unfair treatment from meeting their fundamental needs and interests.

Below is a list of six types of advocacies:

Type of Advocacy	Description
1. Individual advocacy	The advocacy aims to prevent or address instances of discrimination or abuse using a one-on-one approach
2. Systemic advocacy	They are working to influence or secure long-term changes to ensure the collective rights and interests of people with disabilities.
3. Family advocacy	A family member advocates to provide a voice on behalf of another family member
4. Citizen advocacy	Matches people with disabilities to volunteers.
5. Legal advocacy	Upholds the rights and interests of people with disabilities by addressing the legal aspects of discrimination, abuse and neglect.
6. Self-advocacy	Supports people with disabilities to advocate for themselves or as a group

4.0 Policy

All participants have the right to use and choose an advocate to represent their interests and speak on their behalf.

Our staff will work cooperatively with the participant's nominated advocate and show the same respect to the advocate as shown to the participant. When participants cannot advocate for themselves, our organisation's policy ensures that their interests are represented and supported using a substitute decision-maker.

4.1 Advocacy principles

- 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd will ensure that all staff receive training in the use of advocates.
- 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd will maintain printed material on advocacy and advocacy services.
- 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd will maintain local advocacy resource/contact lists.
- 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd will work cooperatively with any nominated advocate chosen by the participant and show the same respect to the advocate as is shown to the participant.
- 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd will utilise a governance system to enable 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd to identify where a participant needs advocacy.

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Initial assessment (participant without an advocate)

- Discuss the participant's right to appoint and have an advocate present to speak on their behalf.
- Provide the participant with advocacy information.
- Explain to the participant their rights regarding advocacy as per the 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd's Service Agreement and Charter of Rights and the NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021.
- Advise the participant that if they wish to utilise advocacy services, 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd can assist them in contacting any of these services.
- Provide the Authority to Act as an Advocate Form to the participant if they decide to utilise the services of an advocate. The completed and signed Form is stored in the participant's file.
- Provide the Third-Party Information Release Consent Form to the participant. The completed and signed Form is stored in the participant's file.
- Discuss and document any specific communication issues or protocols between the service and the advocate (email, phone, or other methods).
- Inform the participant that they can add and withdraw approval for an advocate to act on their behalf, as

5.2 Initial assessment (participant with advocate/representative)

Before initial assessment

- Ensure during initial contact with the participant that they are informed of their right to an advocate and record the advocate's details if they have one.
- Determine the best means of communication (refer to Preferred Method of Communication Policy)
- Advise the participant of the need to complete the Authority to Act as an Advocate Form and provide the appropriate Form to the participant.
- Contact the nominated advocate to ensure they are aware they are nominated and confirm that they agree to advocate.
- Place the completed Authority to Act as an Advocate Form in the participant's file.
- Ensure the potential participant is aware of their advocacy rights, including the right to have an advocate present for all assessments, meetings and communication between themselves and 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd.
- Schedule the participant's initial assessment at a time and date to allow the advocate to be present.
- Arrange for an identified advocate to be present at the assessment.

At initial assessment

- Request the completion of the Authority to Act as an Advocate Form if it has not yet been provided. Explain to the participant that the Form must be completed for 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd to recognise the nominated person as the participant's advocate formally.
- Gather information about the advocate, such as contact details and methodology.
- Explain that the participant has the right to change their advocate. The participant should document changes using the Authority to Act as an Advocate Form in writing (Easy Read form available).

5.3 Working with advocates

- Identify the existence of an advocate in the participant's file.
- Discuss and document any specific communication issues or protocols between the service and the advocate.
- Communicate with a participant's advocate and involve them in goal setting, planning service responses, and referrals for additional or alternative services.
- Provide the advocate with ongoing information regarding the health and wellbeing of the participant, as agreed.
- Ensure that all on-call workers are aware of the participant's advocate.
- Making the 121 Authority to Act as ands Advocate form available on brevity

5.4 Continuing work with advocates

- During reassessments, visits, or meetings, provide participants with written and verbal information that reminds them of their right to have (or change) an advocate.
- Remind participants of their right to have (or change) an advocate during each annual review of services or written communication.
- Communicate effectively and work cooperatively with advocates.
- Refer participants assessed as 'not able to manage their service' (and who have no advocate) to the NSW Department of Justice, Public Guardian, as appropriate.

Note: A web link accessing disability advocacy services is available. As a postcode, town or suburb is required to be entered to access services, 121 Supports Hunter Pty Ltd will guide and assist participants. Go to [Disability Advocacy Finder](#) on the Department of Social Services website.

6.0 Related documents

- 121 Employee Training Register
- 121 Employee Training Plan-Record
- 121 Employee Induction Checklist
- 121 Authority to Act as an Advocate Form
- 121 Third-Party Information Release Consent Form

7.0 References

- Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
- Disability Regulation 2014 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
- National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021

8.0 Advocacy information

Organisations	Websites
Ask Izzy (Formally Disability Advocacy Search)	https Ask Izzy .Org

Australian Centre for Disability Law	disabilitylaw.org.au
Autism Asperger's Advocacy Australia (A4)	a4.org.au
The Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Australia and New Zealand	asan-au.org
Blind Citizens Australia	bca.org.au
Brain Injury Australia	braininjuryaustralia.org.au
Children and Young People with Disability Australia	cyda.org.au
Deaf Australia	deafaustalia.org.au
Deafness Forum of Australia	deafnessforum.org.au
Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)	da.org.au
First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN)	fpdn.org.au
Human Rights Council of Australia	hrca.org.au
Inclusion Australia (National Council on Intellectual Disability - NCID)	inclusionaustralia.org.au
Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS)	idrs.org.au
Mental Health Australia	mhaustalia.org
National Disability Services	nds.org.au
National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)	neda.org.au
People With Disability Australia	pwd.org.au
Physical Disability Australia (PDA)	pda.org.au
Short Statured People of Australia	sspa.org.au
Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA)	wwda.org.au

8.1 New South Wales advocacy providers

Advocacy Providers	Website
Ability Advocacy Service (AIAS NSW)	abilityadvocacy.org.au
Aboriginal Disability Network NSW (ADN NSW)	adnsw.org.au
Action for People with Disabilities Incorporated	actionadvocacy.org.au
Advocacy for Inclusion	advocacyforinclusion.org
Australian Centre for Disability Law	disabilitylaw.org.au

Central Coast Disability Network - Individual Advocacy Project	ccdn.com.au
DAISI Services Limited	daisi.asn.au
Deaf Society of NSW	deafsociety.org.au
Disability Advocacy (NSW)	da.org.au
Family Advocacy	familyadvocacy.com
Information on Disability & Education Awareness Services (IDEAS)	ideas.org.au
Illawarra Advocacy	illawarraadvocacy.org.au
Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS)	idrs.org.au
Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA)	mdaa.org.au
NSW Council for Intellectual Disability	cid.org.au
NSW Disability Advocacy Network	ndan.org.au
Penrith Disabilities Resource Centre Inc.	pdrc.org.au
People with Disabilities Australia (PWDA)	pwd.org.au
Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN)	pdcnsw.org.au
Regional Disability Advocacy	rdas.org.au
Self-Advocacy Sydney Inc	sasinc.com.au
Side by Side Advocacy Inc	sidebyside.org.au
Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCIA)	scia.org.au
Synapse Australia's Brain Injury Organisation (NSW)	synapse.org.au