

## GUIDE TO ENDING SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY TEMPLATE

### ABOUT THIS POLICY AREA

This policy guides how the organisation ends service delivery for clients who will no longer be using services.

A written ending service delivery policy is required as part of meeting Standard 2 (Responding to individuals, families and communities).

#### **Standard 2 — ending service delivery**

*The organisation develops, implements and reviews policies and procedures for managing the process of ending service delivery to individual clients, and assists them to move to where their current needs will best be met.*

#### **Policy checklist**

The following checklist will help you check that an existing policy covers this area adequately.

The policy should:

- describe how the process of ending a service for an individual client is managed in a planned and inclusive way
- explain how the organisation assists clients to move to where their current needs will best be met
- explain how feedback is obtained from clients exiting the service
- contain clear procedures and actions
- indicate the timing of any actions
- show when it was approved
- show when it was last reviewed.

### COMPLETING YOUR ENDING SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY

#### **Using the policy template**

The template provides some example statements. You can adapt these statements and include them in your policy or write your own statements to better suit the operations and services of your organisation.

To customise the policy template, click on the shaded sections **<<Insert text>>** and insert the information that is specific to your organisation.

When you have completed the policy template, delete the shaded instruction sections such as: [Refer to ending service delivery policy template guide for questions and/or examples to consider when customising this section.](#)

For further information on using the policy guides, refer to the information in *Using the policy templates and guides*.

## **Guidelines for each section of your policy**

### **1. Purpose**

When identifying the purpose of the policy, consider how it might apply to your client group/s and stakeholders. Do you need to make specific statements to ensure you are inclusive of particular groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australian South Sea Islanders, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability?

### **2. Scope**

To determine the scope of the policy, consider the following questions:

- Does this policy apply to all your organisation's services and to all clients and stakeholders?
- Are there particular external requirements for specific service types or clients that will affect your ending service delivery?

### **3. Policy statement**

If you are adopting the policy statement in the template, consider whether there are any additional commitments that your organisation wants to make.

In identifying the actions your organisation will take to implement this policy, you should include the following:

- how you manage service closure for clients so they exit the service in a planned way
- how you assist clients to move to where their current needs will best be met
- how you obtain feedback from exiting and former clients.

### **4. Procedures**

The procedures describe how your organisation achieves the aims and goals you have outlined in your purpose, scope and policy statement.

#### **4.1 Ending a service to a client**

The service plan for each client will identify when and under what circumstances the agreed service relationship will end. There may be other circumstances in which the organisation or the client ends the service relationship. It is good practice to assist each client to end their use of your services in a planned way whenever this is possible.

In describing how you manage the end of a client service relationship, consider each of the following:

- the variety of ways a service relationship may end — for example, exiting a residential service, no longer attending activities, entering another program within the same service, changing to another service provider, becoming independent of formal service intervention etc.
- the steps you will take to assist the client in their transition and to sustain the progress achieved during the delivery of your service after the service ends. This may include: involving the client in planning for the withdrawal of support; evaluating achievements;

developing agreed action plans and timeframes; making relevant referrals, information and assistance available at the appropriate time to maximise continuity of service for those clients continuing to receive related or follow-up services; providing emotional and practical help, and transitional and follow-up support services; informing and consulting with other key parties about the pending service completion.

- listing and explaining the ways you document the end of a service. For example, individual case records will show how, when and why the service ceased to be provided; how all legal and contractual responsibilities are discharged; any practical information that may be required concerning issues such as the reconciliation of credits and debts, return of personal belongings or service property, removal of personal records from active systems, onward referrals, contact details etc.
- describing how you will obtain feedback from former and exiting clients to inform a review of your service.

### **5. Other related policies and documents**

The ending service delivery policy should be linked to other policies related to responding to individuals, families and communities. This may include:

- service delivery policy
- allocation policy
- collaboration policy.

The list should also include policies about client rights, in particular:

- access to confidential information policy
- feedback policy
- complaints by clients policy.

Also list the forms and other organisational documents related to your ending service delivery policy.

### **6. Review processes**

Consider how often the policy should be reviewed and the process for doing this:

- **frequency of review:** Most policies benefit from an annual review. The experience of implementing the policy is used to decide which changes are necessary. Consider reviewing your ending service delivery policy as part of an annual review of the organisation's policies or, if your organisation is small, perhaps over a three-year period. Critical incidents may prompt you to review the policy ahead of schedule.
- **responsibility for the review:** In most organisations, the person accountable for client service would be responsible for reviewing this policy. In small organisations, this may be the manager or service coordinator. In larger organisations, this may be a client service manager.
- **process for the review:** Decide which particular staff, volunteers, external people and organisations will provide input to the policy review, and whether clients will be involved.
- **decision-making process:** Who will review draft changes to the policy, and who will approve changes? What will be the timeframe for the review process?
- **documentation and communication:** What records of the policy review process are needed? How will changes to the policy be communicated to staff implementing the policy? In a small organisation, this may be as simple as noting the changes at a staff meeting. In a larger organisation, an email memo may be needed.

- **key questions for the review:** Is the policy being implemented? Are procedures being followed? Is the policy clear? What has changed that may prompt a change to the policy? Have particular stakeholders had difficulty with any aspect of the policy? Can their concerns be resolved? How does the policy compare with that of similar organisations?