



Ability WA Services Guide

Effective from September 2021



Welcome

Thank you for choosing Ability WA to provide your services.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to Ability WA.

We are thrilled to have you join our family.

Understanding how we work together to build positive relationships is Ability WA's main priority. This service guide has been developed to ensure we provide you with all of the information you need to ensure we meet your needs and goals.

Our ongoing commitment to you is to provide easy to understand information about our services. In doing so, we would welcome any feedback from you to tell us where we can improve and give us the opportunity to make changes. You will find out how to do this on page 18.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacquie Thomson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jacquie Thomson

Chief Executive Officer

About this Guide

Ability WA Services Guide is part of your Customer Welcome Pack and also available on our website.

This guide explains:

- How we can stay connected with each other
- Our Eligibility Criteria
- Services and Service Agreements
- Billing of services
- Our cancellation charges
- Our travel and transport charges
- Keeping your information private
- Exiting our services
- Our consent process
- How you can give us feedback about our services



About your Welcome Pack

Your welcome pack contains a set of information sheets to help you get the most from your services with us.

It contains:

- Ability WA Service Guide
- Your Service Agreement/s
- Ability WA Commitment
- Consent Forms



How we stay connected with each other

You can connect with Ability WA in several ways:

- **Customer Contact Team:** Our friendly team members will answer your calls and will help you speak to the right person. 1300 106 106
- **Customer Engagement Team:** can support you in matters related to your Service Agreement with Ability WA.
- **Scheduling Team:** will support you in booking appointments with us.
- **Key Worker:** If you access Therapy services you will be allocated a Key worker. This therapist is your key contact for all matters related to therapy services.
- **Home and Living Co-ordinator:** If you receive our home and living services, you will be allocated a co-ordinator who is your key contact for all your home and living support needs.
- **Opportunities Co-ordinator:** If you receive services from our Opportunities Program, you will be assigned an Opportunities Co-ordinator who will be your main contact for this service.
- **Manager:** If you receive Employment Supports from our Employment Service, Goodwill or Containers for Change team, the Manager or Site Manager will be your key contact for all matters related to your employment.
- **Our website:** Our website has an Information Hub which connects you to our specific time limited programs and other external services you might find interesting. This is updated regularly. abilitywa.com.au.
- **Social media:** Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @AbilityWA

Where there is information about our services that only affects you – we will have a conversation with you in person or over the phone.

We don't want you to miss out

Please let us know the best way we can communicate our Ability WA related information with you. You can do this when you sign your Service Agreement, or at any time convenient to you. The main way we communicate information is through email from info@abilitywa.com.au – so please regularly check your email junk folder to ensure they haven't landed there.

Our Ability WA Commitment

In 2020, our Customer Advisory Council wanted to ensure that our Customers and our staff made a promise to one another about how we work together and treat each other. Out of this discussion with our customers and staff came our "Ability WA Commitment".

This simple, but critical document is signed by our customers on entering our services and our staff when they commence working with us. You will be kindly asked to sign this when you join our organisation.

Our Commitment to you is that:

- We will be respectful and compassionate.
- We will be welcoming and professional.
- We will listen to your questions, concerns and suggestions and respond in a timely manner.
- We will provide easy to understand information about our services.
- We will provide you with appropriately trained and qualified staff.
- We will provide our services in environments where you feel safe.
- We will treat you as an individual.

Your commitment to us:

- You are honest and respectful.
- You are open to discussing how best to meet your needs and goals.
- You are willing to tell us where we can improve and give us the opportunity to make changes.

Our Eligibility Criteria

Our services are best suited to people of any age, from babies through to the elderly, who may have a range of diagnoses that impact significantly on their:

- Physical ability
- Cognitive/learning ability and/or
- Communication ability

We have developed an expertise in working in early intervention (0-6 yrs) and also with people who have complex needs at any age.

Complex needs can refer to people who have either:

- One area of disability that significantly impacts their daily lives; or
- Multiple disabilities when combined together significantly impact the person's daily life.

We also support people with psycho-social and behavioural challenges. However, if this challenge is the main issue without any other presentation, we will discuss our suitability with you. If we are not the most suitable provider to support you, we can provide information about other better suited providers.

Our Strength based approach

"What's more, we discovered that people have several times more potential for growth, when they invest energy in developing their strengths instead of correcting their deficiencies."

Tom Rath (2017)

At Ability WA, we believe that by really understanding your strengths and interests, we can achieve amazing things together. This means building on your existing skills rather than only working on the challenges you may have. This positive focus keeps the excitement and motivation alive as we work together to achieve your goals.

Services

Our services are available for anyone who meets our eligibility criteria and where we cannot find a service in Ability WA to meet your needs, we will do our best to connect you with a service provider who can help you achieve your goals. More information about our services can be found on our website.

Therapy Services

- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Dietetics
- Social work



Consultability

If you would like someone other than your regular therapist to review your skills, we have a range of specialised therapy staff who can provide another assessment for you.

Equipment Solutions

Our highly experienced therapists and specialised technical staff can:

- Find solutions to improve your sleep
- Prescribe, supply and can maintain mobility supports such as inserts, wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and walkers
- Prescribe, supply, maintain and train customers and families in the use of communication devices



Positive Behaviour Supports

Where there are behaviours that may significantly impact on an individual's life in negative way, we have a team of trained Positive Behaviour Support staff who work with individuals, their family and various service teams to develop a plan of supports.

Home and Living Services

- **Our Opportunities program** can help you to access your community in whichever way you choose. This might mean taking you to appointments, help you attend activities/hobbies you enjoy, go shopping and develop your skills for being independent in your community and in personal care.
- **Short Term Accommodation** is available if you need a break from home or want to try living independently before you move out of home. You can have a short stay for a few days, a weekend or up to a few weeks in one of our Ability WA houses with services provided to you in the house to support you where you are at.
- **Medium Term Accommodation** is available if you would like to move into temporary accommodation while your Specialist Disability Accommodation house is being built or while you might be working out where is best for you to live.
- **Shared Independent Living (SIL)** is help and/or supervision of daily tasks to help you live as independently as possible, while building your skills. It is paid personal supports and is most commonly used in shared living arrangements.

- **Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)**– If you think you might be eligible for Specialist Disability Accommodation Funding then we can provide:
- **Qualified functional assessment** for NDIS to see if you are eligible.
- **Connections and support to help you find your home.** Ability WA is connected to several housing partners who we have carefully chosen to meet our values and standards. These housing partners have a range of modern homes that have been purpose built over the last 2 years to be accessible and ideally suited for a range of individuals.



Employment Services

Our Employment Services team can assist you to find work in open employment if you are eligible for Disability Employment Services (DES). Our team walk alongside you to assist you to find the right job for you.

Enterprise Services

Our Enterprise Services can provide Supported Employment opportunities at Goodwill Engineering as well as Containers for Change (Refund Points). We help you to build your work readiness skills in a supportive environment, allowing you to achieve your employment goals.

Support Coordination Services

Our Support Co-ordination team:

- builds your capacity to manage your NDIS funding to meet your needs
- links you in to the services you need in the community
- supports you in NDIS Planning

Your Service Agreement

Your Service Agreement is a contract between you and Ability WA which outlines how we will deliver the supports you want from us. Your Service Agreement with Ability WA is not the same as your NDIS plan.

The Ability WA Service Agreement is a legal contract. It describes;

- The services you have asked us to provide
- How these services can be paid
- Where you can find information about our prices
- The service you can expect from Ability WA
- The expectations Ability WA will ask of you.
- How we keep your information private
- Exiting our services.

You can change your service providers at any time. However, you should be aware of Ability WA's cancellation terms and the requirements to make a new Service Agreement with your new provider.

You can choose one service provider for all your supports or different providers for each of your supports.

If you have funding from NDIS, your Ability WA Service Agreement starts from the date the NDIS plan is approved. It is important you set up a Service Agreement as soon as you receive your NDIS plan so your supports can commence.

If you don't have funding from NDIS you will still need a Service Agreement. This can be aligned to the date you would like to start services with us.

How are Ability WA services provided?

We will work with you to discuss how you would like to have your services delivered to best achieve your outcomes.

You can choose:

1. Location of direct services: services where we are face to face with you

Our services may be provided face to face, directly to you - our customer. This can occur:

- At one of our Hubs (Currumbine, Malaga, Coolbinia, Canning Vale, Osborne Park and Baldivis)
- In your home
- At school
- In your community
- In your workplace
- Through Tele-therapy

2. Intensity and frequency of direct services

The frequency of your services is discussed with your key support person, who might be:

- In Therapy Services, this will be your **Key Worker**
- In our Opportunities Program and Home and Living services this will be your **Co-ordinator**; and
- In Employment services and Social Enterprise this will be your **Manager**

Service frequency will depend on the goals you wish to achieve and the timeframe you would like to achieve them in.

You may wish to have 1:1 services or you may wish to have these services with another person or group of people. You should discuss your preferences with your key support person in your service.

3. Indirect services

(services that are not face to face, but still support you achieving your goals)

- Working with and educating the people who support you – in person or over the phone
- Finding resources or researching for you,
- Developing your programs
- Plan reviews – annually as a minimum NDIS requirement or more frequently if required
- Writing reports for you to use with NDIS and other agencies
- Time for our team to travel to you to deliver services where you need them.
- Mileage associated with the travel to work with you where you need your services.

This type of work will be discussed with you before it occurs and will be charged in accordance with billable items outlined in our current Ability Centre Price Guide

4. Continuity of Services

Ability WA wants to deliver services to you as you would like them delivered and as you have planned. There may be times when we cannot deliver the services you need due to:

- Staff sickness
- Staff leaving
- Limited availability of staff

In such instances, where possible, we will give you notice of these situations as soon as we are aware. We will ask you what you would like us to do to ensure you receive support services.

You may be asked if you would like:

- To reschedule this service
- To engage another Ability WA staff member to deliver these services
- To access this service from staff at another one of our hubs
- To increase the frequency of another of your Ability WA services until we can fill the gap
- To refer you to another organisation for this service.

Price Arrangements for our Services

Our prices can be located on our website:

<https://www.abilitycentre.com.au/our-services/service-agreement-and-rate-schedules/>

NDIS Managed Customers

- Once the service has been provided to you, Ability WA will bill the NDIS for this service. Ability WA will be paid directly from NDIS. You do not need to do anything.
- Billing NDIS is completed twice a week
- To view your bills from Ability WA you can login to your NDIS portal.
- Should you have any queries regarding our billing please contact 1300 106 106 and ask to be put through to our Finance Department.

Plan Managed Customers

Once the service has been provided to you, an invoice will be created and sent to your Plan Manager who will be required to pay these services on your behalf with your NDIS funds within 30 days. Billing from Ability WA will occur on a fortnightly basis.

Self-Managed Customers – where our customers are responsible for direct payment

- Once the service has been provided to you, an invoice will be created and sent to you for payment.
- Billing will occur on a fortnightly basis. Payment is required **within 30 days**.

Cancellation of Appointments

Our aim at Ability WA is to understand you and your personal circumstances. This enables us to plan services in a way that works for you and your personal circumstances. This takes into account:

- Where you need your services to be delivered to meet your goals
- Your medical stability
- Your family support
- Any specific details of your disability if it might impact on your appointment attendance.

If your appointment attendance is going to be regularly affected by a medical condition requiring frequent hospitalisation, please provide a letter of support from your specialist. This will help us to best plan your appointments with you.

By working together to plan services, we hope to minimise the number of cancellations you need to make and discuss a plan for those times in which you cannot give us 48 hrs notice.

Should you be unable to attend any of your appointments, we ask that you provide us with a **minimum of 48 hours notice**. Our team can plan other services they might be able to deliver to you in that week or enables our staff to be directed towards other customers who may be awaiting services.

Should you cancel your services within 48 hours or not attend any booked services you will be charged for that appointment in accordance with NDIS Guidelines.

When there is extenuating situations such as hospitalisation – you may request to speak to a Manager to discuss the management of this cancellation.

Therapy Services Cancellations

If you are accessing our Therapy Services, it is very important that you have a discussion with your therapy team about how you would like to manage short notice cancellations at the beginning of your Service Agreement period, so both parties are clear on the course of action should these short notice cancellations occur. In this way we can minimise your cancellation costs.

Travel Charges

There are two types of travel charges applied when Ability WA staff may travel to your home, school, work or community.

1. Our staff's time to travel to deliver:

- Therapy services
- Opportunities program (e.g. supports for your personal care or support for your participation in recreational activities)
- Supported Employment
- Support Co-ordination

How does it work?

When our staff travel from an Ability WA hub to deliver services to you at your home, school, work or community, our therapy and support co-ordination staff's time will be charged up to 30 minutes each way.

This charge covers the time to prepare and drive to your appointment or community activity (The charge will vary, depending on which of the above services you use).

2. Our staff related travel costs

These costs are related to the vehicle our staff travel in to deliver services to you and will vary dependent on the vehicle used for your travel.

- For a standard vehicle this will be 85c p/km
- For a modified vehicle this will be \$1.90 p/km

All the above charges will be drawn down from your relevant line item within your NDIS Plan.

Privacy of your information

Ability WA respects and values the privacy of all information we handle about our customers. Ability WA collect and securely store your personal information for the main purpose of providing safe and quality services to direct service customers, their families and carers.

Ability WA's digital Customer Management System (CMS) – Lumary – enables appropriate and confidential sharing of information to all Ability WA employees delivering services to you. This means each of the Ability WA team members who delivers services to you is up to date with your needs and circumstances and can ensure safe and efficient service delivery each time you access Ability WA supports and services.

Lumary meets all the Australian requirements to ensure customer information is held securely in Australia.

Our CMS can be accessed by all our Ability WA employees, each who have specific secure and individual logon details. All Ability WA employees must sign a privacy and confidentiality agreement before starting at Ability WA. This is an additional assurance to you and your family about how we keep your information confidential.

Ability WA ensures personal customer information is not shared outside of the people directly involved in delivering supports and services to you from Ability WA, unless you consent to do so.

Consent to share information gives Ability WA authorisation to discuss your progress with other providers who are working with you to help you achieve your goals. More information about consent is provided in the next section.

As a customer, you may ask questions about these consents at any time. You can also withdraw consent from any specific item at any time.

Consent

What is informed consent?

Consent is when you give your permission for an activity or procedure to occur. Informed consent means that you have been given enough information to

understand the benefits and risks of the activity or event you are going to undertake you before you give your permission.

Who can give or withdraw consent?

You or your legally appointed guardian (the person who can legally sign for you) can give consent.

When will I be asked to give consent?

You will be asked to give your consent when you commence services with Ability WA, at the time of signing a new Service Agreement. Consents will be reviewed with you annually at the time of renewing your service agreement with us.

You may also be asked to give your consent or permission should you have require specific activities to occur once you are accessing our services

Withdrawing my consent

You are free to remove your consent from any activity at any stage of your services with us. Just let any of our Ability WA team know your wishes and our Customer Engagement Team will be in contact with you to finalise this process.

Types of Consent

Communication Consent

This is related to the Ability WA information you would like to receive and information that may be important for you to know about our services

Information Consent:

This consent is related to how your information is used within and external to Ability WA

Services Consent

Consent for Ability WA to be able to deliver the services you have chosen to you

Activity Consent

Your consent to participate in activities that are outside your usually planned activities.

Please ask one of our Customer Engagement Team to explain anything to you if you have any questions about consent.

Exiting our Services

Customer Initiated Exit from services

You have the right to exit any or all of Ability WA services at any time during the duration of the Service Agreement. Should you or your authorised representative wish to exit any or all of Ability WA services, it is a requirement for customers to give a minimum of **2 weeks' notice** for:

- Therapy Services
- Supported Employment Services
- Opportunities programs
- Support Co-ordination Services

Exiting a Home and Living Service:

- Notice periods for your exit from a Home and Living service are outlined in your AWA General Service agreement. In addition notice periods are outlined in your Residential Tenancy Agreement or your AWA Specialist Disability Accommodation service agreement. Your Manager or Coordinator will be able to discuss this with you

You can tell us you want to exit in the following ways:

- By having a conversation with and/or sending an email to your main service contact. This would be your
 - Key Worker for Therapy Services,
 - Co-ordinator for Opportunities,
 - Co-ordinator for Home and Living Services,
 - Manager for Employment Services or Support Co-ordinator.

Once you have let us know you wish to exit, Ability WA need to complete written reports summarising the outcomes from the services used. These reports will be billed from your NDIS Plan. This is to help you safely move to other service providers and is a requirement of the NDIS. These reports are your property and can be used by you with the new service provider, to support the process.

Supporting you to move to another provider

It is your decision how you would like the handover of services from Ability WA to the new provider to occur. Ability WA staff are more than happy to meet face to face, over the phone or via telehealth with you, your family and new service providers for a discussion. This handover meeting will be billed from your NDIS plan. More specific details of handover can be discussed and arranged with your direct team.

We value feedback about your reasons for leaving our services. This information helps to assist in improving the way we offer services to our customers. We may send a short survey to customers to complete at the time of exit.

Returning to our services

Even though you may have chosen to leave our services at a point in time, you can come back at any time. Dependent on the urgency of the service – it is reasonable for you to expect that you may need to go on a waitlist should our services be full.

Ability WA Initiated Exit

Ability WA values customer and staff safety.

In rare cases, there may be issues identified by our team which impact our staff safety or the safety of other customers when working with you or your family. In these situations, our team will raise this with you and try to resolve these quickly and respectfully with the development of an action plan to positively manage the situation.

There are instances where Ability WA recognises it may not be in the best interest of our customers or our employees, for you to continue to receive some or all of your services from us. This could include incidents where for example;

- The customer or family are in breach of our Ability WA commitment
- Our staff are placed at risk of serious harm or distress
- The customer or family are unable to make payment for services (in arrears more than 30 days) or rent without disclosed financial hardship and sustained failure to engage in repayment arrangements
- Ability WA cannot meet the individualised support needs of the customer

In the case where a sound resolution cannot be reached, Ability WA retains the right to terminate a customer's Service agreement with two weeks' notice for:

- Therapy services
- Opportunities program
- Short and Medium term accommodation services
- Employment services; and
- Support Co-ordination services

Exiting Home and Living services

In the event Ability WA is the housing provider, notice period will be provided as per the Tenancy/Occupancy Agreement.

As the living support provider, the notice period provided to the customer shall be 90 days unless the customer's presence in a shared living arrangement poses a risk to customers and employees. In this case Ability WA will seek to source alternate interim accommodation arrangements for the customer within the 90 day notice period. Personal belongings should be removed no later than 1 week from the customer exiting.

When notified of the exit, the customer will be provided with information on community based advocacy and legal support services.

We will discuss with you how we can best support you to move to another service provider.

Feedback



We welcome feedback about our people and our services

The way we improve our services to you is by hearing from you. You can tell us what is working, what isn't working and share your ideas for other services you might like to see developed.

How can you give us feedback?

- Tell the staff member you are working with. Let them know if you would like your feedback to be recorded formally and sent to our Quality Team.
- If you cannot speak to the staff member you are working with you can speak to the Manager of the service by calling 1300 106 106
- Email us: feedback@abilitywa.com.au
- Write to us: Feedback, PO Box 61, Mount Lawley WA 6929
- Go to our website and click on Feedback

We will let you know we have received your feedback within 24 hours and will respond in full to your feedback within 30 days

If you don't feel you can talk to us about what we can do to improve our services then you can:

- Call the NDIS Commission on 1800 035 544
- Visit www.ndiscommission.gov.au
- Go to our website abilitywa.com.au to find a list of advocacy agencies who can support you to also provide feedback.