

Participant Money and Property Policy and Procedure



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- maximise each participant's control of their funding and finances.
- support participants to access and spend their own money as they determine within their available budget.
- ensure that our staff do not give financial advice or information other than what would be required under a participant's plan.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff interacting with participants utilising their money, equipment, or belongings during AACCA support.

If AACCA staff are involved with handling a participant's money or transaction cards, strict procedures contained in this policy will always be followed to protect the participant from financial exploitation.

POLICY

AACCA will ensure that all financial transactions and procedures are implemented to meet the requirements of all legislation and contracts. The procedures outlined in this policy will be strictly followed to safeguard all participants and our staff.

The participant's money, or other property, is only used with the consent of the participant and for the purpose intended by the participant. Staff must not give financial advice or information.

All participants requiring financial assistance must approve the arrangement and sign a Service Agreement and Consent Form. The participant's family/carer or advocate must also sign the agreement. All documents will be kept in the participant's electronic file, and directions or guidelines for support required will be outlined in the Participant Support Plan.

PROCEDURE

Home visits

Staff must only use and touch the participant's property to deliver a service, i.e., the use of equipment in completing tasks such as assisting in dressing and using a communication aid.

Staff must not access the participant's money without their consent. If the participant requests the purchase of an item, then the support worker must document the expenditure by keeping a copy of the receipt and completing a Participant Money Record Form.

Financial management guidelines

At times, participants may require assistance with their finances, e.g., paying bills, banking or shopping. Staff must follow the guidelines and procedures outlined below when financially assisting a participant.

- Staff are not allowed access to a participant's personal identification number (PIN) or use an automatic teller machine (ATM) on the participant's behalf.

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- Transaction receipts must be documented and recorded using the Participant Money Record Form for the following:
 - money received
 - money spent
 - money returned
- The staff member must be sure to count the money in front of the participant on receipt and return.
- Staff must record all financial transactions carried out for a participant on a Participant Money Record Form. Records must be documented clearly, accurately and immediately.
- Staff **must not** give participants or their companions financial advice or act as a witness for any legal documents.
- Staff **must not** accept money from participants.
- Staff are discouraged from accepting gifts from individual participants or families. Any gifts received must be reported to the manager. Gifts should be shared with the wider team.

Staff procedure – handling participant money

- The staff member is to immediately record the amount of money received from the participant (cash, cheque, voucher) on the Participant Money Record Form
- The staff member must count any cash carefully in front of the participant.
- Both the staff member and participant are to sign the entry where possible, confirming that the correct details have been recorded. In some circumstances, a family member/carer may sign the record on behalf of the participant.
- The staff member is to complete the transaction and obtain transaction receipts.
- Staff must carefully count out and return any money to the participant and provide all transaction receipts to the participant/family member/carer or their advocate.

Suspected financial abuse

Staff must be aware of signs of financial exploitation when working with participants.

Staff members must follow the AACA Incident Reporting procedure if they suspect a participant is being financially exploited.

Monitoring, evaluating and reporting

AACA prioritises a continuous improvement culture to facilitate the refinement of our services and processes. Stakeholder input is encouraged.

All AACA's policies are reviewed annually. Policy reviews also consider the results attained through monitoring and evaluation and changes in legislation.

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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Consent Form
- Participant Money Record Form

REFERENCES

- Australian Securities Industry Council (financial abuse)
- Corporations Act 2001
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2018
- Privacy Act (1988)
- Provider Registration Guide to Sustainability
- Terms of Business for Registered Providers NDIS
- Work Health and Safety Act 201