



Policy

Promoting and Protecting Human Rights

Endorsed by: CEO

Document Owner: Organisational Management

Section 1: Preamble

Goulburn Options (GO) recognises that all people with disability have human and legal rights that must be upheld, respected, and protected at all times. These rights form the foundation of our supports and services.

We are committed to promoting and protecting human rights as an integral part of everything we do, as promoted within our organisation's Biggest Life Possible Quality Framework. This framework actively works to create an environment where people feel safe, valued, and heard, and are supported to live meaningful lives as full and equal members of the community.

This policy is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and aligns with the NDIS Practice Standards and Child Safe Standards. GO also acknowledges the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this land and commits to advancing reconciliation and cultural safety across all areas of practice.

Section 2: Policy Statement

Goulburn Options supports and protects the rights of people with disability to:

- Realise their potential for physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.
- Participate in and contribute to community life—socially, culturally, and economically—according to their individual preferences, values, and needs.
- Exercise choice and pursue their goals, including the right to take reasonable risks in line with their own decisions.
- Enjoy freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making.
- Determine their own best interests and engage as equal partners in decisions that affect their lives, to the full extent of their capacity.
- Live a life of dignity, free from violence, abuse, neglect, discrimination, and exploitation.
- Have their privacy, confidentiality, and personal information protected.
- Speak up, raise concerns, and be supported through accessible and safe complaints processes.
- Have the voices and roles of families, carers, and other significant people in their lives respected and recognised.
- Be supported by independent advocates to express their will and preferences, particularly when decision-making capacity is limited.

GO provides participants with accessible information and support to understand, claim, and act on their legal and human rights. Our workforce is skilled and supported to embed human rights principles in everyday practice, ensuring dignity, inclusion, and choice are not only protected but actively promoted.

2.1 Children and Young People

GO acknowledges the specific rights of children and young people, including the right to be safe, heard, and supported to thrive. In line with the Child Safe Standards, GO is committed to:

- Recognising children and young people as rights holders with unique needs and vulnerabilities.
- Empowering children and young people to have a voice in decisions that affect them, in ways that are age-appropriate and accessible.
- Creating environments where children feel safe, included, and confident to raise concerns.
- Ensuring all staff working with children receive appropriate screening, training, and supervision to uphold child safety and wellbeing.
- Responding to safety concerns, disclosures, or complaints involving children with seriousness, compassion, and urgency.

GO believes that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to continuous improvement in our child safeguarding practices and to including children, families, and communities in this work.

2.2 Cultural Awareness, Safety and Zero Discrimination

Goulburn Options celebrates and values the cultural identities of all people and works actively to promote cultural safety and inclusion.

We are committed to:

- Providing culturally safe, inclusive, and responsive services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, recognising the ongoing impact of colonisation and the strength of First Nations cultures.
- Supporting people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to access supports in ways that respect their cultural needs, language preferences, and identities.
- Recognising the intersectionality of disability, culture, gender, sexuality, and other identities—and understanding how this may impact access to rights.
- Ensuring our staff are trained and accountable in delivering services free from bias, judgement, or discrimination.
- Having zero tolerance for racism, discrimination, harassment, or exclusion in any form.

At GO, diversity is seen as a strength, and we strive to ensure that every person feels welcome, respected, and valued in our community.

2.3 Responsibilities and Accountabilities

All staff, volunteers, and Board members at GO share the responsibility to:

- Uphold and promote the human rights of people with disability.
- Act immediately if they witness, suspect, or are made aware of any situation where a person's rights may be at risk.
- Undertake training in human rights, cultural safety, and child safeguarding.
- Model respectful, inclusive, and rights-focused behaviour in all interactions.
- Managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring rights-based practice is embedded in service delivery, staff supervision, planning, and continuous improvement activities.

Section 3: Roles

Role	Responsibilities and Accountabilities
Board	Ensure governance practices uphold human rights and support a culture of rights-based service delivery.
Organisational Management	- Lead implementation of human rights principles across GO - Ensure systems, training, and policies support rights.
Team Leaders	- Promote and supervise rights-based practice within their teams - Support staff to identify and address rights concerns.
Workforce (Admin, DSW, Students, Volunteers)	- Maintain privacy and confidentiality in all information handling - Support participants' access to information and complaints processes. - Actively protect and promote the rights of participants in daily practice - Attend training - Report concerns.
Participants/Support Persons	- Understand, claim, and act on their rights - Raise concerns, give feedback, and participate in decisions.

Section 4: Related Documentation

Document Name	Document Type
Code of Conduct	Policy
Child Safety and Wellbeing	Policy
Training and Development	Policy
Biggest Life Possible	Framework
Choice and Advocacy	Policy
Complaints and Feedback	Policy
Incident Management and Reportable Incidents	Policy
Key Elements of Participant Safety and Wellbeing	Policy
Governance	Policy
Participant Handbook	Handbook
Employee Handbook	Handbook
Participant Service Charter	Charter
Privacy	Policy

Section 5: Definitions

Term	Definition
Human Rights	The Australian Human Rights Commission defines human rights as: - the recognition and respect of people's dignity - a set of moral and legal guidelines that promote and protect a recognition of our values, our identity and ability to ensure an adequate standard of living - the basic standards by which we can identify and measure inequality and fairness - those rights associated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Cultural Safety	An environment that is spiritually, socially, and emotionally safe for people of all cultures, where identity is respected.
Discrimination	Unfair or unequal treatment based on personal characteristics such as disability, culture, gender, or age.

Self-determination	The right of people to make their own decisions and control their own lives.
Advocate	A person who supports someone to express their views, exercise their rights, and represent their interests.

Date of Last Review:	May 2025	Date of Next Review:	May 2027
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