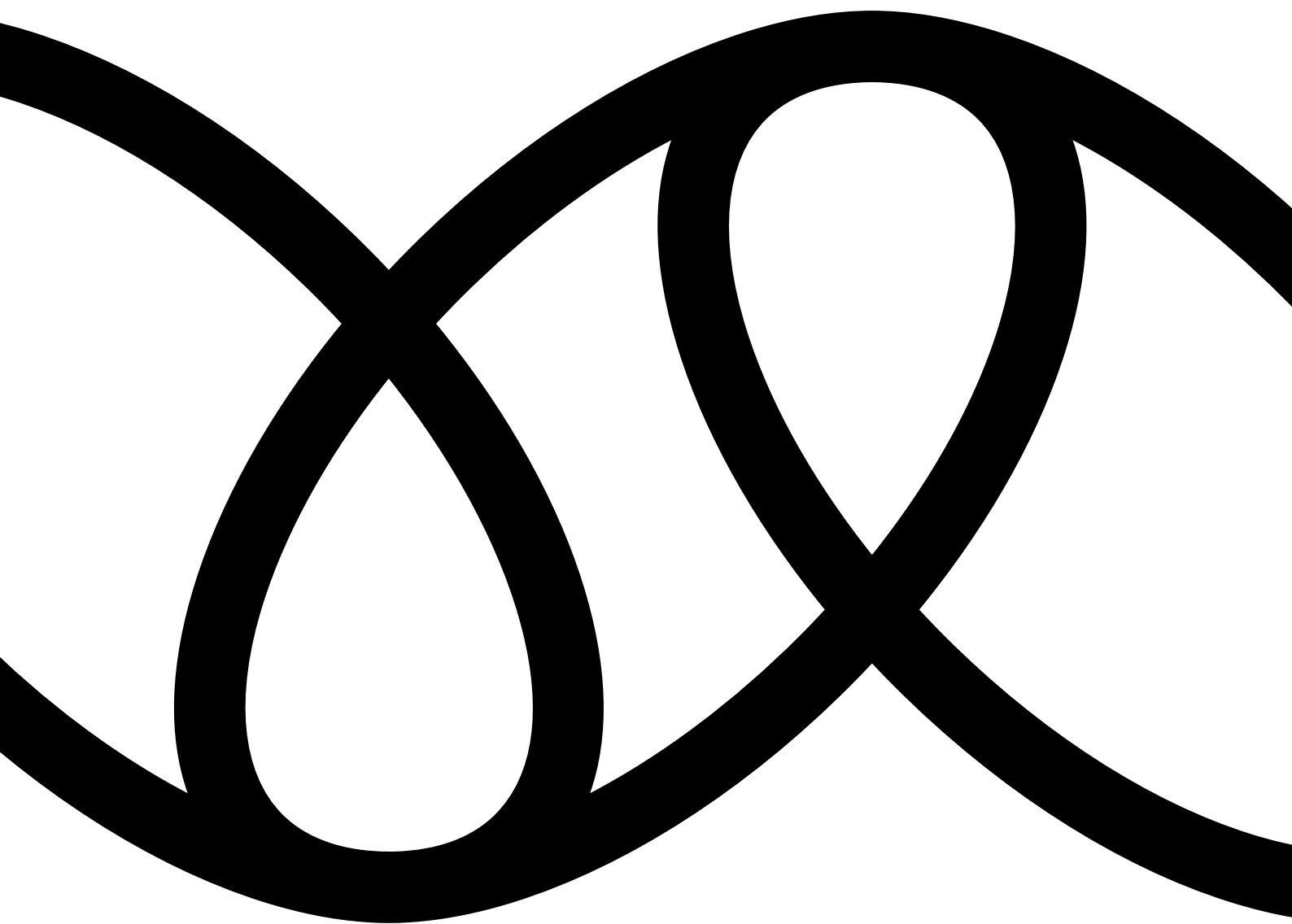


Client Information Booklet



Contents

- Introduction..... 4
- Rights and Responsibilities 5
- Vision Australia Policies..... 6
- Working in Partnership 9
- Other Contacts11
- Government Support 14
- Contact Us 16

Introduction

Vision Australia exists to support people who are blind or have low vision to live the life they choose.

Vision Australia is a for purpose organisation providing specialised vision loss support and services to Australians of all ages.

This document covers key information about how your service record is kept, your rights and responsibilities, service agreements and how you can provide feedback and make a complaint. It also includes a list of relevant contacts for your convenience.

For more information about Vision Australia

Call: 1300 84 74 66

TTY: 02 9334 3260

Fax: 1300 84 73 29

Visit: visionaustralia.org

Rights and Responsibilities

As a client your rights include the right to:

- Be treated with respect, dignity and privacy
- Be assessed for access to services without discrimination
- Be informed and consulted about your service needs
- Pursue any complaint about service provision without retribution
- Involve an advocate or support person of your choice

As a client your responsibilities are to:

- Treat service provider staff and other clients with courtesy
- Take responsibility for the results of any decision made jointly with staff about services arranged
- Provide a safe work environment for staff members who work within your home and help them to provide services safely.

Vision Australia's responsibilities as a service provider are to:

- Enhance and respect the independence and dignity of the client and/or carer
- Ensure that the client's access to service is decided only on the basis of need and the capacity of the service to meet that need
- Inform clients about service options available to them
- Inform clients of their rights and responsibilities in relation to services
- Protect the personal and sensitive information provided by clients and other stakeholders

Vision Australia Policies

Privacy and confidentiality

All Vision Australia service users can be assured that their privacy, dignity and confidentiality is respected in the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

Vision Australia is committed to its legislative responsibility to protect the personal information of its clients, customers, donors, staff and volunteers.

We will ensure all data is collected lawfully, fairly and with consent and is used for a lawful purpose.

Privacy and management of client records

Vision Australia is required to maintain an accurate record of relevant information and services provided to you. Your information is managed under the terms of your written (or verbal) consent (or consent of person responsible or guardian). To enable the delivery of individual services, Vision Australia only requests or shares service information with relevant third party health professionals or organisations, as required. You can specify who you do not want us to share or exchange information. This consent is valid for 12 months and reviewed every 12 months.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time. Non-identifying information is provided to funding bodies as required.

Your record is confidential; privacy rights are upheld and the record is securely stored. The principle of freedom of information is endorsed by Vision Australia. On written request, you will be provided with supervised access to your record.

All records are retained and protected in accordance with legislative requirements. A digital record will be retained indefinitely. This permanent record is a summary of all services received by you and associated notes.

Complaints and feedback – tell us what you think

We value your feedback and it can help us improve our services to you. Tell us about any suggestions, concerns or complaints about services or staff members. Complaints and feedback is managed fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution. Such feedback is integral to our continuous improvement program.

You can lodge a complaint through an external advocate at any time. Your choice of advocate will be respected by Vision Australia, and if requested, Vision Australia will assist to access an advocate.

To provide feedback or make a complaint, please call **1300 84 74 66**, contact your local office, any Vision Australia staff member or visit www.visionaustralia.org.

Human rights and freedom from abuse

In the provision of services, Vision Australia ensures that the human rights of its clients are upheld. We are committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and to the prevention of all forms of abuse.

Service completion and service withdrawal

Services are planned with you and your supports to ensure they meet your needs. A service agreement is completed when your identified goals have been achieved or when you elect to cease services before the completion of the agreed services. You can remain connected with us by receiving a client newsletter, using our library services, visiting Vision Australia's website, listening to segments about Vision Australia on Vision Australia Radio or the RPH network (Radio for the Print Handicapped) or join our Facebook page.

You can contact us when there is a change in vision or a change in personal circumstances or when a new need arises; Vision Australia will, where relevant, refer you to other assessment agencies e.g. My Aged Care or National Disability Insurance Agency.

Vision Australia services may be withdrawn where the client no longer meets the eligibility criteria due to improved vision or where a client is unable to fulfil his or her responsibilities to meet agreed goals. If the client's behaviour is threatening or menacing, an agreed action plan is developed to support the client to continue in service. Where agreed client responsibilities and actions cannot be fulfilled, services will cease.

Working in Partnership

To deliver services that open up possibilities for people who are blind or have low vision, Vision Australia works in partnership with government, supporters, trusts and foundations, community groups, educators, health professionals, businesses, advocacy agencies and our clients.

Individual service agreement

Vision Australia works in partnership with you (and/or your family, carer, advocate and others as required) to develop a service agreement to identify services that will support you to reach your goals.

Client and consumer consultation

Engaging clients and consumer groups in meaningful consultation in relation to all aspects of the organisation is highly valued. We regularly contact clients to obtain feedback on the quality of our services and also seek their input through questionnaires, discussion groups, consumer forums, advisory committees and from time to time clients may be asked to participate in audit interviews.

The Board of Vision Australia convenes a Client Reference Group to seek advice and feedback on specific matters relating to the experience of our clients and direction of the organisation. This Group operates under Vision Australia's Client Reference Group Charter.

For more information visit

[www.visionaustralia.org/about us/client-engagement](http://www.visionaustralia.org/about-us/client-engagement)

Members

Any person over the age of 18 years may become a member of Vision Australia. The annual fee is \$25 and membership entitles a person to be involved at general meetings, receive papers and to vote on issues of importance.

Supporters and Volunteers

Vision Australia relies on the generosity of people in the community to raise a significant proportion of the money to deliver our services. We appreciate any support and all gifts go towards services. Clients may receive marketing material in the mail giving them the option to donate. If a client does not want to receive mail from us, they can let us know by calling 1800 42 20 77.

While many support us financially, others give their time and skills as volunteers. The more than 2600 registered volunteers enable Vision Australia to reduce costs and devote more resources to deliver services to people who are blind or have low vision.

Advocates

An advocate is a person who can speak and act on behalf of someone else. You may choose to work through an advocate of your choice to help make decisions or resolve issues. You may choose an advocate who is a family member, friend, member of our Client Reference Group or use an external agency (see Other Contacts). Vision Australia supports and respects the choice the client makes.

Other Contacts

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

To raise concerns about the quality of care or services to people receiving aged care services.

Ph: 1800 55 05 52

Visit: www.agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au

Blind Citizens Australia

Consumer group that advances opportunities and advocacy for people who are blind or have low vision.

Ph: 1800 03 36 60

Visit: www.bca.org.au

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres

Provides short term emergency respite services.

Ph: 1800 05 22 22

Visit: www.commcarelink.health.gov.au

Elder Abuse Concerns

Each state and territory provides information about abuse, abuse prevention and useful contacts.

Ph: 1800 20 04 22

Visit: www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-and-legal/elder-abuse-concerns

My Aged Care

The gateway for older Australian's to receive services including information on aged care for you, a family member, friend or someone you're caring for.

Ph: **1800 20 04 22**

Visit: **www.myagedcare.gov.au**

National Aged Care Advocacy Line

To raise concerns about the quality of your aged care services and want to speak to someone about this, this advocacy service may be able to help.

Ph: **1800 70 06 00**

Visit: **www.myagedcare.gov.au/how-make-complaint/advocacy-services**

National Anti-Discrimination Information Gateway

This gateway provides contact details for complaints against race, sex, disability and age discrimination or harassment and bullying.

Visit: **www.antidiscrimination.gov.au**

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disabilities using government funded services.

Ph: **1800 88 00 52**

Visit: **www.disabilityhotline.org**

NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme)

A scheme to ensure people under 65 years with a disability receive the support they need.

Ph: **1800 80 01 10**

Visit: **www.ndis.gov.au**

Sexual Assault Services throughout Australia

List of state-based organisations that provide support and information.

Visit: **www.sass.org.au/directory**

Government Support

Vision Australia would like to acknowledge the following government funding and support:

Commonwealth Government

- Department of Communications and the Arts
- Department of Employment
- Department of Health
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Veterans' Affairs

Australian Capital Territory

- Community Services Directorate

Victorian State Government

- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Health & Human Services

New South Wales State Government

- Department of Family and Community Services (Ageing, Disability and Home Care)
- Department of Education
- NSW Ministry of Health

Northern Territory Government

- Department of Education

Queensland State Government

- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- Department of Education and Training

Tasmanian State Government

- Department of Education

Our Commonwealth Home Support Program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Visit the Department of Social Services website (www.dss.gov.au) for more information.

Contact Us

Call: 1300 84 74 66

TTY: 02 9334 3260

Fax: 1300 84 73 29

Visit: visionaustralia.org

visionaustralia.org