

AMIDA
Action for More Independence and
Dignity in Accommodation

Who can use AMIDA?

What do we offer?



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**This policy is regularly reviewed and
people using the service can have a say in
improving the policy.**

WHAT DOES AMIDA DO?

AMIDA is an independent advocacy organisation which advocates for good housing for people with disability. We provide advocacy to individuals, with priority given to people with an intellectual disability, and advocate for change in systems which prevent people from achieving good housing. This means we don't just work with one person at a time, we work with groups of people or on problems that affect groups of people.

AMIDA strongly supports the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability and works to assert these rights and community inclusion for people with a disability.

AMIDA acknowledges that people with disability have a right to a choice of who they live with and where they live. Further, people with disability have a right to good quality housing which is accessible, affordable and non-institutional. People with disability have a right to live in the community with access to support to participate and have a good quality of life.

WHO CAN USE AMIDA?

Any person who has a disability can use AMIDA and access to the service is decided on a non-discriminatory basis. AMIDA provides its services in a manner sensitive to the age, gender, sexuality, marital or employment status, cultural, linguistic and religious background of each person with a disability.

Our major area of experience is with people with an intellectual disability and if we believe another advocacy group has more experience than AMIDA we may refer you to them.

Priority for service will be given to people with the greatest need, as assessed at the time. Assessment of that priority may include levels of homelessness, isolation within the community, and any threats or risks that the person may be experiencing.

AMIDA acts to prevent abuse and neglect and to uphold the legal and human rights of people with disability

AMIDA has developed some statements in the past around [What makes Housing, Good Housing](#) and a [Statement of Rights and Beliefs](#) as part of the AMIDA Housing and Self Advocacy Conference 1989.

INTAKE/REFERRAL PROCESS

People with a disability or anyone concerned about the interests of a person with a disability can contact us via phone, email or by dropping into the office. Appointments are preferred.

HOW DOES AMIDA CHOOSE WHAT TO WORK ON?

Before we decide to work on an issue, we ask ourselves the following 11 questions:

1. Is the issue to do with housing or tenants rights?
2. How urgent is the problem?
3. Is this an advocacy issue or can another community service meet the persons need?
4. Does the issue fit in with our current priorities and performance plan?
5. Is the issue important to people with disabilities as a group?
6. Who else might have an interest in the issue? Should AMIDA join them, refer to them, or work alone on the issue?
7. How much time and effort will the work take and do we have the time and resources to do the work or can we get these resources?
8. Do we have the knowledge and ability needed and if we don't can we get it?
9. What opportunities are there for people with disabilities to get involved?
10. Is the person seeking individual advocacy assistance an employee or a committee member of AMIDA? Due to potential conflict of interest we cannot provide individual advocacy to anyone with these positions but will refer them to another advocacy service.

11. Are there any other potential conflicts of interest and can they be transparently resolved?

HOW DOES AMIDA WORK?

1. When a person or group first speaks to AMIDA we write this up on a "Referral form" including your name, contact details and brief summary of the issue.
2. The AMIDA worker will talk with the person or group about their question or problem and take down the information they will need to assess whether we can assist. We ask ourselves the 11 questions listed in the above section, "How does AMIDA choose what to work on?"
3. The AMIDA worker will tell the person or group if they are able to advocate with or for them. If AMIDA cannot give any advocacy support we will try to find another organisation that can assist.
4. If AMIDA agrees to work with you we will start a file which will include: your consent to advocacy, your consent to talk to relevant people on your behalf and individual advocacy action plan which we will write together. This plan will include what your issue is, the strategy we agree to, what action we both agree to take, when we will do it by and follow up times. Any other documents or information we might need that will help carry out the plan will be stored in this file.
5. AMIDA will only do work that you, or your guardian, understand and agree that we can do. You are very welcome to have a support person with you when you meet with AMIDA.
6. This file will be kept private and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet that only AMIDA advocacy workers have access to.
7. AMIDA must have your written consent to give your information to anyone else. **No-one** else can see this file unless you say they can. You can say **No**.
8. You can see or receive a copy of the information in your file.

9. You can ask AMIDA to change what they are doing for you at any time.
10. You can choose to stop using AMIDA at any time or for any reason.
11. Any information, advice or support that AMIDA provides will be given to you in a way that you can understand. For example, if you cannot speak or read we will use a communication board or pictures. If you have visual impairment we will use big print or an audiotape.

WHEN THE WORK IS FINISHED....

This section is about how AMIDA or a person using AMIDA decides to stop working together and how to do this. This can happen in many different ways:

- You or AMIDA may decide that AMIDA has done all they can for you and there is nothing more that can be done. If we find a new way of helping you in the future we may ask you if you would like to work with us again.
- You may decide that you have got what you wanted and that you don't need us anymore.
- You are encouraged to make a complaint if you are not happy with AMIDA. We will do our best to fix this and improve things. If you are still unhappy you can decide to go to another organisation for help.
- If you do decide to stop using AMIDA, for any reason, you can talk to us about this and let us know what you want to do. Whenever possible, both AMIDA and the person using AMIDA will decide together how and when to end the service.
- If anyone verbally or physically hurts any AMIDA workers, volunteers, members or visitors we may decide to stop working with that person. Each situation will be treated individually and worked out with and approved by the AMIDA Committee of management and treated confidentially. The person may be told about another service they can use.

CLOSING FILES

- We will set a date for reviewing the Advocacy Action Plan. At this time we will discuss whether the advocacy will continue or finish. If either you or AMIDA or both of us decide it should finish we will write this in the file and write to you telling you the file is closing. If at any time in the future you think you may need our advocacy assistance again you can contact us.
- We will give you the opportunity to tell us what you liked about our service and how we could improve. Your feedback is welcome as it helps us improve our service.
- AMIDA will keep copies of files for at least 7 years from the date on which the file is closed. After this time and if the file is no longer needed for the advocacy purposes for which it was created, we will take reasonable steps to destroy or permanently de-identify personal information.