

## 1.0 PURPOSE

Autism Queensland (AQ) understands there are times when planned sessions cannot go ahead. Costs are incurred by AQ regardless of whether a client attends a session. This policy aims to minimise the negative effect on both clients and AQ 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 AQ in any capacity.

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

## 3.0 POLICY

Autism Queensland aims to balance client and organisational financial interests in relation to cancellations and no-shows, and to make all reasonable attempts to safeguard clients who no-show. This Policy reflects requirements of the relevant government agencies who fund services clients purchase from AQ (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 Cancellation

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

### 4.2 Short- Notice Cancellation

Cancellation of the scheduled delivery of supports with less than two (2) clear business days’ notice.

### 4.3 No Show

Non-attendance for scheduled delivery of supports without notice.

### 4.4 Business Day

Monday to Friday 8.00am – 5.00pm.

## 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, or via telephone or email.

Autism Queensland’s Cancellation Policy will be reiterated to all clients before signing an AQ Service Agreement.

To cancel an appointment, clients can notify the office of the appropriate AQ centre within business hours.

Alternatively, clients may leave a message if contacting AQ over a weekend or on a 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 with adequate notice, no charge applies (4.1 Adequate Notice Cancellation). Where the participant cancels with short notice or no-shows, AQ will charge 90% of the scheduled fee (4.2 Short Notice Cancellation).

- 5.2.3. Wherever possible, AQ 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**

- In the case of Short Notice Cancellation, 90% of the session fee will be charged to the client's NDIS Plan for each booking, as per 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 above.

### **5.3.2. Therapy and Early Childhood Intervention Groups**

- In the case of Short Notice Cancellation, 90% of the session fee will be charged to the client's NDIS Plan for each booking, as per 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 above.

### **5.3.3. Other Supports**

- Where the NDIA does not permit charges against the NDIA Plan, the customer will be personally charged as per 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 above. 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 that the client will be invoiced directly.

## **5.4 Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) Funded Services**

HCWA funds cannot be used to pay for sessions that did not take place. The charges as laid out in 5.2 apply and will be invoiced to the family. Please refer to the specific conditions as stipulated in the Autism Queensland 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, AQ 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 AQ 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, serious illness, 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.

If the position has been filled, the client's name will be placed on the waiting list for that service and a place offered when available. The services that this applies to will each have specific arrangements and requirements in place, which will be discussed with the participant and/or family at the time of notification of the ongoing absence.

## 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 Code of Conduct

NDIS Practice Standards

NDIS Terms of Business for Registered Providers

NDIA Price Guide

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