Client Finances and Property Policy and Procedures

"I have the right to clear and transparent processes when my personal money is being handled' – client voice

Introduction

Play Grow Flourish is committed to supporting staff with guidelines for working with clients and handling personal expenditure. Play Grow Flourish ensures that no financial advice or information other than what is required under a client's plan is provided.

Scope

This policy applies to Management, staff and students who provide support to clients.

Policy

It is Play Grow Flourish policy to:

- Maximise each client's control of their funding and finances.
- Support clients to access and spend their own money as they determine.
- Inform clients of costs and the payment process for all services provided.
- Provide clients with technical assistance to increase their capacity to direct their own support and teach the client how to self-manage.

The client's money, or other property, is only used with the consent of the client and for the purposed intended by the client.

Staff must not give financial advice or information.

Procedure

Participant Property

Staff must only use and touch the client's property to deliver a service, i.e., the use of equipment in completion of tasks, e.g., sweeping, assisting to dress.

Participants are not permitted to bring gaming devices or other non-essential items to the day program.

For clients who are attending respite, and asset register must be completed to document items that have been brought to the program on arrival.

This register must be reviewed on departure to ensure participants items are returned.

Financial management guidelines

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

- Staff are at **no time** allowed access to a client's personal identification number (PIN).
- Transaction receipts must be obtained and provided to the client for the following:
  - Money Received
  - Money Spent
  - Money Returned
- The staff member must be sure to count the money in front of the client on receipt and return.
- Staff must record all financial transactions carried out for a client in the Financial Transaction Record and recorded in the client's progress notes. Records must be documented clearly, accurately, and immediately.
- Staff must not give financial advice to clients or their companions, or act as a witness for any legal documents.
- Staff must not accept money or gifts from clients.

Suspected financial abuse

Where staff suspect financial abuse when working with clients, they discuss preventative measures with clients, including:

- Informing the client not to relinquish control of their finances if the client can self-manage.
- Advising the client not to make significant financial decisions following a major event, e.g. Loss of a partner.
- Ensuring that the client is aware of their right to refuse people access to their funds or personal money.
- Encouraging the client to ask for help if they are overwhelmed, confused, or feel they are being taken advantage of.

If any staff member suspects that a client is being financially abused, then the following steps are to be taken:

1. The staff member is to gather evidence and record in client's notes.
2. The staff member is to contact the Director to discuss evidence gathered.
3. The Director will gather the details of the abuse and report to relevant authorities for example the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission through Incident Reporting.

Client fees and payments for NDIS clients

Payments and pricing (NDIS)

- Play Grow Flourish adheres to the NDIS Price Guide or any other agency pricing arrangements and guidelines, as in force from time to time.
- Play Grow Flourish declares relevant prices, any notice periods or cancellation terms, to clients before delivering a service. Clients are not bound to engage the services of Play Grow Flourish after their prices have been disclosed.
- Play Grow Flourish can make a payment request once a support has been delivered or provided.
- No other charges are to be added to the cost of the support (including credit card surcharges) or any additional fees including any 'gap' fees, late payment fees or cancellation fees. These requirements apply to all clients, whether the client self-manages their funding or whether funding is managed by a plan manager, or by the agency.
- A claim for payment is to be submitted within a reasonable time (and no later than sixty (60) days from the end of the service booking) to the client or the NDIS.
- Play Grow Flourish and clients (except for those that are self-managing) cannot contract out of the Price Guide. Where there are any inconsistencies between the Service Agreement and the Price Guide, the Price Guide prevails.
- Where required, Play Grow Flourish will obtain a quote for services and have this approved by the client. A service agreement will also need to be completed prior to commencement of services.

Other funding or Private clients:

Where clients are funded by another organisation or privately funded, prices are charged according to the relevant guidelines or through private arrangements.

Training

All staff are trained at induction in the processes contained within this policy and the associated recording mechanisms.

Responsibilities

For the purpose of this policy, the Management Team includes the Director, Executive Team Leader and Human Resources Manager.

Management is responsible for:

- Approving and monitoring the implementation of this policy and recording any changes within the Policy Version Control Register.
- Monitoring and reviewing finance practices for consistency with the policy and procedure.

Shift Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff are provided with training in client money handling practices.
- Ensuring all staff are implementing the appropriate financial transaction recording process.

Staff are responsible for:

- Advising the Team Leader where financial transactions have been requested.
- Completion of the financial transaction record

Related policies and documents

- 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 2011.

Review

This policy will be reviewed through internal audit processes, client feedback and as contextual drivers determine a need for a review.

Release Date:	Version No:	Approved By:	Amendments:
January 2024	1.0	Director	Nil
Review Date:	**Version No:**	**Approved By:**	**Amendments:**
June 2025	2.0	Human Resources Manager	Responsibilities have been amended to