

Central Coast Home and Community Care Development Project

Guidelines for The Use of Brokerage Agreement

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GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF BROKERAGE AGREEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Document Status

Version	Issue Date
Brokerage Agreement	September 2000 – Issued for comment to Central Coast Working Party
Draft 1 – Guidelines	August 2001 – Issued for comment to Central Coast Working Party.
Final Version – Guidelines & Agreement	September 2001

What are these Guidelines?

These guidelines have been developed in response to a request from the Central Coast Aged and Disability agencies who felt that there needed to be a consistent way in which their agencies required brokered services to be provided.

The guidelines are prepared for agencies to be used in conjunction with the Brokerage Agreement in order to provide consistency cross the Central Coast.

Agencies are reminded that they should complement these guidelines with Policies on Financial Management, Special Needs Groups, Legal Obligations and Duty of Care.

The document has been developed as a guide only and is designed to enable agencies to decide on policies/procedures that best suit the needs of their clients and their own organisational structures.

Do I have an obligation to use this Agreement?

The Agreement was requested in the spirit of consultation and consistency, and for agencies who broker out funds there will be an opportunity to sign off on the agreement.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES

The set of procedures for the use of the Brokerage Agreement is summarised below –

1. Develop a Policy relevant to your agency.
2. Develop a Communication procedure between your agency and the agency to which funds are brokered.
3. Agencies have in place procedures covering Privacy and Confidentiality.
4. Identified changes to the document have to be communicated back to the working party.

PROCEDURE ONE: DEVELOP A POLICY RELEVANT TO YOUR AGENCY

Your agency develops a policy relevant to your position when brokering services. This may or may not involve a commitment to use the attached agreement.

What is a Policy?

A policy is a clear, written statement, which sets out an organisation's position or attitude on a certain issue. Many policies can rely on Acts of Parliament, Award conditions, Industrial Agreements or industry standards for their basic contents.

An organisation can then write a policy based on the Act and the other conditions that it has decided to adopt.

Although policies often have a legislative base they can be adapted for individual needs within an organisation. Other policies can be based on standard practice that has emerged over time or they can be statements of a new intention or direction for an organisation.

A policy should always reflect the organisation's corporate goals and be seen as further evidence of its main objectives and orientation.

PROCEDURE TWO: DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE BETWEEN YOUR AGENCY AND THE AGENCY TO WHICH FUNDS ARE BROKERED.

What is a Procedure?

A procedure describes an activity and often shows how a policy is put into action. Procedures are designed as practical guides, the 'how to' of operating an organisation or service. They should be framed as instructions, often in a step-by-step format that can be easily followed after only one read.

For Example –

- Apply the kiss strategy – keep it simple stupid
- Make available a copy of the agreement to the agency providing the service.
- Ask if the provider/s will have any trouble fulfilling the Terms of the Agreement.
- Sign agreement and collect relevant documentation.

PROCEDURE THREE: AGENCIES HAVE IN PLACE PROCEDURES COVERING PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.

Clients' life (including financial details) details are often held with community agencies to enable them to provide services appropriate and relevant to their client needs. This leaves the client vulnerable to exploitation in a variety of ways.

Agencies have an obligation to develop and implement policies and procedures that protect the privacy and confidentiality of all clients.

At the very least client files and persona; details should only be accessible to workers who need them to carry out their duties, either direct services or maintaining agency records.

An example of Privacy and Confidentiality Policy follows:

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.....(Agency Name)

The only information held by.....(Agency Name) about a consumer will be information necessary to assess the need for a service, and to provide the service. Information should be as non-obtrusive and objective as possible, yet relevant and up to date.

The consumer has the right to withhold information for privacy reasons.

Information about a consumer will not be shared with another agency without the permission of the consumer or his/her legal guardian or advocate.

Consumers have the right to read any personal information about them by (Agency Name). Requests from consumers to access files should be referred to the Coordinator who should ensure that assistance is provided for the consumer to access information on his/her file within two weeks. A staff member should be made available to explain any terminology to the consumer. Information regarding consumers will be stored in a filing cabinet, which is kept locked when the office is unattended. This information is only accessible to the Coordinator, Day Care Coordinator and the Administrative Support Officer (for maintaining files).

There are a number of models for developing Confidentiality/Privacy Policies.

(Please note this practise is a minimum standard for Home and Community Care Standards – Objective 5 Privacy and Confidentiality, Performance Question 21).

PROCEDURE FOUR: IDENTIFIED CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT HAVE TO BE COMMUNICATED BACK TO THE WORKING PARTY.

This is to ensure that difficulties are overcome in a consistent manner and all parties to the agreement are afforded the opportunity to benefit from improvements between themselves and the agency to which they are brokering funds.

CHECKLIST

What Information is Required Before the Signing of this Agreement?

- ABN Number/GST Status
- Insurance Policy Documents and Certificates of Currency
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Hazard Identification Checklist
- Award Conditions and Wage Rates
- Child Protection Legislation/Relevant Criminal Checks
- Anti-Discrimination Legislation
- Rates of each service level
- List of appropriate staff and qualifications
- Relevant policies and procedures

SUMMARY OF HACC STANDARDS

OBJECTIVE 1

ACCESS TO SERVICES

To ensure that each consumer's access to a service is decided only on the basis of relative need.

OBJECTIVE 2

INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION

To ensure that each consumer is informed about his or her rights and responsibilities and the services available, and consulted about any changes required.

OBJECTIVE 3

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

To ensure that consumers receive the benefit of well planned, efficient and accountable service management.

OBJECTIVE 4

COORDINATED, PLANNED AND RELIABLE SERVICE DELIVERY

To ensure that each consumer receives coordinated services that are planned, reliable and meet his or her specific ongoing needs.

OBJECTIVE 5

PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

To ensure that each consumer's rights to privacy and confidentiality are respected, and he or she has access to personal information held by the agency.

OBJECTIVE 6

COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

To ensure that each consumer has access to fair and equitable procedures for dealing with complaints and disputes.

OBJECTIVE 7

ADVOCACY

To ensure that each consumer has access to an advocate of his or her choice.