

STAFF HANDBOOK

Version 1.1

Open Care Community Services Pty Ltd

t/a Open Care Connect

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Contact Information

Open Care Connect

Address: 32 Ranfurly Circuit, Melton West VIC 3338

Phone: 0435 335 444

ABN: 22 668 873 694

NDIS: 4-JU2I9UJ

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SECTION 1: ABOUT OPEN CARE CONNECT

About Us

Open Care Community Services Pty Ltd, trading as Open Care Connect, is a registered NDIS provider committed to delivering high-quality disability support and care services. We support people with disabilities to live independently and participate meaningfully in their communities.

Our Mission

To empower people with disabilities through person-centred support, promoting independence, dignity, and quality of life.

Our Values

Person-Centred Support

We place the individual at the centre of all we do, respecting their preferences, goals, and aspirations.

Integrity and Accountability

We operate with transparency and take responsibility for our actions and outcomes.

Excellence and Innovation

We continuously improve our practices and adopt innovative approaches to service delivery.

Respect and Dignity

We treat all participants, staff, and stakeholders with respect and uphold their dignity.

Our Locations

32 Ranfurlie Circuit, Melton West VIC 3338

Contact Details

Phone: 0435 335 444

ABN: 22 668 873 694

NDIS Provider ID: 4-JU2I9UJ

Orientation Process

All new staff members are required to complete a comprehensive orientation program within their first two weeks of employment. This includes:

Induction to company policies and procedures

NDIS Practice Standards and Code of Conduct training

Work Health and Safety induction

Site-specific induction at your assigned location

SECTION 2: YOUR EMPLOYMENT

Employment Rights

As an employee of Open Care Connect, you have the following rights:

Fair and non-discriminatory treatment in all aspects of employment

Safe and healthy working conditions

Compliance with the SCHADS Award 2010 and relevant legislation

Reasonable access to training and professional development

Confidentiality of personal information

Access to grievance and complaint procedures

Employee Responsibilities

In return, we expect all staff members to:

Comply with all company policies and procedures

Maintain professional standards in conduct and appearance

Contribute to a safe and supportive work environment

Respect the rights, privacy, and dignity of participants

Communicate effectively with management and colleagues

Participate in required training and professional development

Working Hours and Breaks

Working hours and break entitlements are governed by the SCHADS Award 2010. All staff members are entitled to:

Paid breaks in accordance with award requirements

Meal breaks as per relevant legislation

Reasonable notice of roster changes

Pay Details

All employees receive payment via electronic transfer on a fortnightly basis. Pay rates are determined by:

Classification under the SCHADS Award 2010

Years of service and qualifications

Applicable penalties and loadings

Applying for Leave

All leave applications must be submitted to your supervisor as far in advance as possible. Leave entitlements include:

Annual leave

Sick leave

Bereavement leave

Maternity/Parental leave

Long Service Leave (after eligible service)

Maternity and Parental Leave

Eligible employees are entitled to maternity and parental leave in accordance with the Fair Work Act 2009. Open Care Connect supports and encourages the taking of parental leave.

Long Service Leave

Long Service Leave is available to eligible employees in accordance with Victorian legislation. Details regarding entitlements and calculation will be provided by the Finance Department.

Bereavement Leave

Compassionate leave is available for eligible employees to allow time to grieve and attend funerals or memorial services. Contact your manager for specific entitlements.

Superannuation

Open Care Connect makes superannuation contributions on behalf of all eligible employees in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992. Contributions are made to your nominated fund or the default fund.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when your personal interests could influence your professional judgment or decisions. All staff must:

Declare any potential conflicts of interest to management

Avoid situations where personal interests compromise professional duties

Refrain from accepting gifts or benefits that could be perceived as influencing decisions

Changes to Personal Information

All staff members must notify their manager of any changes to personal information, including:

Address and contact details

Emergency contact information

Tax file number or banking details

Relevant qualifications or certifications

SECTION 3: NDIS REQUIREMENTS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

NDIS Practice Standards

Open Care Connect is committed to delivering services in accordance with the NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators. All staff must understand and comply with these standards.

Rights and Responsibilities of Participants

We ensure that all participants have their rights respected, including:

The right to control their own support and make decisions about their lives

The right to privacy and confidentiality

The right to be treated with dignity and respect

The right to safe and quality services

Code of Conduct

All staff members must adhere to the following principles:

1. Honesty and Integrity

Be truthful in all dealings and maintain high ethical standards.

2. Respect and Dignity

Treat all participants, colleagues, and stakeholders with respect and courtesy.

3. Confidentiality

Protect the privacy and confidential information of all participants.

4. Accountability

Take responsibility for your actions and decisions.

5. Safety and Wellbeing

Prioritize the safety and wellbeing of participants and colleagues.

Consent and Communication

All support and services must be provided with the informed consent of the participant. Staff must:

Obtain clear consent before providing support

Communicate effectively and ensure understanding

Use interpreters or communication aids where necessary

Advocacy and Rights

Open Care Connect supports participants to exercise their rights and access advocacy services where appropriate. Staff should encourage participants to:

Make their own decisions and choices

Access independent advocacy services

Raise concerns or complaints without fear of reprisal

SECTION 4: WORK HEALTH & SAFETY

Workplace Health and Safety Obligations

Open Care Connect is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all staff. We comply with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and associated regulations.

Hazard Reporting

All staff members are responsible for identifying and reporting hazards in the workplace. If you identify a hazard:

Immediately notify your supervisor or manager

Complete a hazard report form

Cooperate with investigations and corrective actions

Incident and Injury Reporting

All incidents, injuries, and near-misses must be reported immediately to your manager. A formal incident report must be completed within 24 hours.

First Aid

Open Care Connect provides first aid facilities and trained first aiders at all worksites. The location of first aid kits and names of trained first aiders will be provided during your induction.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all company vehicles and at worksites where this policy has been established. Designated smoking areas may be provided in accordance with local regulations.

Company Vehicles and Equipment

Staff who use company vehicles for work-related activities must:

Hold a current, valid driver's licence

Comply with all traffic laws and road safety rules

Report any accidents or damage immediately

Maintain the vehicle in clean and safe condition

Use seat belts and follow all safety procedures

Workplace Clothing and Equipment

Staff are required to wear appropriate workplace clothing and use provided safety equipment. Specific requirements will be outlined during induction and by your supervisor.

Bullying and Harassment Prevention

Open Care Connect maintains a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. All staff members have the right to work in an environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and vilification.

Bullying may include:

Repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker

Creating a risk to health and safety

If you experience or witness bullying, you should:

Report it immediately to your manager or HR department

Document the incidents with dates and details

Utilize the Complaints and Grievances procedure

SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Commitment to Professional Development

Open Care Connect recognizes that continuous learning and professional development are essential for delivering quality services. We support and encourage all staff to develop their skills and knowledge.

Mandatory Training

All staff members must complete mandatory training including:

NDIS Practice Standards and Code of Conduct

Work Health and Safety induction

Privacy and Confidentiality

Manual handling and ergonomics (where relevant)

First aid certification (where required)

Disability awareness training

Ongoing Professional Development

Staff are encouraged to pursue relevant qualifications and training to enhance their professional capabilities. Information about available training opportunities will be provided by management.

External Training and Courses

Requests for external training or course fees should be directed to your manager. Approval is dependent on relevance to your role and organizational needs.

Supervision and Mentoring

Regular supervision is provided to all staff members to support professional development, discuss performance, and address any concerns.

SECTION 6: PERFORMANCE AND CONDUCT

Probation Period

New employees are typically subject to a probation period, usually 3 months from the date of commencement. During this period, the employment may be terminated with one week's notice. Regular feedback will be provided to support your adjustment to the role.

Performance Appraisals

All staff members will receive formal performance appraisals at least annually. These appraisals provide:

Feedback on performance against role expectations

Identification of strengths and areas for development

Discussion of career development goals

Opportunity to discuss concerns or issues

Conduct Expectations

All staff members are expected to maintain professional standards of conduct at all times. This includes:

Presenting a professional appearance

Being punctual and reliable

Treating colleagues and participants with respect

Complying with all policies and procedures

Maintaining confidentiality and privacy

Misconduct and Disciplinary Action

Serious misconduct or repeated breaches of policy may result in disciplinary action. Open Care Connect follows a fair and transparent disciplinary process that may include:

Verbal warning

Written warning

Final warning

Termination of employment

Termination of Employment

Employment may be terminated by either party. The notice period depends on the terms of your employment contract and length of service. Open Care Connect will comply with all legal requirements regarding termination.

SECTION 7: COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Complaints and Grievance Procedure

Open Care Connect is committed to resolving complaints and grievances promptly, fairly, and confidentially. All staff members have the right to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

Step 1: Informal Resolution

If you have a concern or grievance, the first step is to attempt informal resolution. Speak directly with the person involved or your immediate supervisor to discuss the issue and seek a resolution.

Step 2: Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful, submit a formal written complaint to your manager or the HR department. Include:

A detailed description of the complaint

Dates and times of relevant incidents

Names of witnesses (if applicable)

Desired outcome or resolution

Step 3: Investigation and Resolution

Once a formal complaint is received, it will be investigated promptly. You will be kept informed of the progress and outcome. The company will work with all parties to achieve a fair resolution.

Step 4: Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may appeal in writing to the Director within 10 working days. The appeal will be reviewed and a final decision provided.

Confidentiality and Support

All complaints are handled confidentially. Staff raising complaints will be provided with appropriate support throughout the process. Open Care Connect maintains a zero-tolerance policy for victimization or retaliation against staff making complaints.

SECTION 8: KEY POLICIES SUMMARY

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

All staff members must protect the privacy and confidentiality of participant information. This includes:

Not disclosing personal information without consent

Secure handling and storage of confidential records

Compliance with privacy legislation and regulations

Proper disposal of confidential materials

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Open Care Connect is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all staff and participants. We do not discriminate based on:

Age, race, colour, national origin

Gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation

Religion, disability, or political belief

Marital or family status, or any other protected attribute

Risk Management Policy

Open Care Connect implements comprehensive risk management procedures to identify, assess, and mitigate risks. All staff must:

Report identified risks to management

Implement risk control measures

Participate in risk management training

Continuous Improvement Policy

We are committed to continuous improvement of our services and operations. Staff are encouraged to:

Provide feedback and suggestions for improvement

Participate in quality review processes

Engage in regular supervision and feedback

Gifts and Benefits Policy

Staff members must not accept gifts, benefits, or services that could be perceived as creating an obligation or conflict of interest. However, small gifts of nominal value are acceptable in normal business circumstances.

Social Media and Communication Policy

Staff must be mindful of their social media conduct and ensure:

Participant and organizational confidentiality is maintained online

No defamatory or inappropriate content about the organization is posted

Professional conduct is maintained in all online communication

Substance Abuse Policy

Open Care Connect maintains a substance-free workplace. Staff must not report to work under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs. Testing may be conducted where safety risks exist.

Dress Code and Appearance

Staff are expected to maintain a professional appearance appropriate to their role. Specific dress code requirements will be communicated by management and may vary by location.

SECTION 9: CONTACT INFORMATION AND KEY NUMBERS

Open Care Connect Head Office

Address: 32 Ranfurlie Circuit, Melton West VIC 3338

Phone: 0435 335 444

Email: contact@opencareconnect.com.au

ABN: 22 668 873 694

NDIS Provider ID: 4-JU2I9UJ

Key Contacts

Director: [Director Name]

HR Manager: [HR Manager Name]

Manager - Operations: [Operations Manager Name]

Work Health & Safety Officer: [WHS Officer Name]

Emergency Services

In case of emergency, always call 000 (Triple Zero) for:

Fire, police, or ambulance

Life-threatening situations

Serious accidents or incidents

Support Services

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Available to all staff for counseling and support services (details provided separately)

Work Health & Safety Hotline: 0435 335 444

HR Support: 0435 335 444

External Resources

Fair Work Ombudsman: www.fairwork.gov.au | 13 13 94

WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au | 1800 136 089

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission: www.ndiscommission.gov.au

This handbook provides general information and should be read in conjunction with your individual employment contract and detailed policy documents. Open Care Connect reserves the right to update policies and procedures as required. All staff will be notified of any significant changes.

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Custodian: Director, Open Care Community Services Pty Ltd