

Direct Support Staff Handbook

Updated June 2022



“ There is nothing more powerful than a community discovering what it cares deeply about”



Welcome

Welcome to the ConneXtions!

We value your time and the interest that you have already shown in supporting people with disabilities to achieve their goals and outcomes and we look forward to working with you to best support the people we work with and their families.

What do we do

At ConneXtions we work to realise inclusive lives and communities through good planning, facilitating and strengthening informal supports, exploring valued roles, community participation, community building and building networks to support people to develop skills, knowledge and experience and employment.

We support people to think about their life goals, plan the supports they need. We work with people to explore what options exist, and/or can be created, to best fit the person and their lifestyle. We support people to self -direct their own lives and seek to build the capacity of people with disabilities and their networks and/or self- manage and/or self-direct, customise, coordinate and/or manage their services, support plans and team arrangements to achieve the good things in life

Our Expectations of You

It is all of our roles and responsibilities to support our participants in accordance with their needs and wishes and/or the support plan and strategies of support.

Many of the people we support are not able to advocate for themselves and are not comfortable letting us know when they are not receiving appropriate support.

We expect that staff will attend, listen to and respond to the verbal and non - verbal messages people communicate to us. The people we support will let us know either verbally or through their behaviour what they want. Sometimes we need to listen to them and their behaviour to work out what they are trying to tell us.

We have a number of processes to ensure we are meeting the needs of each person, we support and that all staff has a thorough understanding of their role.

Title: HR – Direct Support Worker Induction Handbook	<i>Uncontrolled When Printed</i>	Version: 4.0
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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 2

The following methods of formal review are available including

- An individualised support plans
- communication plans
- positive behaviour support strategies
- regular conversations and reviews
- An outcomes approach to how we work with a person.

Your responsibility

We expect all workers to be able to support people in a range of situations.

As an employee with ConneXtions you are expected to have the following skills and knowledge

- Understanding of a person centred approach
- Understanding of the Human Rights framework
- Understanding of infection control principles
- Understanding of alternate communication methods
- Understanding of importance of privacy and confidentiality
- First Aid including CPR
- An ability to implement manual handling procedures
- An ability to provide personal care
- A working knowledge of the Policies and Procedures of the organisation, how to access them and act in accordance with them.
- An ability to work constructively with your colleagues to ensure seamless delivery of service to participants
- Take ownership of your learning , Health and Wellbeing and actively participate in supervision

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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 3

- To seek clarification of roles and responsibilities and support needs of people you are working with , ask and be proactive in professional development , and information you need to do your job effectively and safely

YOUR TOOLS and ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Make sure you have the on call/rostering and/afterhours numbers – please ensure you have these** have you been shown how and when to contact
- **Downloaded the Visi Case app and know how to access it to check rosters, log on and off, enter case notes, incidents and leave –**
- **Check Support Plans and Participant Information** – ask questions about program and the routines and how best to support the person
- **Support bag** – We encourage all staff to be responsible for their support and safety equipment so that you have access to cleaning /medical and personal care supplies including PPE
- **Know how to access policies and procedures**
- **I know how who to contact in my team**

Dress Code:

- Smart casual
- Closed shoes
- No jewellery or clothing that if grabbed will cause injury.

Smoking:

Smoking is NOT permitted whilst working with a person

Privacy and Confidentiality

ConneXtions has a strict policy of privacy and confidentiality that all people, volunteers, visitors and workers must adhere to. You may only talk about people you are supporting to your supervisor.

Staff are not to share, copy or keep any information that is kept electronically or in hard copy about the programs, services, people we support unless it is directly related to the

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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 4

program and information relating to the people you support will be available for you to access through the Client Information and Management System (CIMS) which is VisiCase.

Information Technology:

Please familiarise yourself with the IT and social media policy and make sure that you understand that you cannot share information on any social media platform.

Connexions does not post information about people we support. Their achievements and lives are their own. Their lives and their achievements are private and their process is not for us to share or disclose. Their stories and lives are there and not our stories to tell! If families or participants wish to post information then can but as a rule we do not share or post information. Please respect this!

Note: Please do not give anyone access or show anyone your enterprise portal as it contains confidential information held within it and it is a breach of your duty of care.

Information Management – Client and Staff

All rosters are organised by our Workforce Options team. Please send all queries to our rostering officer. You can access your rosters through the enterprise app and you can accept shifts and communicate with us via the app as well. We publish rosters daily so please ensure that you check your rosters and log your availability and unavailability as well. Please familiarise yourselves with your rosters, how to log on and off a shift, make case notes, understand goals and outcomes and know what you are expected to do on a shift.

Support and Care Plans – Updated Regularly

Client information, Health Records, Goals, Outcomes and Routines are recorded and captured in VisiCase. This information will assist you to provide the right support. Alerts and behaviour support strategies are also updated and information is available in the client record to assist you to work effectively with the people you support. Please advise if you are aware of anything new that needs to be updated and report it to the Workforce Team and they will update the information.

Title: HR – Direct Support Worker Induction Handbook	<i>Uncontrolled When Printed</i>	Version: 4.0
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Review Date: 1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 5

Case plan and support Plan reviews are undertaken at least annually and/or as required. Case notes are critical to assist us to monitor goals and outcomes so please ensure that they are relevant, meaningful and specific to the support that you are providing.

Continuous Improvement

As we advance in our understanding and use of the new client information management system (CIMS) we will provide you with updates and we are still implementing the system so please provide any feedback to the rostering team and they will make the necessary updates in the system in order to provide you with the information you need to do to do your job. We review the case notes for people we support on the services and supports that are delivered and make new goals. These reports are critical for ensuring that we are all working on outcomes and can make changes to people supports as their needs change.

Incident Management

Please familiarise yourself with the CIMS and know where and how to record any incidents that occur while you are working with people you support. It is your responsibility and duty of care to log and issues and concerns so that we can ensure that they are followed up. If you have any concerns about the Health and Wellbeing of people you are working with please log this as an incident and speak to your line manager so that we can ensure that these are followed up.

Hours of Work

Personal Assistants/Support Workers supporting people in their own homes or in the community receive individual support hours depending on the needs of the person receiving support. These are outlined in your rosters and any changes or specific tasks and information you may need are outlines in the shift. Please read these as they contain relevant information about pickups, drop offs, emergency contacts, any changes and or specific information relevant to a specific shift.

Use of your Personal Car

Title: HR – Direct Support Worker Induction Handbook	<i>Uncontrolled When Printed</i>	Version: 4.0
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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 6

Transporting participants and travelling with them can only occur if it is part of your rostered shift and any kms allocated to a shift are approved and staff will only be able to be paid for the agreed Kms. Please seek further advice on this and be aware of any special conditions and limits

Vehicle Safety & Staff documentation

To ensure that staff are well prepared when travelling with participants a vehicle check will be performed as part of your OHS, WHS and safety routine. You must have comprehensive care insurance to transport participants, which must be presented as part of on boarding.

Please ensure that we have a copy of your driver's license and insurance documents and that these remain current. We enter first aid, insurance, driver licence and Working with Children and NDIS worker screening and training into the Human Resource Information Management System (Flare) it will provide alerts when there are to expire. It is your responsibility to ensure that all your mandatory requirements are maintained, including CPR updates.

Please upload any training that you have completed as well or advise us at your annual review so that we can acknowledge and develop further individual training plans with you.

Our Practice - How we Support People

Participants each have an individual plan and a schedule of activities that are regularly reviewed with them and reflect their needs and interests.

As a support worker it is your responsibility to know what the focus of the support a participant is to receive on any day and their likes and dislikes and support preferences

If you do not know the person, please ensure that you ask the right questions and read their support plans especially the "About me documents". Please ask for information about the goal and or outcome the person is working towards by participating in the activities that they have selected.

Title: HR – Direct Support Worker Induction Handbook	<i>Uncontrolled When Printed</i>	Version: 4.0
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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 7

The activities are chosen by the participants, their families and carers and all outcomes are linked to an individual's individual plan and staff are encouraged and expected to provide feedback on the outcomes and progress of all participants on a regular basis.

Participants partake in activities they choose depending on their individual plan

Support Plans

Any alerts on medication or other will list the name of the person and refer you to the person's individual file.

Each person is an individual with their own gifts, talents and abilities and is on their own individual journey.

Each person has a story to tell. It makes them who they are and it is important that we see the person, know what they want to achieve by participating in the activities and events and support them to achieve this.

By taking a Person Centred Approach to supporting people, we recognise and respect the individuality of each person. By listening to people and their stories we are able to work with each person to assist, they achieve their goals and aspirations.

Person Centred Practice

Each person supported by ConneXtions is invited to complete an individual plan that will outline their goals and aspirations whilst taking into account their needs.

Each person's support requirements is linked to a person's individual plan. In the Community Inclusion programs, this would mean a person's shift plan is linked to their individual plan and staff are to read and know the requirements of each person that they work with.

The activities a person takes part in are linked to their individual plan. This is to ensure that all supports provided are individually planned and designed to assist a person achieve their goals and aspirations.

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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 8

Please take time to read these plans carefully. If you have any queries please speak to your coordinator.

Accessing Information – Support Plans & Needs

All plans for people supported are in the person's individual file.

They provide us with some information about the person, their likes, dislikes, needs, preferences, communication and personal care needs.

Individual Support and Health Plans

Individual Plans – outline the individual story and are regularly updated the more we know and learn about the person. This information can be accessed via the participant's portal and Client Information Management System (CIMS). You have access to the client information electronically.

Behaviour support, eating and drinking plans, epilepsy and health and wellbeing plans, medication and emergency contacts and routines. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the support plans prior to working with a participant and ensure that you have read the one page profiles.

This information is private and can only be shared with people who the person has given permission.

The Participant information provides information about the person, their likes and dislikes please make sure you read them and that if you find out something new tell the team so they can be updated.

Staff Support and Supervision

ConneXtions staff always carry the on call phone number and you are encouraged to call the office to report and issues or concerns or communicate any information about the participants to the Key Workers.

You are encouraged to be proactive in finding out about what is expected of you and to seek feedback on how you are going.

On Call and After Hours Support

Title: HR – Direct Support Worker Induction Handbook	<i>Uncontrolled When Printed</i>	Version: 4.0
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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 9

Please call the on call phone if you need any assistance, support is only a call away

Learning and Development

ConneXtions provides education and training opportunities to all workers. There are a range of learning and development on line modules that you can access. Please request access by contacting the rostering team. Staff are expected to take responsibility for their ongoing personal and professional development and actively seek opportunities to maintain and develop their skills, including maintaining their first aid certificates.

First Aid

Staff are expected to hold a current First Aid and CPR Certificate and to keep this updated at all times. Training opportunities are provided throughout the year and you are encouraged to discuss with you supervisor your training needs. The people provide valuable learning opportunities to us we support every day and staff are encouraged to think about what they have learnt on the job and about the each other every day.

Complaints

Many of the people supported are not able to advocate for themselves or feel comfortable in making a complaint. A number of processes are available to provide people the opportunity to comment on the support they receive and provide up to date information to workers.

At times you will be asked to participate in one or more of the following review systems

- Case meetings & Briefings and Participant Meetings and Updates
- Individual plan reviews
- Support coordinator meetings and reviews

Policies and Procedures

Workplace policies and procedures can be access via flare – please provide feedback and or if you cannot find something specific please contact you line Manager or a member of the HR team and they will be able to send these to you.

Staff Benefits – Salary scarifying & Professional Body

Title: HR – Direct Support Worker Induction Handbook	<i>Uncontrolled When Printed</i>	Version: 4.0
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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 10

Access Pay – as a not for profit organisation there are attractive tax benefits and salary sacrificing we encourage you to contact Access Pay to see how these may be of benefit to you and your individual circumstances. Staff are able to join the National Disability Practitioners Network for (free) as an employee of Connexions there are a range of resources and

Health Safety and Wellbeing (HSW)

ConneXtions is committed to providing a nurturing and positive HSW culture that focuses on delivering services to people according to their needs and aspirations while ensuring the HSW of all persons within the work environment.

COVID19 protocols must be adhered to at all times. The mandatory training “Infection control – COVID19” explains all of the requirement to ensure you, our staff and participants are kept safe. If unwell stay home, get tested and return to work when cleared and are well. Connexions following the Department of Health Guidelines and recommendations in relation to immunisation requirements

Please ensure that you have access to PPE and that you include this in your support bag and that you are aware of any Health alerts and monitor your health and the health of people you support, whilst you are supporting them. Please log any incidents or concerns and contact your line manager if you need any further information and strategies to support you in the course of providing support.

Staff Incidents /Injuries/Risk and Concerns

All incidents, injuries or illnesses (regardless of severity) are to be reported to your direct supervisor/coordinator prior to end of the shift where practical or within 24 hours of event occurring . If you are injured as, part of your employment an incident, report in the CIMS if this relates to a client and or if staff related in the HRIMS. Contact your direct line man anger and send an email to incidents@connexions.org.au

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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 11

An investigation will be conducted with you, and your Supervisor. If you require time off from work because of workplace injury, return to work opportunities will be discussed with you.

Complaints and Grievances

If you have a complaint or grievance, we encourage you to raise it so that we can work through it at ConneXtions. We have a saying which is “everything is figure-out-able”. A copy of the complaints resolution process is available in the HR policy and procedure Part 2 of the Policy and Procedure Manual.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

If an employee requires assistance from (EAP) because of an incident that has occurred as part of their employment we will arrange this as soon possible. Request a Flyer

Our Commitment to Quality

“Quality service delivery is everyone’s business and responsibility all of the time.”

You are expected to provide a quality service to the participants at all times and perform your duties in accordance with the organisations policies and procedures.

We are mindful that our reputation is only as good as the quality of the support that we all provide. This is a team effort and that we regularly get feedback for other staff, people in the community and participants about the quality of the services and supports that they receive.

You would be surprised to know what community members know the people you are supporting and we get feedback from community members and families regularly.

Communities keep people safe and the ConneXtions Community is a very large community!

Your Contributions are Welcomed and Valued!

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Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 12

Staff are encouraged to make any ideas for improving what and how we work known. We are continually looking at ways to improve what we do-so no ideas are too crazy

You may be involved in sporting clubs, interests groups, or have hobbies and interests that we could harness to continue to do what we do even better.

Please let us know what else you would like to have known at the commencement of your employment or placement with us – so that others can benefit from your experience.

Welcome Aboard - Your Contributions are welcome - email or speak to your Manager about any ideas or opportunities that may be harnessed or explored.

Please email me Toni.reeves@ConneXtions.org.au 0407 299777 if I can be of further assistance anytime

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Created by: Executive Director	Ratified by: Manager Quality	Issued Date: 19 Feb. 23
Review Date:1/6/2023	Printed Date:	Page No: 13