

1.0 PURPOSE

Autism Queensland understands there are times when planned sessions cannot go ahead. Costs are incurred by Autism Queensland regardless of whether a client attends a session.

This policy aims to minimise the negative effect on both Autism Queensland and its clients when a session is cancelled.

2.0 SCOPE

This Policy applies to all employees of Autism Queensland. A reference to “employees” or “staff” includes permanent, fixed-term, temporary and casual employees, directors, contractors, volunteers and other representatives acting on behalf of Autism Queensland in any capacity.

This Policy applies to all clients who access services provided by Autism Queensland.

3.0 POLICY

Autism Queensland aims to balance customer and organisational financial interests in relation to cancellations and no-shows, and to make all reasonable attempts to safeguard customers who no-show. Autism Queensland’s policy reflects the requirements of the relevant government agencies for the funding being utilized to pay for the service (e.g. National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Terms of Business for Registered Providers and the most current National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Price Guide, or other).

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Adequate Notice

Cancellations with more than two (2) business days’ notice.

4.2 Inadequate Notice

Cancellation of the scheduled delivery of supports from between two (2) business days’ notice and prior to 3.00pm on the day before the scheduled service.

4.3 Short-Notice

Cancellation of the scheduled delivery of supports after 3.00pm the day before the scheduled service.

4.4 No Show

Non-attendance for scheduled delivery of supports without notice.

4.5 Business Day

Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm.

5.0 PROCEDURE

5.1 Cancellations

Autism Queensland’s Cancellation Policy will be discussed with all clients at the time of the initial request for services, whether face to face, telephone or email.

Autism Queensland’s Cancellation Policy will be discussed with all clients before signing an Autism Queensland Service Agreement. To cancel an appointment, clients can notify the office of the appropriate Autism Queensland centre within the business hours of 8.30am – 4.30pm. Alternatively, clients may leave a message if contacting over a weekend or public holiday. However, the business days’ notice periods still apply.

5.2 Notice Periods

- 5.2.1. Where Autism Queensland cancels as the service provider, no charge is made to either the participant or to NDIS.
- 5.2.2. Where the participant cancels after 3 pm of the day before service delivery, Autism Queensland will charge 90% of the scheduled fee (4.3 Short Notice Cancellation).
- 5.2.3. Where the participant cancels before 3 pm of the previous day, Autism Queensland will charge a percentage of the scheduled fee as follows:
 - Where supports are cancelled with 48 hours' notice or more, no charge applies (4.1 Adequate Notice);
 - Where supports are cancelled with 24 - 48 hours' notice, a cancellation fee of \$50 will be invoiced to the client (4.2 Inadequate Notice).

Wherever possible, Autism Queensland will charge the relevant funding body (e.g. NDIS) directly. If the funding body rejects the cancellation payment for any reason, the client will be charged directly as above.

5.3 NDIS Funded Services

- 5.3.1. Personal Care and Community Access Supports
 - Up to and including 12 occasions per year: NDIA permits cancellations with short-notice or no notice being charged against the NDIA plan up to (and including) 12 times a year. This will be recorded on the service delivery form as a short-notice or no-notice cancellation and 90% of the session fee will be charged to the client's NDIS plan.
- 5.3.2. Short Term Accommodation (STA – formerly known as Respite)
 - For each booking, as per 5.2.1 to 5.3.3 above.
- 5.3.3. Therapy and Early Childhood Intervention Groups
 - Up to and including six (6) hours per service booking: NDIA permits that cancellations with short notice or no notice for therapy can be charged up to and including six (6) hours per service booking. This will be recorded on the service delivery form as a short-notice or no-notice cancellation and 90% of the session fee will be charged to the client's NDIS plan.
- 5.3.4. Other Supports
 - Where the NDIA does not permit charges against the NDIA plan, the customer will be personally charged according to the notice periods as described in 5.2. This will be recorded on the service delivery record and the relevant charge will be invoiced to the client personally. A cancellation will be noted on the invoicing spreadsheet as a cancellation and relevant details will be added, including the invoice going directly to the client.

5.4 Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) Funded Services

HCWA funds can not be used to pay for sessions that did not take place. The charges as laid out in 5.1 apply and will be invoiced to the family. Please refer to the specific conditions as stipulated in the AQ Service Intake Form.

5.5 All Other forms of Payment (i.e. other than NDIS or HCWA)

For all other sources of payment for services including self-funding, Autism Queensland will invoice the client directly for payment according to the notice periods outlined in 5.2

5.6 Special Circumstances

Charges may be waived if the customer has experienced a significant event, e.g. emergency hospitalization or a death in the family. The decision to waive the charge will be made only by the Team Leader or Manager of the relevant service.

5.7 Safeguarding and No-Shows

In the event of a no-show, the employee scheduled to support the client will make every attempt to contact the client to determine if there are any special circumstances or safety concerns for the client:

- telephone the client to check on their safety (if appropriate to do so);
- telephone the client's nominated emergency contact person;
- contact the relevant Autism Queensland Team Leader and seek direction on next steps.

The Team Leader will:

- assess and determine the next steps including whether to persist with contacting the client, their emergency contact person or other authorities having regard to what is known about the client, their behaviours and risks; and
- make a decision regarding the client's next appointment (if relevant), including sending a reminder SMS and/or telephone call.

5.8 Suspension of Services

There are times when clients request a temporary suspension of service delivery due to personal circumstances, such as travelling overseas, holidays, etc. Autism Queensland is unable to hold a placement without payment. If the client wishes the place to be held open until their return, the client must pay for the service during the period of absence. If the client chooses not to pay for that position and it is still available on the client's return, they will be restored to that service.

6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Legislation and Regulations

[National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 \(Cth\)](#)

[Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)

[Australian Privacy Principles](#)

[Human Services Quality Standards \(Dept Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services\)](#)

[National Disability Standards \(Cth\)](#)

[NDIS Terms of Business for Registered Providers](#)

[NDIA Price Guide](#)

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