

YMCA Whittlesea

Advocacy Policy

For Community Services

1. Purpose:

YMCA Whittlesea is committed to ensuring all participants advocated for, in a safe respectful and inclusive manner which recognises their rights and needs. This policy aims to outline a process of advocating for those who need support in the act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person, place, or thing.

2. Scope:

This Policy is applicable to all disability services participants and administration staff who support a person with a disability?

3. Policy:

The YMCA Whittlesea's approach to Advocacy plays a vital role in ensuring the rights and interests of people with a disability are respected and achieved. An advocate 'stands beside' a person with a disability to help them make their own decisions and communicate effectively.

Any participant, or any potential participant at the Y, has the right to use an advocate to speak on their behalf. An advocate can refer participants to the service, attend meetings with the participant, and make arrangements for the participant by phone or mail, or co-ordinate any correspondence between the Y and the participant.

YMCA Whittlesea wants to ensure that advocacy gives the participant as much choice and control when making decisions about what and how they would like to achieve their goals.

4. Definitions:

Staff - any person employed by YMCA Whittlesea by either paid employment or contract.

Advocacy - is the act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person, place, or thing

Participant – any person who engages with YMCA Whittlesea programs and services

Goals - the object of a person's ambition or effort; an aim or desired result.

6. **Related Policies**

- New Participant Connection and On-Boarding Policy
- Referral Policy
- Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Policy

7. **Related Procedures and Supporting Documents**

- Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Procedure
- Participant Connection and On-Boarding Procedure
- Referral Policy
- Advocacy and other Key Contacts Valid
- Community Services Service User Handbook
- Using an Advocate Information Handout
- Nomination of Advocate Form

8. **Legislative and Industry Requirements**

- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Practice Guidelines

9. **Consequences of Breaching this Policy**

All elements of this policy must be adhered to, and any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the [YMCA Whittlesea Disciplinary and Termination Policy](#).

10. **Policy Owner**

The Community Services Manager is responsible for keeping this policy current, including making amendments as required and regular reviews as scheduled.

11. **Document Control**

Review of this policy will be undertaken every two years, or prior as required by law, in consultation with appropriate YMCA personnel.

Policy available on Y-MAC>Communication>Manuals and Files>Policies and Procedures.

This document is due for review on 30/06/2022.

Version:	Description of Amendment, Approver and Date:	Amended by:	DCR Updated	New Issue Date:	Policy Location:
V5	Splitting of Policy and Procedure into two separate documents	Annette Jurisch	08/07/20	30/06/20	Shared:Drive>YMAC>Policies_Final>Community Services
V4	Reformatting	Annette Jurisch		13/07/17	