

## PROCEDURE

### Participation and Inclusion

#### 1. Purpose

In accordance with the Participation and Inclusion Policy, this procedure explains the process for promoting and contributing to the connection of people with disability and their relationships, work, leisure, culture and participation within their chosen communities. EPIC Support Services will respect Participant's rights to independence and choice and control in relation to participation and inclusion and will provide support and facilitation in accordance with its Person Centred Approach.

#### 2. Definitions

**Participant:** term used to describe a person with disability who utilises a service or support within EPIC Support Services.

**Employee:** term used to describe a staff member of EPIC Support Services but does not include Volunteers or Students.

#### 3. Procedures

##### 3.1 Connection with Relationships, Work, Leisure, Culture and Community

EPIC Support Services will ensure that:

- It supports and promotes the importance of a strong connection to relationships, work, leisure, culture and community within a participant's support network;
- That Participants are encouraged and supported to establish, preserve and/or enhance connections with relationships, work, leisure, culture and community provided this aligns with the participant's preferences; and
- That it works with relationships, work and community to establish, preserve and/or enhance these connections, provided written consent has been obtained to do so.

### **3.2 Community Participation and Inclusion**

EPIC Support Services will ensure that:

- Its services are designed to facilitate the participation and inclusion with the community at times and in ways similar to all members of the community;
- Its services are designed in a similar way that is provided to all members of the community (e.g. hours of work, use of public transportation, visits to local shops); and
- That opportunities for inclusion and participation are identified through events, programs and organisations that are open to all members of a participant's community, and to identify opportunities specifically for persons with disability if needs cannot otherwise be met.

### **3.3 Identification of Opportunities**

Opportunities for inclusion will be sought from a broad range of options including (but not exhaustive of):

- Local opportunities – that is they are within walking distance, a single trip on public transport or a short drive. These activities may include, hosting a dinner for family and friends, walking to a local park, shopping at a local shopping centre, or joining an activity at the local gym or community centre;
- Opportunities beyond a participant's local area – for example participants attend events of sporting teams they support, outings to the beach but live some distance from it, or they need to travel further to access specific services or activities (such as riding for the disabled);
- Opportunities outside a participant's region, which may require longer trips by car, public transport or other modes of travel may include day trips to other locations, overnight trips to visit friends or family or to participate in activities hosted by groups that a participant is or wishes to become a member of.
- Partnering with the local community, such as seeking employment or work-like activities at local businesses or assisting an aged care facility to perform garden maintenance etc.
- Volunteering opportunities that reflect personal interests, for example working with animals (local RSPCA), cooking (canteen duty at a local school), sport (assisting a local sports club to maintain their equipment) or caring for the environment (Clean-up Australia Day or tree planting);

- Activities hosted by groups that are advertised as 'inclusive', for example inclusive sports activities; or
- Within services provided by EPIC Support Services or other disability support organisations or activities for people with disabilities that are organised by local Councils.
- Providing opportunities for the community to participate in EPIC Support Services events, such as holding open days at Business Services sites to enable the community to see the work undertaken by EPIC Support Services employees.

### **3.4 Employee Procedures**

EPIC Support Services will ensure that Employees:

- Explore a Participant's connection with relationships, culture and community on an annual basis through the Person Centred Planning Process with a view to supporting and encouraging participants to establish, preserve and/or enhance these links;
- Explore a participant's level of participation in activities within their community on an annual basis through the Person Centred Planning Process with a view to supporting and encouraging participation and access of community based activities and services;
- Respond to participant requests and goals by identifying suitable supports, services and opportunities for participants to access community activities and/or groups and develop and maintain contacts and involvement within their community;
- Are responsive to participant cultural and linguistic diversity and respect a participant's wishes for religious, spiritual and/or cultural engagement within their chosen community;
- Promote community events through word of mouth and posting event information on the EPIC Support Services Web and Social Media Sites;
- Maintain a resource directory on EPIC Support Service's Web Site that contains supports and services in the community; Work with a participant's family, friends, carers and advocates, provided written consent to do so has been obtained from the participant; and
- Provide an opportunity for participant to provide feedback about the extent to which the service contributes to their participation and inclusion outcomes.

<b>RELATED DOCUMENTS</b>
Complaints, Feedback and Compliments Policy and Procedure
Complaints, Feedback and Compliments Form
Cultural Safety for Participants Policy
Participation and Inclusion Policy

<b>RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR STANDARDS</b>
Disability Services Act 2006 (Vic)
National Standards for Disability Services