

AMIDA

Action for More Independence and
Dignity in Accommodation

Planning to meet Individual needs



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What is this policy about?

Every person has different needs. These are known as 'individual needs'. This policy is to help AMIDA meet the individual needs of the people it works with.

AMIDA provides advocacy to individuals, groups and to the community as a whole. We advocate for individuals with a disability, resource and encourage self-advocacy, resource and support family members to advocate for someone with a disability (family advocacy) and provide systemic advocacy. Systemic advocacy means we advocate to government and services to resolve problems in our community which affect large numbers of people with a disability.

How do we make sure our advocacy helps people to meet their individual needs?

1. We make sure there is plenty of time to talk with people about their request for advocacy. We will make sure you have enough time to think, talk and ask questions.
2. Some people wish to involve their support person to help them get the advocacy they need. If at any point you want to involve your support person AMIDA will work with you and your support person.
3. We will be mindful of any potential conflict of interest for AMIDA in providing you with advocacy. If we do identify any potential conflict of interest, we will let you know about this and how we will deal with this. If necessary, referral to another worker or advocacy service will be arranged. E.g.

You have a tenancy problem and the landlord is related to the advocate.

4. In providing family advocacy we will give clear and consistent messages to other family members involved in the advocacy action about the importance of discussing this with the person with a disability where possible and that the best interests and needs of the person with a disability are the goal of advocacy. Where there is any doubt about the best interests and needs of the person with a disability, we will seek information from the person with a disability and others close to them.
5. If the adult we work with is assisting a family member with a disability who is under 18, we will ensure the adult is made aware of the UN Rights of the child including that; **Every child has the right to:**
 - Be safe from violence (Article 19)
 - Protection of identity (Article 8)
 - Sufficient standard of living (Article 27)
 - Know their rights (Article 42)
 - Non-discrimination (Article 2)
 - Best interest of the child (Article 3)
 - Right to life survival and development (Article 6)
 - Right to be heard (Article 12)
6. We will identify any potential conflict of interest between a family member involved in the advocacy and the individual needs of the person with a disability. Where such conflicts are identified AMIDA will seek to deal with this transparently and by putting the needs of the person with a disability first.
7. We will talk with you about the different ways we can work on your problem.

8. We will help you weigh up the possible risks and benefits of advocacy actions. We will explore and explain these with you without unnecessarily restricting your choices in planning. We will give you as much information as we can to help you make a choice about what to do.
9. We will provide information in a way that you are most likely to understand. This could be in big print or on audio but we will also explain it to you.
10. We will encourage you to tell us about any age, gender, cultural or any other considerations which may need to be taken into account in planning your advocacy actions.
11. We will only take advocacy actions that you agree to.
12. We will write an Individual Advocacy Action Plan with you and review this plan every 3 months and will review capacity to continue with any case that has continued for 6 months with you taking into account your changing needs and when it is time to close the case.
13. We will let you know if there are other groups which can work on your problem. We will support you to work with other groups. This could include making sure they understand your needs. This could also include clearly telling the service about your rights to receive a service.
14. We will keep a written record of the work we do with you and its outcomes which we will keep private and secure.
15. As a way of making sure that we are meeting people's individual needs we will ask the people we work with how well we did this and encourage them to say what they really think. The feedback can be provided to a worker who wasn't your advocate.

16. If you are not happy with the work we are doing or how we are doing it, you can make a complaint to us. We will give you information about how to make a complaint in a way you are most likely to understand. For example, large print or audio. We will also let you know about other groups that can help you make a complaint.
17. We can provide you with information about your rights and encourage and support you to advocate for yourself or your family member.
18. We can inform you about self-advocacy groups that may be able to continue to help you develop your self-advocacy skills to meet your own needs and those of people with a disability more generally.

How do we meet individual needs through systemic advocacy?

1. We network with advocacy and housing groups, researchers, and self-advocacy groups of people who have disabilities to find out what housing and NDIS needs they have identified. This will help us plan our work to deal with the different housing and NDIS problems people face.
2. We identify through our individual advocacy, the individual housing and NDIS needs of people with different types of disability and advocate to government and services providers to meet these needs.
3. Sometimes we are asked to work with other groups which provide services to people with disabilities. We only work with them if their aims are consistent with our own and in the best interests of people with disabilities.

4. People with disabilities have a say in deciding how AMIDA will work on group or systemic advocacy via our planning days and other opportunities for involvement as listed in the Decision Making and Choice Policy.
5. We also encourage people with a disability to be involved in systemic campaign groups we are involved in.
6. Under our Constitution, which is the set of rules we work under, at least half of the people on AMIDA's Committee of Management have to be people with a disability. This is one way we try to make sure we have strong representation from people with a disability so that their needs are listened to and acted on by AMIDA
7. AMIDA's policies are regularly checked and reviewed with the involvement of people with disabilities. They will be made available to you in a way that you are most likely to understand, for example in big print or on audio. We can also explain the policies to you.