

NDIS Emergency and Disaster Management Plan Framework

For small and medium-sized NDIS Providers



NDIS PROVIDER EMERGENCY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK (FRAMEWORK)

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Relevant to: all workers and clients.
Fire Warden: Vivian Anderson
First Aid Officer: Vivian Anderson

1. Overview

Background: As part of our business, we provide supports and services to people, including NDIS participants and other people with disabilities. Some of these supports might be critical to the health, safety, and wellbeing of NDIS participants.

We must plan for emergencies and disasters: As with all businesses, we are vulnerable to emergencies and disasters. Emergencies and disasters have the potential - temporarily or permanently – to affect our ability to provide supports to our clients, including NDIS participants. We are required by law – and it also makes business sense - to plan for emergencies and disasters so we can do our best to continue to support our clients, including NDIS participants, if our business is ever affected adversely by an emergency or disaster.

Status of this document: This Framework is an important part of our Risk Management System, and should be read with the Risk Management System.

Purpose and focus: In this Framework, we document our plans to prepare, prevent, manage and respond to emergency and disaster situations. As required by the Rules, our plans focus on providing continuity of supports and services that are critical to the health, safety and wellbeing of NDIS Participants.

Scope: This Framework documents our emergency, and disaster plans with a view to considering and managing the risks that may arise in an emergency or disaster that have the potential affect the health, safety and wellbeing of clients (including NDIS participants). Following management consideration of known risks, this Framework documents:

- how we have prepared for, and will respond to, an emergency or disaster;
- changes that we may need to make to client supports (including supports for NDIS participants);
- how we will adapt and respond rapidly to changes to supports and other interruptions caused by an emergency or disaster;
- how we will communicate changes in supports to:
 - clients (including NDIS participants and their support networks); and
 - workers;
- our specific emergency and disaster management plans;
- measures our managers have taken, and will take, to consult with our clients, support networks and workers about our emergency plans;
- an explanation and guide for how we will respond to and oversee our response to an emergency or disaster; and
- how we will test our plans and adjust them in the contexts of different kinds of emergencies or disasters.

Communication: The Risk Management Officer will communicate this Framework to clients (including NDIS participants), support networks and workers at the Marion Office.

Worker training: Contracted speech pathologists must read and abide by this Framework, its implementation and its requirements.

Regular review and consultation: This Framework will be reviewed by management, in consultation with the Risk Management Officer at least once a year and as soon as practicable after a disaster or emergency event.

2. Main points

- As part of our general risk management framework, we have established risk management systems to mitigate the strategic, financial, market, and operational risks of a future emergency or disaster that affects our business, supports and/or services.
- In this Framework, we document our:
 - **emergency plans and procedures;**
 - emergency **communication protocols** for workers, clients (including NDIS participants) and other key stakeholders;

- principles upon which we will plan and execute our **recovery plans** in the event of an emergency or disaster, including adjustments we may need to make to our support and service delivery models, with a particular focus on **supports and services that are critical to the health, safety and wellbeing NDIS participants**;
- **stakeholder consultation arrangements** with respect to this Framework and emergency planning, generally; and
- responsibilities for regular testing, worker training and updates to this Framework and our emergency plans.

3. Framework

3.1 How we have prepared for, and will respond to, an emergency or disaster

In this Framework, we outline how we've prepared for an emergency or disaster. Our focus is on the steps we will take to seek to continue to provide supports and services to our clients in the event of an emergency or disaster, including our supports and services to NDIS participants.

It is of course impossible to define all the potential emergencies or disasters that could disrupt our business materially. Examples of potential emergencies or disasters include things like major floods, fires, cyclones, acts of terror, environmental incidents and pandemics.

Under our general risk management systems, we back up and secure our client data regularly and use digital collaboration and online tools to reduce our reliance on physical access to documents. We maintain adequate insurance. We train our staff in how to implement and follow key policies and procedures, as well as in operational risks associated with business interruptions.

3.2 Our emergency and disaster management plans (the Plans)

This section of the Framework includes instructions that outline what workers and others at our workplaces should do in an emergency. It includes:

- emergency procedures including an effective response to an emergency;
- evacuation procedures (see specific location details for evacuation procedures);
- notifying emergency service organisations at the earliest opportunity;
- first aid, medical treatment and assistance;
- effective communication between the person authorised to coordinate the emergency response and all people at the workplace;
- regular testing of the emergency procedures; and
- rules about information, training and responsibilities of relevant workers in relation to implementing the emergency procedures.

Emergency Plans: a guide for how we will respond to and oversee our response to an emergency or disaster at the Marion Office.

Issue	Key points	Specifics
Key Responsibilities The Risk Management Officer, with support from the First Aid Officer and the Fire Warden have the key responsibilities to make sure: - all workers and others in the workplace are accounted for in an evacuation; and - all workers must know what to do in an emergency.	In the event of an emergency, follow directions from the Risk Management Officer or the Fire Warden. If the Risk Management Officer and the Fire Warden cannot give directions, all workers, clients and others onsite should leave the premises in an orderly fashion and proceed to the emergency meeting place. There is one exit, which is marked on the floor plan attached.	The emergency meeting place in the first instance is at the door marked Exit. The second meeting point is in the carpark.
Emergency contact details Emergency Services State Emergency Services Poison Information Line	In the event of an emergency, call 000 and ask for police, ambulance and/or fire services, as applicable.	Make sure you are safe first, then send for help. Call: Police, fire, ambulance: 000 Poisons: 13 11 26
Evacuations These rules cover everyone who may be present at the workplace and allow for quick and safe evacuation when needed. Clearly identify routes to safe assembly areas consider special assistance for hearing, vision or mobility-impaired people, and include a process for accounting for people.	Key identified evacuation events: Fire, major flood, cyclone, major accident or injury, violence or threat of violence, medical emergency (e.g., high infection risk), bomb threat, act of terror, major weather event, environmental incident.	If in doubt, treat event as an emergency and evacuate as set out in these procedures. Risk Management Officer to conduct head count and ensure everyone accounted for.

Issue	Key points	Specifics
		Risk Management Officer to assist anyone requiring special assistance or direct
Evacuations (for a fixed workplace), overseen by the Fire Warden, reporting to the Risk Management Officer. A site plan with emergency exits marked is attached to this document. All exits, corridors and aisles readily accessible and kept clear of obstructions. Smoke detectors, emergency stair lighting and exit signs have been installed.	All staff to be familiar with exits – see attached floor plan. Smoke alarms will sound if there is a fire. Emergency lights will also light up. All emergency exits are marked. All corridors must be kept clear of obstructions at all times. In the event of an emergency, follow the Risk Management Officer's instructions and proceed calmly to your nearest safe exit, then onto the emergency meeting place.	
Fire protection equipment (overseen by Fire Warden, reporting to the Risk Management Officer)	Fire extinguishers are fitted. Fire blanket in the kitchen. Fire equipment is checked every year. All staff to read instructions for fire extinguishers.	Two fire extinguishers are fitted in the office. One in the kitchen and one in hallway outside toilet (see floorplan). Risk Management Officer to ensure 6 monthly checks are conducted on fire extinguishers by FESSA (Fire and Emergency Services SA).
First aid Overseen by First Aid Officer	All front-line workers to have CPR Training. First Aid Officer must be trained in first aid. First aid kit stored in bottom draw in kitchen (see floorplan). All staff to review first aid kits.	First Aid Officer to ensure front-line staff have current First Aid Certificates. First Aid Officer to ensure First Aid Kit is stocked and within expiry dates.

Issue	Key points	Specifics
		Kitchen draw where first aid kit is stored is marked with white cross on green background. (See floorplan).
Post incident follow-up, overseen by Risk Management Officer Procedures in place to notify the relevant regulator/s about a notifiable incident where necessary, as per Incident Reporting Procedures. Procedures in place to ensure the welfare of workers and visitors after an emergency or an incident, for example medical treatment or trauma counselling.	Directors responsible for notifying regulators (including SafeWork SA) regarding notifiable events. After event, Risk Management Officer to review procedures to reduce chance of recurrence and to improve procedures. In the event of trauma, Risk Management Officer will arrange medical treatment and/or trauma counselling as required.	
Review of these procedures	Annual evacuation drills will take place. These procedures will be reviewed once a year by the Risk Management Officer, in consultation with workers and clients. The Risk Management Officer is responsible for ensuring any changes to these procedures are documented and explained to staff. Worker and client feedback on these procedures is welcome at any time.	

Key emergency personnel

The Risk Management Officer is primarily responsible for managing the matters set out in this Framework, including consulting with workers and clients on the Framework, updating procedures regularly, staying up to date with current regulations related to matters addressed in this Framework, and conducting worker training. Other personnel involved in emergency situations include our:

- First Aid Officer, currently Vivian Anderson, to administer first aid support in an emergency.
- Fire Warden, currently Vivian Anderson, to supervise and action emergency evacuation procedures and to conduct annual drills.

Emergency kit

Our emergency kit is clearly labelled and highly visible. It is located the kitchen area.

The Risk Management Officer is responsible for ensuring that the emergency kit contains a copy of this plan, emergency and recovery contacts, our key insurance documents and a first aid kit.

Emergency drills

Emergency plan training is conducted for each worker at induction, with reminders at least annually. At least annually, the Risk Management Officer will conduct an emergency drill to test the adequacy of our worker training and our emergency procedures, generally.

3.3 How we will communicate changes to workers and clients (including NDIS participants and their support networks)

As soon as practicably safe to do so, the Risk Management Officer will coordinate communication with workers, clients, stakeholders, and the general public about the effects of the emergency or disaster as follows:

People to be contacted	Method(s) of contact	How to access contact lists remotely (including offline)	Key messages
Workers	Text message	Staff phone tree emergency list (See attached List)	Interim work arrangements. Key recovery plans.
Clients (including participants and their support networks)	Text message or phone call to client or support worker (depending on each client's preference and plan)	Risk Management Officer has access to email or phone Client.	Event has occurred, which may delay or change their supports from us. Immediate implications for supports. Recovery planning and interim arrangements and timetable to resume supports.

People to be contacted	Method(s) of contact	How to access contact lists remotely (including offline)	Key messages
Insurers including	Phone call and written notifications as required by insurance contracts		Insurable event has occurred. Request for interim support.
Key suppliers and service providers	Phone calls or emails	Samaras Group ph: 8447 7088	Notify about event and impact. Logistics and arrangements for deliveries and payments.
Lawyers, accountants	Phone calls or emails		Seek advice as required, including in relation to contracts and solvency.
Banks/financiers/shareholders	Phone calls or emails		Notify event, explain short- and medium-term implications.
Public	Sign on door.		Event has occurred. General recovery plans and timelines.

3.4 How we will adapt and respond rapidly to changes to supports and other interruptions caused by an emergency or disaster and changes that we may need to make to client supports (including supports for NDIS participants)

As soon as practicable after an emergency or disaster occurs, the Risk Management Officer will work with management, workers, clients and other key stakeholders to draft and execute our recovery plan. The recovery plan will include an assessment of damage to the business, its impact to business operations, the severity of the impact, the recovery steps needed (including insurance claims and urgent repairs), the resources required, the person or people responsible for specific recovery-related tasks, and estimated completion dates for each task.

The specifics of our recovery plan will depend on the nature of the event and its impact on our business. But priority will be given to tasks that enable us to resume our business safely for workers, and to resume providing supports and services to clients (including NDIS participants) as soon as it is practical and safe to do so to the required standards.

Adjustments to business accommodations and service delivery models

If our property, workplace, or other key infrastructure is affected by the emergency or disaster, and this affects our ability to supply supports and services, and/or clients' access to our supports and services, we will consider all feasible options, including:

- accessing the following temporary business accommodations to enable us to work on a recovery plan and to continue our services: e.g. private residence, other premises rented by Talk and/or
- to the extent appropriate, providing hybrid work and service delivery model options, including:
 - permitting qualifying workers to work from home or otherwise remotely; and/or
 - encouraging clients (including NDIS participants) to access supports and services remotely, using freely available and inexpensive remote work technologies.

As at the date of this Framework, options to facilitate hybrid work and service delivery models include Zoom, Teams and other cloud-based services.

Adjustments and alternatives to supports and services critical to the health, safety and wellbeing of an NDIS participant.

If:

- we are contracted to provide a support or service that is critical to the health, safety and wellbeing of an NDIS participant; but
- temporarily cannot deliver the support or service safely or to the required standard due to the effects of an emergency or disaster,

we will:

- **proactively communicate** with the participant or a member of the NDIS participant's support network with a view to helping the participant to access required supports and services in another way; and
- **rapidly generate and consider options to deliver the support or service in a different way**, or (with the NDIS participant's consent) to contact emergency services for special or additional support, and/or put the NDIS participant in contact with another provider to help ensure the participant can access essential services and supports, recognising that alternative providers may not be available, e.g., if they are also affected by the emergency or disaster.

If, because of an emergency or disaster, we need to make a material adjustment to the way in which we deliver a support or service, or need to make a material adjustment to the support or service itself, **we must first obtain the informed consent and agreement of the NDIS participant** before supplying him or her with that adjusted support or service.

3.5 Measures our managers have taken and will take to consult with our clients, support networks and workers about our emergency plans

Before we finalised this Framework, we shared it for comment with workers and representative clients (including NDIS participant representatives and their support networks). We considered their feedback and factored it into the final Framework.

This Framework will be shared with clients, and the latest version will be available to clients on request. This Framework will be reviewed and amended regularly (at least annually). The Framework, with our Risk Management Officer's proposed amendments, will be shared annually with representatives of our key stakeholders, including our workers and clients (including NDIS participants and their support networks). As part of our annual review, the Risk Management Officer will consult with these stakeholders and consider their feedback before finalising any changes.

If an emergency or disaster occurs, and our emergency and recovery planning principles are activated, the Risk Management Officer will conduct a review of how we performed and make recommendations to management, workers and clients to enhance this Framework. Again, the Risk Management Officer will consult with workers and client representatives (including NDIS participants and support networks) before finalising any proposed changes to the Framework.

All feedback is welcome

This Framework will be shared with workers and clients, and other key stakeholders. As business conditions, key relationships, our experience responding to emergencies and disasters, and our assessment of the risks of emergencies and disasters change, this Framework will be amended as noted above.

We take the risks of emergencies and disasters seriously, recognising the risks they pose to our operations and to the delivery of high quality supports and services to our clients (including NDIS Participants). We welcome feedback from any stakeholder – especially from clients - and will consider any suggestions very seriously with a view to making our disaster and emergency preparations as robust and client-centred as possible.

