



ETHNIC DISABILITY ADVOCACY CENTRE Inc.

OPERATIONS MANUAL

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Singh'.

Signed:

(President)

On behalf of the Management Committee / Board

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1. ETHNIC DISABILITY ADVOCACY CENTRE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The OPERATIONAL MANUAL was developed to inform and assist Management Committee / Board and Staff members on the practical and policy operations of the Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre Inc. This manual will be reviewed as required and should be read in conjunction with EDAC's Policies and Procedures Manual.

1.2. BACKGROUND

People from CaLD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) backgrounds who have disabilities are doubly disadvantaged in being able to access services, supports and opportunities that other people have, because of their disability and their ethnicity, and often barriers related to language and colloquialisms. Problems faced by this group have been widely reported in various consultations and studies undertaken by government departments and academics. There are different cultural attitudes about disability including, the isolation of families; lack of knowledge about services and systems; and family reluctance to use services. The ABS survey and other studies indicated that people with disabilities from CaLD backgrounds represented 14% of the population with disability and had low participation rates in disability related programs delivered by government and non-government agencies.

In 1993 the Ethnic Communities' Council (ECC) undertook an access and equity project in employment for ethnic people with disabilities in WA. The project involved trialing the Access and Equity model that was developed by the Action on Disabilities within Ethnic Communities (ADEC) in Melbourne. One of the recommendations from the evaluation of this project was the development of an advocacy service for ethnic people with disability in WA in order to facilitate better access to all disability and mainstream services for people with disabilities and their families/carers from CaLD backgrounds. Such a service would increase their representation on disability related programs so that they can exercise control over their lives and participate in all levels of society.

The ECC WA in conjunction with the Ethnic Disability Support Group applied to the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Disability Services Commission for funding to establish an advocacy service in Western Australia. Funding was approved in March 1995 for the establishment of the Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC).

1.3 MISSION

Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC) vigorously seeks to promote, protect and safeguard the rights and interests of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) people with disabilities and/or mental health issues, their families/ carers and communities, to fulfil their full potential.

Objectives

- To advocate on behalf of people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds with disabilities in order for them to achieve equal access to services and resources in our community.
- To work towards the empowerment of individuals and families from CaLD backgrounds by increasing their participation in decision making particularly in areas which affect their lives.
- To increase the awareness of issues relating to ethnicity and disability within the ethnic, disability and mainstream sectors.
- To represent people from CaLD backgrounds with disabilities and their families or carers in public forums, government consultations etc.

It is the aim of EDAC to work to the National Standards for Disability Services (2013); namely

1. **Rights:** The service promotes individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making and actively prevents abuse, harm, neglect and violence.
2. **Participation and Inclusion:** The service works with individuals and families, friends and carers to promote opportunities for meaningful participation and active inclusion in society.
3. **Individual Outcomes:** Services and supports are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed to build on individual strengths and enable individuals to reach their goals.
4. **Feedback and Complaints:** Regular feedback is sought and used to inform individual and organisation-wide service reviews and improvement.
5. **Service Access:** The service manages access, commencement and leaving a service in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way.
6. **Service Management:** The service has effective and accountable service management and leadership to maximise outcomes for individuals.

1.4 FUNDING

EDAC has been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Department of Social Services (DSS) and Disability Services Commission to provide individual and systemic advocacy for people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families/ carers since 1995. More than a decade since its inception EDAC remains the only funded disability advocacy organisation, solely for people with disabilities from CaLD backgrounds, providing an independent and quality advocacy service. In recent years EDAC's advocacy service has extended to the regional areas of Carnarvon and W. Kimberley (Broome, Derby and Fitzroy Crossing) through funding received from the Dept. of Social Services.

1.4.1 Description of Advocacy according to funding agreement:

EDAC conducts individual and systemic advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds.

The goal of individual advocacy is to promote and protect the rights of consumers with disability and assist them to address their grievances, complaints and discriminatory issues. Individual advocacy is accountable to the person with disability and in making sure that their rights are being recognised and respected.

In systemic advocacy, EDAC seeks to address barriers and discriminatory practices to produce long-term positive changes to service access for people with disabilities from CaLD backgrounds and their families/carers and on occasions will work with advocacy groups and other relevant agencies to effect changes.

Areas of coverage include health, education, transport, employment, housing, legal etc.

EDAC also provides information and training to consumers and service providers to raise awareness of disability and cultural issues.

1.4.2 Performance Report

A report outlining performance outcomes against the objectives and strategies agreed to in the Service Outlet Performance Plan is required by Department of Social Services, bi-annually and by DSC, annually. (Refer to funding agreement).

2. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

2.1 Management Committee / Board

There are 12 elected members on the Management Committee / Board, as per EDAC's constitution.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Management Committee / Board

The Management Committee / Board members will:

- 1) Ensure that the organisation conducts its affairs so as to promote the agency's aims and objectives.
- 2) Understand their roles and responsibilities as a Management Committee / Board member.
- 3) Fulfill their responsibilities as Management Committee / Board members by attending as many Management Committee / Board or sub-committee meetings as possible and tendering their apologies in advance if unable to attend any meeting.
- 4) Prepare themselves properly for Committee meetings by pre-reading the minutes of the previous meeting, the agenda for forthcoming meeting and any supporting documentation.

- 5) Satisfactorily complete any tasks allotted to them by the Management Committee / Board within the agreed time frame.
- 6) Act in good faith and in the best interests of the organisation.
- 7) Observe the confidentiality guidelines established by the Management Committee / Board.
- 8) Exercise reasonable care and diligence in the execution of their duties by keeping themselves informed about the agency's activities and financial position.
- 9) Not make improper use of their position as a Management Committee / Board member to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or any other person, which may be detrimental to the agency.
- 10) If they have personal interests that might give rise to conflicts of interests with their duties as Management Committee / Board members, they will need to disclose the nature of those interests at the Management Committee / Board meeting and refrain from discussing or voting on the issue.
- 11) Ensure the keeping of such accounting records as correctly explain EDAC's transactions and financial position.
- 12) Not make or authorise a statement to the Ministry of Fair Trading, the Australian Taxation Office, EDAC's independent auditor or its funding body which, to their knowledge, is false or materially misleading.
- 13) Prevent EDAC from incurring a debt if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that it is insolvent at the time the debt is incurred or would become insolvent by incurring the debt or a number of debts.
- 14) Refer to EDAC's Constitution.

2.3 Meeting Procedures

The Management Committee / Board meetings are usually held once a month commencing at 5.15pm and attended by all members of the Committee and the Chief Executive Officer. Staff will be invited to attend from time to time to present their reports.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has no voting rights. All meetings are conducted in accordance with the Constitution.

3 HUMAN RESOURCE

3.1 EMPLOYMENT

3.1.1 Vacancy

- 1) Maintain up to date written duty statements and selection criteria for all positions in the agency.
- 2) The Management Committee / Board is responsible for the appointment of staff. Unless the Management Committee / Board confirms otherwise, all positions will be advertised.

- 3) The Management Committee / Board delegates the Chief Executive Officer the responsibility to advertise the vacant position according to agreed guidelines. (See Policy on Recruitment and Selection of Staff)
- 4) Project(s) will be allocated to current staff members if they have a set of specific skills appropriate for that project.
- 5) Project officers will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer or Project Steering Committee comprising of representatives of Partner Agencies if applicable.
- 6) The Chief Executive Officer must consult with the President/Chair Person or a member of the Executive of the Management Committee / Board and present a report of such appointments at the next Management Committee / Board meeting.
- 7) Any vacant position may be re-advertised if the range and quality of applicants is not suitable to the requirements of the position.
- 8) All prospective applicants will be provided with a copy of the relevant duty statement and selection criteria, including the requirement to provide a current Police Clearance certificate.
- 9) Applicants will need to address the essential criteria for each position in their job applications and provide a current Police Clearance Certificate (no older than five years)
- 10) A panel of three to four members (including the Chief Executive Officer or a delegate) will interview applicants deemed potentially suitable for the position/s.
- 11) All short-listed applicants (staff or volunteers) must provide documentary proof of identity, when attending the selection interview.
- 12) Short-list applicants for interview who have demonstrated in their written application that they meet all of the selection criteria and who are deemed potentially suitable for the position.

The Selection Panel will:

- a) Establish a standard set of interview questions that enables the selection panel to establish the degree to which the short-listed applicants best meet the selection criteria.
- b) Conduct interviews in an appropriate setting and, as far as practicable, on the same day or consecutive days.
- c) Make summary notes on applicants' responses to questions.
- d) Consider all short-listed applicants' responses to interview questions and recommend the candidate who best meets the selection criteria for the position or, if no candidate meets the required standards, re-advertise the position.
- e) Contact at least two of the recommended candidate's referees explaining the nature of the organisation's activities, the position that is being sought and seeking the referees' assessments of the recommended candidate with respect to fulfilling the duties of the position and to verify the recommended applicant's claims against the selection criteria.

- f) Prepare a brief report on the recommended candidate's suitability for the position.
 - g) Subject to satisfactory referees' reports, prepare a conditional offer of appointment to the recommended candidate including a commencement date, conditions of employment, commencement salary, and asking them to provide a current police clearance.
 - h) Subject to satisfactory police clearances (in accordance with EDAC Policy on Police Clearances); invite the successful applicant to formally accept the offer of appointment under the conditions described in the letter.
- 13) The recruitment of staff will comply with the Equal Opportunity Legislation and Disability Discrimination Act.
- 14) All applicants will be contacted by mail regarding the outcome of the process.

3.1.2 Equal Employment Opportunities

- (1) EDAC operates a discrimination free workplace that promotes equal opportunity principles.
- (2) Ensure that offices owned or leased by the agency are physically accessible for people with disabilities.
- (3) Recruitment of employees will be based on merits, fairness and transparency.
- (4) Look for opportunities to fill vacancies within the agency with people who have disabilities and/or from a CaLD background.
- (5) Undertake any reasonable workplace modifications or provide necessary equipment for staff, students and volunteers with disability.
- (6) Promptly investigate, remedy and document any organisation employee grievance regarding equal opportunity. If proven, remedial action will be taken against the offending employee.

3.1.3 Availability of Funding

- (1) The employee's appointment is subject to ongoing funding. Should funding be withdrawn or reduced, the employee's appointment may cease, or a new contract be negotiated.
- (2) Salary increments are subject to the availability of funds from the funding bodies, and to a satisfactory performance appraisal and approval by the Management Committee /Board.

3.1.4 Probation Period

- (1) All employees on initial engagement are subject to a probation period of three months.
- (2) The probationary period could be extended (depending on the nature of the position) if the assessment and review is not satisfactory to the employer.
- (3) In the event of an unsatisfactory assessment following the extended probationary period, employment will be terminated.

- (4) He or she may be entitled to two weeks' notice of termination of employment or payment in lieu.

3.1.5 Employment Contract

Upon engagement, the employer shall provide each new employee with a written statement (or contract) which states the following;

- An outline of the duties of the position.
- Days or Hours of work allocated to a program/programs.
- Salary agreement, classification if known and length of probationary period.
- Hourly rate specified.
- Entitlements specified (based on number of hours worked).
- Superannuation specified if entitled
- Entitlement to salary sacrifice.
- On acceptance the employee shall provide EDAC with the Employment Declaration Form on Confidentiality agreement.

3.1.6 Duties

- (1) New staff should familiarize themselves with EDAC's policies and procedures.
- (2) The employee shall carry out the duties as outlined in the Duty Statement attached to the employment agreement.
- (3) A review of the employee's performance of duties will be held annually, unless it is a short term project (see Performance Appraisal section).
- (4) The Management Committee /Board may vary the duties outlined in the Duty Statement following consultation with the employee and funding body.

3.1.7 Flexi Time

- (1) Full time employees (FTEs) are required to work 37 hours and 30 minutes a week and part-time staff will work according to hours agreed on their contract. (The Centre opens from 9:00am – 5:00pm. Monday to Friday).
- (2) There will be no Flexi time arrangement for part-time staff. Flexi period for FTE will only consist of a fortnight and this will coincide with the payment of salaries. The core time for this purpose is 10.00 am - 4.00 pm.
- (3) If a FTE's flexi credit is likely to exceed 10 hours at the end of a flexi period, and the person is not in a position to take time off due to work commitments, the CEO can authorise the accrual of additional flexi time.

3.1.8 Higher Duties

- (1) An employee will be eligible for higher duties allowance if that person is undertaking higher duties and responsibilities for a period of five working days, or more.
- (2) The rate of pay of higher duties shall be determined by the Management Committee /Board or CEO, subject to availability of funds.

3.1.9 Training

- (1) The Centre will provide opportunities for staff training subject to availability of funding.
- (2) Any training requests by staff must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer.
- (3) Training needs of individual staff members will also be determined in performance appraisals.
- (4) Staff who have completed training or professional development may be required to submit a report to the CEO or a presentation to other staff members.

Please refer to the section on Professional Development below.

3.1.10 Employee Assistance and Support

- (1) In instances where the stress level of an employee is such that it adversely affects work performance as a result of excessive work pressure, EDAC will ensure that the employee receives appropriate support. Such support may include discussions with peer staff or supervisors;
- (2) EDAC may, as an option, recommend that the employee receive outside counseling or stress management training if work performance continues to decline. Employee attendance at a counseling session is voluntary.
- (3) Any counseling that an employee may receive will be treated as confidential between the employee and the counselor.

3.1.11 Supervision and Performance Appraisal

- (1) The CEO or a Senior Staff/Manager will establish formal supervision sessions for all staff and volunteers, at least once a month, and
- (2) Maintain a record of the content and outcomes of each session.
- (3) All staff will be subjected to an annual performance review.
- (4) The purpose of the review is to:
 - Allow both the Committee and staff the opportunity to review a preceding period of time within the framework of the objectives, the duties required of the person, and the actual performance against these.
 - Develop professional development plans and strategies to enable a staff member to perform in a more enhanced manner in relationship to the Centre's needs.
 - Enable staff to raise and address concerns and issues which they see as important, and which relate to their role within the Centre.
- (5) Subsequent follow ups or further reviews may take place throughout the year as is thought necessary to manage and maintain appropriate performance levels.
- (6) The Chief Executive Officer's performance appraisal will be conducted by the Management Committee /Board.
- (7) Performance Reviews will be directly related to the employee's stated duties and any issues they may raise related to their work, and include discussion of areas of strength and achievement and areas which need development or

improvement. These outcomes will be recorded, at least once a year, in the employee's file.

- (8) Outcomes of performance reviews may result in recommendations for further training and development, which will be recorded in their personal professional development record.

3.1.12 Resignation

- (1) Resignation

An employee has to give between one week and four weeks notice to the Chief Executive Officer and Management Committee /Board when tendering their resignation unless there is a prior employment agreement that accommodates unforeseen circumstances or the employee is prepared to forfeit a salary payment. Please refer to Fairworks website for the minimum notice period required.

3.1.13 Exit Interview

- (1) All staff will have an exit interview with the Office Manager and will complete an exit interview form on or before their last day of work.

3.1.14 Issue of references

- (1) All references for staff members, volunteers, practicum students and work experience placements must be considered by and issued only with permission of the Chief Executive Officer.
- (2) Staff members may prepare, sign and dispatch references subject to the above.

3.1.15 Students on Placement

- (1) The decision to accept a student on placement will be made by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Management Committee / Board.
- (2) Students should have an appropriate orientation by the CEO and delegated staff, including access to EDAC's information kit, which includes Annual Reports, National Standards for Disability Services and Policy and Procedure Files.
- (3) Basic training in relevant safety procedures, code of conduct and work tasks will be provided at the beginning of the student's placement.
- (4) The overall aim of the orientation is to:
 - Achieve a historical insight into the organisation, its mission, values, aims and objectives and the services provided.
 - Policies and procedures as to how services are provided, privacy and confidentiality guidelines and service standards etc. The aims and objectives

of the student placement must be well documented and articulated between the students and EDAC.

- (5) The student will be made welcome and the purpose of the placement known to all staff members.
- (6) The accident insurance policy of the student/ on placement should be borne by the respective educational institutions or universities.
- (7) Students will be provided with adequate, professional supervision by the CEO or a delegated staff member.
- (8) Accredited industry training programs will be used wherever feasible.
- (9) A Work Experience Record will be maintained for all students as required by their school/college.

3.2 ENTITLEMENTS

3.2.1 Absence from Work

(1) Staff are required to notify their line manager as soon as possible when absent from work or conducting visits/ meeting outside the office. All staff have access to Microsoft Outlook calendar to record their activities. If sick and special leave is required, the employee will need to complete an appropriate leave application form for their line manager's approval.

3.2.2 Overtime/time-off-in-lieu (TOIL)

- (1) There shall be no over-time unless prior approval is provided by the Chief Executive Officer or by a delegated authority appointed by the Management Committee /Board.
- (2) Time off in lieu can only be taken at a time mutually agreed to by both the employee and the CEO or a delegated authority.
- (3) The maximum time off in lieu (TOIL) which can be accrued is the hours worked in two weeks by an employee. e.g:

Employee 1 works 20 hours every two weeks. Maximum TOIL is 20 hours.

Employee 2 works 40 hours every two weeks. Maximum TOIL is 40 hours.

- (4) As a result of urgent and unavoidable work, an employee may accrue TOIL beyond the two week maximum, with the approval of the CEO.
- (5) TOIL must be utilised within 12 months from the original date of entitlement, or alternative arrangements agreed to between the CEO and the employee.
- (6) TOIL shall be at the ordinary time rate that is one hour for each hour worked, and as agreed between the CEO and the employee.

3.2.3 Public Holidays

- (1) The employee is entitled to the State/Commonwealth statutory public holidays.

3.2.4 Annual Leave

- (1) Annual leave application should be lodged with the CEO as early as possible and no later than two weeks prior to commencement.
- (2) An employee shall be entitled to 4 weeks annual leave after 12 months of service.
- (3) Once an employee has completed the probationary period, he/she will be eligible to apply for annual leave as accrued fortnightly.
- (4) Annual leave must be taken and payment shall not be made in lieu of leave except on termination of employment.
- (5) If after one month's service, an employee lawfully leaves his/her employment or his/her employment is terminated for reasons other than misconduct, the employee shall receive any accrued leave due.
- (6) Each employee before going on leave, shall be paid for the period of leave in full or during each pay period
- (7) The prescribed leave loading shall be paid during annual leave, in accordance with employee's pay and leave conditions. This does not apply to time-off-in-lieu or public holidays which may be taken in conjunction with the period of annual leave.
- (8) Where their employment ceases, the employee shall be entitled to all untaken annual leave.

3.2.5 Sick Leave

- (1) All employees are entitled to sick leave credits according to the number of hours worked each fortnight.
- (2) Sick leave not taken in one year can be accumulated from year to year.
- (3) Medical proof of illness or injury shall be provided if the employee is absent for more than two consecutive working days.

3.2.6 Long Service Leave

- (1) The employee shall be entitled to 13 weeks of long service leave on full pay or on pro rata basis after 10 years of continuous service.
- (2) Long service leave will be taken within 12 months of it falling due unless otherwise agreed to by the Management Committee /Board and the employee.
- (3) Pro-rata payment is provided after seven years of continuous service when the employee terminates employment with EDAC.

3.2.7 Maternity/Parental Leave

- (1) An employee shall be entitled to 18 weeks paid or a maximum of 52 weeks unpaid maternity/paternity leave as per Federal Government requirements in July 2012 and therefore is subjected to changes from time to time.
- (2) A Medical confirmation of the baby's delivery date and subsequent leave application should be submitted to the CEO at least six weeks prior to the commencement of leave.

3.2.8 Short/Special leave

- (1) Subject to the CEO's discretion, an employee shall be entitled to short leave or compassionate leave for up to three days in any 12 month period of employment without loss of pay in the event of pressing personal considerations including the death of close family members.

3.2.9 Leave without pay

- (1) Leave without pay is subject to the discretion of the employer and may be provided for a period of up to 12 months provided it will not unreasonably affect the operation of the service.

3.2.10 Training and Study leave

- (1) An employee may, with the prior approval of the CEO or Management Committee /Board, attend conferences, training courses and seminars during normal working hours without loss of pay. However training and staff development needs should be identified during staff appraisals
- (2) Staff are entitled to time off with pay for study purposes, for a specified amount of time, on the same basis as their employment, pro rata for part-time staff on authorisation by the CEO and/or the Committee of Management.
- (3) In every case, the approval for time off with pay for study purposes is subject to:
 - i. organisation convenience;
 - ii. the course being undertaken on a part-time basis;
 - iii. the employee undertaking an acceptable formal study load in their own time;
 - iv. the employee making satisfactory progress with their studies; and
 - v. the course being of value to the organisation.

3.2.11 Interstate meetings

- (1) Interstate meetings may be attended with prior approval from the CEO, without loss of pay unless remunerated by another agency or department.
- (2) The purpose of the meeting must be relevant to the employee's job description and the Centre's objectives.
- (3) The employee can apply for leave without pay however this is subject to approval by the CEO and/or Management Committee /Board.
- (4) Any expenses and allowance must be negotiated prior to acceptance of attendance at the meeting.

3.2.12 Superannuation

- (1) EDAC will pay Superannuation Entitlement in accordance to all legal and award requirements.

- (2) EDAC will only pay Superannuation to a legitimate Super Fund or Company as nominated by the employee.

3.3 EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE

3.3.1 Entitlements

- All agency employees and volunteers are to be made aware of their right to lodge any grievance and to have that grievance heard.
- Grievances will be heard within five working days in line with the principles of procedural fairness. (That is; without bias or fear of retribution)
- The grievance and the agency's response to the grievance are fully documented.
- The Management Committee / Board is informed of any grievances that are lodged, the actions taken by the agency in resolving those grievances and the outcomes.

3.3.2 Employee Grievance Procedure

- (1) All staff should be aware of and follow the agency's Policy and Procedures on Staff and Volunteer Grievance Resolution.
In the case of the employee having a grievance relating to aspects of their employment, this involves following the relevant procedure; namely:

Step 1 The employee shall initially attempt to resolve the grievance directly with the person concerned. (This should be done before taking the issue to a supervisor or other party. If the grievance is with the CEO, the employee can skip Step 2.

Step 2 If not resolved satisfactorily, the employee may approach the Chief Executive Officer for discussion, advice and resolution. The CEO, will hear the grievance within five working days of being notified about the grievance. Notes from the hearing and resolution of the grievance will be kept in the employee's file and a copy kept by the CEO.

Step 3 If the problem is not resolved in Step 1 & 2, the employee may put the issue in writing to the President / Chair of the Management Committee / Board, to be tabled for discussion at their next meeting.

The employee may request to address the grievance personally to the Management Committee / Board after submitting a written statement. The Management Committee /Board or nominated board members may choose to meet with the employee at subsequent meetings to resolve the matter. The employee may choose to have an independent representative present during these meetings.

The Management Committee /Board shall make a decision on the issue and advise the employee of their decision within seven days after the Management meeting. At this point the decision of the Management Committee / Board is final.

- (2) Formal grievances and their resolutions and subsequent actions to be taken will be documented and kept in the relevant employee and meeting minutes files.
- (3) Records of grievances subsequently resolved shall be destroyed not earlier than six (6) months after resolution.
- (4) Any complaint concerning unlawful behaviour or sexual harassment which has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant after due consideration by the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Board, shall be referred to the Police and/or appropriate legal authority by the EDAC Chief Executive Officer.

3.3.3 Dispute on unsatisfactory performance

Please see the Policy and Procedures on Staff Supervision and Performance Management.

In the case of a grievance regarding unsatisfactory work performance (not including misconduct), the employer will implement the following procedure:

Step 1 Verbal notice of unsatisfactory work

- I. The employee will be informed as soon as possible of any unsatisfactory work performance during staff supervision, appraisals, and assessment of probation.
- II. The Chief Executive Officer or his/her senior staff delegate will discuss with the employee the areas of unsatisfactory performance and, where necessary, will outline how the employee can improve on his/her performance. Any assistance needed by the employee to improve his/her performance will be identified and provided where possible. A date for review of the employee's performance will be set if required.
- III. If the unsatisfactory performance was noted during or at the end of the probation period, the CEO with approval from the Management Committee /Board can extend the probation period for a further month or terminate employment with 2 weeks notice and pay.
- IV. THE CEO will monitor the employee's performance and give further guidance during the agreed time for improvement.
- V. If the employee's performance improves following a reasonable time period, then the matter is considered closed.

NOTE - The employee should also be advised of his/her rights to lodge a grievance in accordance with the policy on Staff Grievance Resolution.

Step 2 First Written Notice (for permanent staff)

- I. If the employee's performance is still unsatisfactory following the verbal notice and after a reasonable time for improvement; there will be a further discussion with the employee.

- II. The employee will be given the opportunity to account for their performance and any reasons for unsatisfactory work.
- III. The areas of unsatisfactory performance, necessary strategies for improvement, and a time frame for improvement will be determined in light of all the evidence provided by the employee and the CEO.
- IV. Notes recording the outcome of this meeting will be provided to the employee, detailing the date; areas and strategies to be implemented for improvement, by a certain date; also stating that a lack of improvement by the given date could result in termination of employment.
- V. During the period of remediation the CEO will monitor the employee's work performance regularly and, and depending on the situation, provide feedback on progress towards achieving desired work performance standards.
- VI. The CEO will record the employee's progress or any improvements or unsatisfactory performance on the employee's file.

Step 3 Termination of Employment

If there is no improvement by the given time, the employer may terminate employment with approval from the Management Committee /Board. The employer shall give 14 days notice from the date of termination or a lesser period as agreed between the employer and the employee or by payment, in lieu of notice, of salary equivalent to the period.

3.3.4 Termination of Employment in situation of misconduct

(Please refer to the Policy and Procedures – Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct)

- (1) In cases of misconduct, the employer may dismiss the employee without notice and with no salary payable for any period following the time of dismissal.
- (2) The following may represent misconduct:
 - theft of property or funds from the Centre;
 - willful damage of Centre property;
 - intoxication from alcohol or other substances during work hours;
 - the disclosure of confidential information with respect to the Centre to any other party without prior permission;
 - carrying on a private business from the Centre premises or using Centre's resources for own business in competition with the activities of the Centre; and
 - falsification of records for personal gain or on behalf of any other employee.
- (3) An Appeal against the dismissal can be made to the Management Committee /Board who will conduct a review in their next meeting or if appropriate may establish a steering committee to hear the appeal and a recommendation will be submitted to the Management Committee /Board at their next meeting. The decision made subsequently by the Management Committee /Board will be final. If there is still a disagreement with the decision the employee as the right to lodge a complaint externally.

3.4 SALARY PACKAGING

Salary Packaging is offered by EDAC (to eligible employees) and accepted by the employee in writing.

All reporting requirements of the Australian Taxation Office with regard to the payments of salary packaging should be fulfilled. Relevant particulars should be documented on a regular basis for this purpose.

3.4.1 Who is eligible?

All salaried employees of EDAC are eligible for salary packaging. It is up to each staff member to decide whether they wish to participate.

Joining is entirely voluntary and no one can be compelled in any way to accept the offer.

3.4.2 How do you get it?

Staff will need to complete the prescribed form indicating their acceptance and nominating the use of one or more of the designated payment categories, with details of what payments they wish to make, in order to utilise the percentage of pre-tax salary, which is available for salary packaging. The completed form should be return to the CEO.

3.4.3 What is available?

Any staff member undertaking salary packaging may allocate up to 45% of their total current salary (or a limit of \$30,000 gross up value, not including superannuation or other FBT free entitlements) to be utilised under the flexible remuneration scheme arrangements. The 45% must be allocated to one of the designated categories (to minimise the costs of operating the system).

3.4.4 Payments of Accounts

EDAC can pay the provider of the account on behalf of the employee - e.g. Telstra, Mortgages, Rates, and Insurance etc.

3.4.5 The Remuneration Package

Core salary will be paid to the employee on a fortnightly basis with superannuation and tax components paid to third parties quarterly.

3.4.6 Proposed range of benefits

The benefits will be offered on a salary sacrifice basis, i.e. benefits will be paid as an alternative to cash salary and are not intended to cover private expenses incurred by employees.

The proposed range of benefits to include:

- Mortgage Payments/Rent
- Hospital Benefits

- Educational expenses
- Hire Purchase/Personal Debt repayment (including car/other loans, credit card)
- Other acceptable benefits e.g. Child Care/Telstra/Western Power/Alinta Gas/Rates etc.

The proposed range of benefits will be subject to review depending on the needs of employees and administration requirements.

3.4.7 Administration of superannuation

- 1) If staff choose to utilise Salary Packaging they should complete the **Salary Packaging Form** and advise the CEO in writing that they wish to enter the scheme. They should indicate which payments are to be made on their behalf by completing a PAYMENT AUTHORITY for each separate Payment.
- 2) No benefits can be paid prior to the completion of the salary packaging form.
- 3) If the employee requires further information other than what is provided, they should contact their financial adviser. Applications will be processed as they are received.
- 4) All Staff should be offered 45% of their current salary (base salary) for packaging when they are offered employment with EDAC, on a non-casual basis.

3.4.8 Changes to Payment

Change to the allocation of the flexible remuneration arrangements will require at least a fortnight notice, in writing to the CEO.

3.4.9 Withdrawal from the Scheme

Any staff member who is in the scheme may withdraw subject to one week's notice in writing.

3.4.10 Termination of Scheme

Should the Taxation Commission make a determination that affects either the benevolent status of the service, the current rulings regarding the FBT Assessment Act 1986, the Taxation ruling IT2345 or any other matter that alters the responsibilities of, or costs to the service, the scheme will cease and the workers normal salary will become immediately payable less the appropriate tax.

Should the Taxation Commissioner make a determination with retrospective effect, the employee will be responsible for any consequent tax liability.

The ongoing participation on this scheme remains the prerogative and goodwill of the Management Committee / Board of EDAC.

3.4.11 Employment Confidentiality

Each employee's arrangement will be regarded as confidential and not available to any other employees for discussion.

3.5 VOLUNTEERS

- 1) EDAC utilises volunteers to enhance, not replace the services usually provided by paid employees.
- 2) Volunteers are assigned duties on the basis of their skills, interests and availability.
- 3) Volunteers must attend an induction session with the CEO or delegated senior staff member to gain an understanding of the Roles and Objectives of EDAC, Operations Manual, Service Standards, Safety, Fire and Evacuation procedures and sign a confidentiality commitment with the organisation. Such attendance must be documented and dated in their personal file.
- 4) The CEO or a delegated staff member will provide volunteers with adequate and professional supervision.
- 5) Unless specifically agreed upon, a volunteer is not to provide direct individual advocacy, but can assist the staff member who has the responsibility in advocacy.
- 6) Volunteers will be reimbursed for traveling and other expenses whenever possible.
- 7) Any grievances volunteers have will be resolved using the policy and procedures on Staff and Volunteers Grievance Resolution.
- 8) Volunteers are not to make private arrangements to help clients outside of their organised times without first consulting the Chief Executive Officer.
- 9) Proper and due recognition shall be given to people who volunteer their time to EDAC.

3.6 POLICE CLEARANCES

- 1) All EDAC staff, volunteers and Management Committee /Board members are required to hold a National Police Clearance certificate or equivalent. ("Current " means five years old or less) The National Police Certificate is part of the Essential Criteria for staff selection.
- 2) Volunteers and students on placement or work experience will be required to provide a current National Police Clearance. EDAC may reimburse volunteers for the cost of obtaining the Police Clearance, on the CEO's discretion.
- 3) All existing staff and volunteers must provide evidence of holding the National Police Certificate or equivalent.

- 4) EDAC will require staff and volunteers to renew their National Police Certificate after four years of the date of issue.
- 5) EDAC will maintain a register of all staff and volunteers in relation to the possession of the National Police Certificate and advise them at least three weeks in advance of when their certificate is due to be renewed.
- 6) If any recorded criminal convictions are identified, the matter will be referred to EDAC Management Committee /Board for a determination as to whether the specified conviction would be likely to place the organization or its clients at any risk; or breach EDAC's duty of care obligations.
- 7) The Management Committee /Board will base its determination of whether or not a potential employee or volunteer could work for EDAC on the following:
 - a) on whether the conviction has been for an offence which directly relates to the duties,
 - b) whether the position being sought would offer unsupervised opportunities for a similar offence to take place,
 - c) whether the offence has occurred recently,
 - d) whether there are single or multiple convictions and
 - e) whether the conviction(s) reflect generally on the suitability of the person to become an employee or volunteer with the organization
- 8) All contractors doing work for the organisation must also satisfy the organisation that criminal records checks have been obtained.

NOTE - Staff who come from other agencies should have provided a police clearance to that agency.

3.7 INDUCTION FOR NEW MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE / BOARD MEMBERS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 1) All Staff, new members of the Management Committee /Board and volunteers are to be inducted during the first week of work commencement or as soon as possible utilising EDAC's Induction guide.
- 2) Induction will involve assisting new staff to become familiar with and /or be trained in:
 - I. EDAC Mission and Values
 - II. The operations, policies and procedures of EDAC
 - III. The whereabouts of first aid and emergency equipment
 - IV. Safety, emergency and evacuation procedures
 - V. A Copy of The National Standards for Disability Services
 - VI. Rules to observe whilst at EDAC;

- VII. Any procedures that the staff member needs to perform in their work; such as the processes for individual and systemic advocacy;
 - VIII. The list of Board members, staff, and their roles;
 - IX. A checklist of all induction items
- 3) The new staff /volunteer is to sign off on each item on the Induction checklist once they are familiar with them, and the person conducting their induction will sign off once the induction is completed. Once this is done, a copy of the signed induction checklist will be kept in the staff member's / volunteer's personal file.
 - 4) All new staff and volunteers must be aware that client/staff/volunteer details are confidential.
 - 5) New staff/volunteers should be made aware of any training opportunities and encouraged to attend training sessions offered by EDAC and other relevant organisations.

3.8 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1) Professional development for staff is usually discussed at performance appraisal meetings, during staff supervision or staff meetings.
- 2) To undertake professional development activities or training Staff and Management Committee /Board members will need to complete the **Staff Development form** indicating time, objectives, and costs etc.
- 3) All applications must be submitted to the CEO for approval, which is also subject to EDAC's budget for professional development in that year.
- 4) Participants must agree to provide a report and/or conduct a workshop as an outcome of the Professional Development activity if required.
- 5) All staff, volunteers and Board members will have regular (at least annual) opportunities for refresher sessions on knowledge and skill areas which affect their work; such as the National Standards for Disability Services, Safeguarding, Human Rights and Protection from Abuse and Neglect, Duty of Care, Safety issues, and Individualised services.
- 6) Professional Development should, wherever possible, be provided by recognized industry training providers.
- 7) Professional Development attended will be recorded in employee training records.

4. ADMINISTRATION

4.1 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

4.1.1 Reporting

- (1) The Chief Executive Officer reports monthly to the Management Committee / Board /Board on matters concerning administration, staffing issues, individual and systemic advocacy activities.
- (2) Monthly reports by advocacy and project staff will be incorporated into the CEO report to the Management Committee /Board.
- (3) The following information is generally provided in staff monthly reports.
 - Activity related to individual casework, statistics and relevant outcomes.
 - Activity related to systemic advocacy work and relevant outcomes.
 - Project progress activity and relevant outcomes.
 - Any matters or issues of concern.
- (4) Sub-committees will also report monthly to the Management Committee /Board.

4.1.2 Attending Meetings

- (1) Management Committee / Board /Board meetings are held each month.
- (2) The Chief Executive Officer is required to attend all Management meetings.
- (3) Staff members are welcome to attend Management Committee /Board meetings when presenting reports.
- (4) Staff meetings will be held at least once a month.
- (5) Any meetings attended by staff must be relevant to the work carried out by the Centre and its date, time and purpose recorded in the computer network folder, under staff activities.
- (6) Staff members who attended meetings or conferences on behalf of the Centre must report back to the CEO on any issues and areas of concern to which the Centre may need to respond.

4.1.3 Mail

- (1) The Management Committee /Board President/Chair and the Chief Executive Officer have the right to view all incoming and outgoing mail.
- (2) All incoming mail is to be given to the Chief Executive Officer who will redirect it to the respective persons.
- (3) All incoming mail that is addressed to the President/Chair and marked confidential shall be placed unopened in a file designated for the President.
- (4) A copy of all important incoming and outgoing mail is to be placed in the current incoming and outgoing mail files.
- (5) Staff will bring to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer any correspondence that may be of concern or problematic.
- (6) A summary of all important incoming and outgoing mail is tabled at monthly Management Committee /Board meetings.

4.1.4 Press Releases, Public Relations and Communications

- (1) Only the President/Chair is authorised to issue media press releases or in his/her absence designate the role to the Vice President or the CEO.

- (2) Matters concerning broader policy issues can only be commented to the media by the President or the Chief Executive Officer.
- (3) No staff member is to present a particular stance on an issue relating to EDAC's objectives or business without first discussing it with the Chief Executive Officer or the President/Chair.
- (4) Any lobbying exercise connected with EDAC is to be fully discussed with the Chief Executive Officer, who shall advise the Management Committee/Board.
- (5) Staff who represent EDAC on committees shall report to the Chief Executive Officer or at staff meetings on relevant information and matters.
- (6) The Chief Executive Officer must give prior approval to any staff member planning to contact or write to Members of the Parliament, Government Ministers or Heads of Government Departments on particular advocacy issues, and will review the letter prior to it being sent.

4.1.5 Recording Staff Itineraries and Time Sheet

- (1) For insurance purposes, all staff must inform the Admin Assistant or the CEO when leaving the Centre during office hours and whereabouts noted on the Record of Activities file located on their desktop.
- (2) If staff members are unable to record their whereabouts they should phone the Admin Assistant with the relevant details as soon as possible.
- (3) Each staff member is responsible for completing their individual time sheet which is located on their personal desktop.

4.1.6 Confidentiality-General

- (1) Details regarding the following are to be treated as strictly confidential unless authority is given by the CEO or under statutory requirements.
 - Staff addresses and phone numbers
 - Volunteers' details
 - Financial details
 - Management Committee /Board files.

4.1.7 Use of Staff Vehicle

- (1) Staff may use their own vehicle or public transport when conducting EDAC's business, provided they hold a current driver's licence and their car is in roadworthy condition..
- (2) Staff may use their own vehicle on EDAC's business only if it is covered by Comprehensive and third party insurance.
- (3) EDAC will reimburse the expenses incurred once the staff has completed the **Travel Claim Form** and had it duly authorised by the CEO.
- (4) Staff and volunteers who use their own vehicles for work related purposes can claim mileage in accordance to the Australian Taxation Office guidelines. The payment is for the reimbursement of all expenses (including insurance) associated with the use of the staff vehicle.
- (5) Staff will have to ensure that they have third party insurance before transporting clients in their car. Staff should discuss with the CEO if in doubt.

- (6) The driver of the private vehicle is responsible for paying all traffic and parking fines incurred in the course of work related travel.
- (7) Staff driving cars for work related business must comply with all driving and traffic laws and regulations.

4.1.8 Issue of Taxi Vouchers

- (1) Taxi vouchers may be issued to staff for official use only.
- (2) Taxi vouchers can only be issued to Clients and Board Members who have difficulty using public transport and only in special circumstances.
- (3) The Taxi Vouchers are issued by the Admin Assistant once authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.2 OFFICE SECURITY

4.2.1 Premises

- 1) The last person/s leaving the office is responsible for ensuring that electrical equipment (computers, photocopier, air conditioners, urns etc.) are turned off and all doors and windows are securely locked and alarm system activated.
- 2) Each staff member is responsible for securing their own filling system and valuables.

4.2.2 Office Keys

- (1) Only a limited number of keys are issued to delegated staff.
- (2) Keys cannot be cut without the Chief Executive Officer's consent.
- (3) Keys cannot be given to non-staff, short term casual staff and volunteers without a the Chief Executive Officer's consent.
- (4) Keys may be given to "approved" external users for the purpose of after-hours activities with prior consent of the Chief Executive Officer.
- (5) Keys are not to be left in public view.

4.2.3 Money/Valuables/Personal Items

- (1) Money, valuables, and personal items belonging to staff are not to be left in public view during the day or left on the premises overnight unless absolutely necessary and locked in a safe area.
- (2) EDAC will not accept responsibility for any personal items stolen from the premises.

4.2.4 Property/Equipment

- (1) Valuable equipment belonging to the Centre, (such as camera, computer equipment and projector) must be booked in advance, signed for when picked up, and stored safely on return.
- (2) Use of equipment by non-EDAC personnel is at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.
- (3) Personal use of any equipment by staff is at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer. If equipment is damaged or lost, the user must take full responsibility for any costs incurred.

4.3 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.3.1 Accidents and Incidents

- (1) When conducting agency and home visits, staff must take all reasonable steps to ensure their personal safety.
- (2) If an accident and injuries occur during the course of a work related activity, staff must complete the **Incident Report form within 24 hours of the incident**. A Workers' Compensation Claim may also be submitted if necessary. Volunteers can also lodge a claim under EDAC's accident insurance policy.
- (3) Subsequent to the report of the incident/accident, the CEO will conduct an investigation and undertake appropriate actions to remedy the situation and if possible also implement strategies to minimise future risks or occurrence.
- (4) All documented Incidents and Accidents will be tabled at the Committee of Management meeting
- (5) A first aid kit is available in the office and is maintained by the Admin Assistant.

4.3.2 Management of Serious Incident

Serious Incident Reporting is required under the Disability Services Act (1993) and Section 3.7 of the Disability Services Commission's Service Agreement General Provisions. EDAC is obliged to report on any serious incident utilising the form provided by DSC.

The definition of Serious Incident includes,

- An allegation of physical, sexual, psychological abuse.
- Harm by omission of duty of care to a person with disability.
- An unlawful behaviour of the service provider, its staff, volunteers and sub-contractors in the course of their duties.
- Any situation where there would be adverse publicity from the actions of a service provider, its staff or sub-contractor.

Procedures for reporting Serious Incidents

The following procedures are to be implemented to ensure that the EDAC meets its policy objective of safety and protection of abuse and neglect of a person with disability (National Standard for Disability Services Number One)) and obligations on serious incident reporting requirements.

- (1) Any clients referred to EDAC with incident of abuse or alleged abuse must be reported immediately to the CEO and in his/her absence, the President/Chair of the Management Committee/Board/.
- (2) The CEO or President will determine together with the staff member, appropriate protective measures and action plan, including developing a serious incident report to the DSC.
- (3) If deemed necessary a **Serious Incident Form** will be completed by the staff member (advocate) signed by the CEO or the President and lodged with the DSC accordingly, within 7 days of incident being known to EDAC.
- (4) Any clients who had disabilities and deceased should also be reported to the DSC accordingly.
- (5) Where the matter involves potential criminal charges such as sexual and serious physical abuse of a person with disability by a staff member or contractor of the service provider it is essential that the Management Committee/Board be notified and the Police be consulted as part of the process of investigation.
- (6) If the Department of Child Protection, Office of the Public Advocate and the Coroner are involved, this matter needs to be recorded in the Incident Form.

4.3.3 Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedure

- 1) All employees, volunteers and students are required to become familiar with EDAC's policy and procedures on Emergency Procedures and the Evacuation Plan.
- 2) Fire, safety and evacuation procedures will be trained during induction to EDAC as a work place for new staff, Board members and volunteers; and practiced regularly, at least once a year.
- 3) Records of outcomes of evacuation drills will be kept by the Chief Executive Officer or delegated Safety Officer.
- 4) Staff located in regional areas and outreach services must also ensure that they are familiar with fire safety and evacuation procedures in those premises.
- 5) EDAC's "Fire safety and evacuation procedure" booklet is located in the reception area and all new staff must sign their names in acknowledgement that they are familiar with the evacuation procedures. A Site Evacuation Plan (**Standard Fire Order**) is displayed prominently near the front and the rear doorway of the building.
- 6) The evacuation order and implementation of the Standard Fire Order may be effected in the event of
 - a. suspect of fire
 - b. identification of suspect parcels (bomb)
 - c. identification of suspect letters (bio-hazards)
 - d. or other dangerous situations

- 7) The Chief Executive Officer and the Admin Assistant will be responsible for ensuring that all people with disability are given priority and assistance to evacuate the site.
- 8) After meeting at the assembly area, the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Admin Assistant will ensure that all employees, volunteers, students and clients are accounted for and determine the next appropriate action.
- 9) All fire-fighting equipment and operating procedures must be kept current.
- 10) At least one full-time staff member should have a current First Aid Certificate.
- 11) Regular reviews of EDAC's Emergency Management Plan will be conducted in response to changes in numbers of staff, volunteers, students and clients using EDAC premises, or other changes in the EDAC workplaces or operations.
- 12) Following an emergency, a report will be written on the incident and the outcomes, and any recommendations for improvements in emergency and evacuation procedures.
- 13) Reports of emergency incidents and evacuation trials with recommendations for improvements in procedures will be provided to EDAC Committee of Management /Board.

4.4. FINANCIAL

4.4.1 Goods and Services Tax

- (1) The Centre is a public benevolent institution and as such is required to register for GST as our annual turn-over exceeds \$100,000.
- (2) GST provisions should be used for all taxable purchases made by the Centre.

4.4.2 Costs Incurred

- (1) Staff and volunteers can claim reimbursement of certain expenses or payments made on behalf of EDAC.
- (2) Prior authorisation should be sought with the Chief Executive Officer before purchasing an office item. Inappropriate and unauthorised expenditure will not be paid unless in exceptional circumstances.
- (3) Travel and parking claims are allowable for staff and volunteers who travel as a result of work related activities. This does not include travel costs from home to EDAC work and vice versa.
- (4) EDAC will not pay for penalties such as speeding or parking infringements.
- (5) Claims for payments must be submitted on a Request for Payment form or a petty cash voucher with the receipt or documentation for the expenditure attached. If a claim is made without a receipt, the claim must be authorised by the CEO or Treasurer.

4.4.3 Authorisation of Expenditure

- 1) EDAC Management Committee / Board produces an annual budget for its income and expenditure which provides for adequate resourcing of its services and maximum financial support of its core business activities.
- 2) EDAC Board is responsible for ensuring that EDAC remains financially viable, that is, that it is able to pay its expenses as and when they fall due.
- 3) All expenditure will be for the purposes of carrying out the core business of EDAC and related to the benefit of EDAC clients and their families/carers.
- 4) The Chief Executive Officer will be authorised by the Management Committee/Board to approve expenditure up to a specified amount, without having to obtain Board approval each time, to allow efficient running of EDAC; provided the purchase is within approved budget parameters.
- 5) All expenditure above that specified amount must be authorised by the Management Committee/Board either at the approval of the annual budget, or on a one-off basis at a Management Committee/Board meeting.
- 6) All payments should be approved and signed by two of the 4 designated signatories authorised by the Management Committee / Board and noted by the Bank.
- 7) An authorised signatory should not sign a cheque/payment when he/she is the beneficiary.
- 8) Payment of salary and/or other expenditure is made electronically over the internet either by Billpay or crediting directly into the supplier's account. There is a set daily limit and other safeguards provided by the Bank.
- 9) All formal legal contracts must approved by the Management Committee /Board by way of formal resolution.
- 10) All EDAC expenses will be categorised for the purposes of accounting, e.g. salaries/wages, communications, office equipment, service equipment, transport/vehicles, stationery, electricity and gas.
- 11) Bank statements, income and expenditure reports and budgets are tabled and ratified at monthly EDAC Board meetings.
- 12) An annual report of EDAC's income and expenditure and any extraordinary financial items will be presented at each EDAC Annual General Meeting.
- 13) EDAC income and expenditure and accounts will be audited by an external auditor annually and his/her report provided to EDAC Annual General Meeting.

4.4.4 Purchase of Capital Items

- (1) The purchase of capital items must be approved by the Management Committee /Board.
- (2) Two quotes must be obtained for any items over \$500
- (3) The Chief Executive Officer is to make recommendations on quotes to the Management Committee /Board.

4.4.5 Banking

- (1) The Centre currently maintains bank accounts with BankWest. Changes have to be approved by the Management Committee/Board.
- (2) All income to EDAC will be categorised according to its origin, and banked as soon as possible; within a week.
- (3) There must be two signatories to all bank accounts, comprised of any two of
 - i) the Chair of the Board
 - ii) the Secretary of the Board
 - iii) the Treasurer
 - iv) the Chief Executive Officer
- (4) Bank statements will be made available for tabling at Board meetings.
- (5) EDAC Board will decide where surplus funds will be invested; e.g. in savings, fixed term or other interest bearing bank accounts.

4.4.6 General Ledger Accounting

- (1) EDAC will use an appropriate accounting software package such as Mind Your Own Business (MYOB) for its general accounting purposes.
- (2) The accounting software package will be utilized for the operation and management of all financial transactions, consolidating administration to maintaining better control of EDAC's income and expenditure for reporting purposes.
- (3) The chart of accounts currently consists of income, expenditure, current assets, equity, liabilities, debtors and creditors.

4.4.7 Payments received in Cash and Cheques.

- (1) All forms of income and expenditure are processed through the accounting system. (refer to 4.4.6)
- (2) Receipts for all cash and cheques such as for membership, donations and funding are issued by the Admin Assistant and recorded in the Bankwest deposit book, clearly identifying the source, amount and associated receipts.

- (3) The recorded information relating to the cash/cheque payment is provided to the Accounts clerk for entry into the MYOB system. Cash receipts and payments are coded onto transaction forms using the appropriate account codes for each grant, and are processed fortnightly. The original copy from the deposit book is provided to the bank when making deposits.
- (4) Cash income is to be banked as soon as possible.
- (5) Any cash held in the building is to be kept to a minimum for petty cash expenses, and stored in a lockable cabinet/safe.

4.4.8 End of Month Financial Procedures

After all transactions for the month are entered into the accounting system, the following procedures are performed:-

- Check accuracy of transactions against cheque-book stub entries and deposit slips.
- Perform bank reconciliation.
- Run a trial balance and ensure that the general ledger balances with the bank reconciliation.

4.4.9 End of Month Financial Reports

At the end of each month the following reports are processed through the accounting system (E.g. MYOB):

- Bank Statement
- Bank reconciliation
- Trial Balance
- Consolidated Profit and Loss
- Project P & L
- Balance Sheet
- Submit Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet reports to the Treasurer each month for checking before sending to Management Committee / Board members.

4.4.10 Payroll

- (1) Pay and leave transactions, tax deductions, travel allowance are processed through "Last Payroll" in the accounting package MYOB.
- (2) The Last Payroll chart of accounts is designed to record all wage and related employee details.

4.4.11 Payroll and Staff Records

The pay roll officer uses the following procedures for processing pay roll and staff records:

- 1) Record all wage, tax deductions, salary packaging, annual, sick and long service leave, superannuation, travel allowance and terminations in Last Payroll.
- 2) Record personnel details in last Payroll.
- 3) Process wages fortnightly and payroll advice slip provided to every staff member.
- 4) At the end of the quarter, process the following additional transactions:
 - a) PAYE tax/GST remittances - send a cheque/ electronic transfer together with relevant documents to the Tax Office on a quarterly basis in accordance with their timelines.
 - b) Superannuation remittance - send a cheque/ electronic transfer with a list of individual employee's superannuation contributions to each employee's nominated superannuation fund on a quarterly basis or in accordance with their timelines.
 - c) Process employee group certificates through Last Payroll at the end of the fiscal year before the payroll year-end is processed.

4.4.12 Petty Cash Float

- 1) A Petty Cash float of a maximum of \$500 for the Subiaco office and \$200 for the Broome office will be held for small incidental expenses.
- 2) Receipts and payments on a petty cash transaction form are to be recorded as and when transactions occur.
- 3) A voucher form needs to be completed and signed and a receipt attached for each item of expenditure.
- 4) All transactions will be reconciled each month and processed through the accounts/MYOB.
- 5) Day to day expenditure is authorised by the CEO.
- 6) Receipts or documentation must accompany claims for expenditure from the petty cash float.
- 7) Staff or any other person may not use the petty cash float for personal loan purposes.
- 8) The petty cash float should be kept in a lockable cash tin, in a secure place.

4.4.13 Assets Register/ Listing

- (1) An assets register of all capital items purchased over \$1000 is maintained at EDAC for annual auditing purposes.
- (2) Assets under \$1000 are maintained in an asset listing using an Excel spreadsheet.
- (3) The cost, date of purchase, serial number (if appropriate) should be recorded in the assets register for all items.
- (4) All assets are to be checked against the assets register annually.

5 PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY PROCEDURES

5.1 GENERAL

- 1) All EDAC staff members, volunteers, contractors and Management Committee /Board members are required to sign a **Confidentiality Agreement Form** to comply with EDAC's policies and procedures on Client Privacy and Confidentiality upon commencement of their employment and/or voluntary service.
- 2) Any personal information about clients and their families/carers" will be kept confidential unless given prior consent by the individual and/or their primary carer to share that information with another service is given.
- 3) Consent of the client or family/carer must be obtained prior to seeking personal information from any other source.
- 4) Clients or their family/carer must give written consent prior to any information about them being released to any other source.
- 5) Staff will not speak about clients and or their family/carers to others inappropriately or to outside parties.
- 6) Personal information is stored securely and is not left on view to unauthorised staff or the general public.
- 7) Any consumer grievance regarding confidentiality will be promptly investigated, remedied and documented.

5.2 COLLECTING AND HANDLING CLIENT INFORMATION

- 1) Collection of data information relating to advocacy cases should be relevant to the provision of advocacy service and in accordance to the client's demographic form and EDAC's Database. The fields and categories in the database are developed in accordance to the information sought by the funding bodies, i.e. FaHCSIA and DSC.
- 2) Clients will be advised of the type of information likely to be collected by EDAC.
- 3) When additional information is sought/ and released on behalf of the client in relation to their case, a signed consent must be obtained from the client (refer to **Client Consent Form**). However in circumstances where the client is unable to provide consent due to their decision making capacity and/or personal circumstances, an alternative arrangement should be sought, such as verbal consent or consent provided by a family member, carer or person of significance nominated by the client.
- 4) If the advocate is aware of complex and dysfunctional family dynamics, caution and sensitive measures and arrangements must prevail. Refer to CEO for advice and discretion.

- 5) Client information may only be released to persons or organisations which are indicated on the Consent Form.

5.3 PERSONAL INFORMATION ON EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS ON THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE /Board

- 1) All information relating to EDAC employees, Management Committee /Board members, volunteers and contractors will be treated with the utmost respect and privacy. Such information should be filed in secured cabinets. Access to these documents is limited to the CEO only.
- 2) In no circumstances (unless it's a court order) should personal information of employees, volunteers and members of the Management Committee /Board be released without prior consent other than information which are currently on EDAC's website and publication.

5.4 ACCESS TO CLIENT FILES

- 1) Only employees working with the client will have access to the client's file.
- 2) Clients wishing to access their personal files that are kept by EDAC may request to access the information.
- 3) Access to personal files will ordinarily be granted within 14 days of receipt of the request and upon the identity of the individual being verified by EDAC.
- 4) Any information held on the client's file about other persons or matters which may pose a risk of imminent detriment, danger or threat to the individual or other person(s) will be removed prior to access being permitted.
- 5) A private area within the EDAC office or premises will be provided to enable the client to view the information held on their file. A representative of EDAC will be present at all times during the viewing so they can address any client concerns.
- 6) If any information retained on a client's file is identified either by EDAC or the client as being inaccurate, incomplete or irrelevant, then the information will be revised and if appropriate, verified, and the information may be edited or updated by the relevant EDAC staff member and the CEO informed.
- 7) Should a dispute arise between the client and EDAC regarding the accuracy or fullness of the information kept in a client's file, a written statement of the client's claim(s) will be recorded and a written explanation as to why EDAC is disputing the client's claim(s) will be provided to the client as soon as is reasonable and practicable.

5.5 SECURITY AND STORAGE OF INFORMATION

- 1) Client files are to be maintained in a secure lockable location.
- 2) No client file is to leave the office unless being transferred to another site by an authorised person. For the purpose of this procedure, an authorised person is an employee of EDAC.
- 3) The person removing the client file is to ensure the file is kept on their person or in a secure place at all times when away from EDAC offices or premises.

- 4) At the close of business Monday to Friday, all files should be returned to their appropriate location. EDAC's employees will be responsible for ensuring that no identifiable information is left in public view.
- 5) Individual Files on Staff members, Management Committee / Board members and Volunteers are kept securely by the CEO.
- 6) Access to information contained on the EDAC Database is available on the EDAC IntraNet on specific PCs used by Advocate staff through their EDAC accounts.
- 7) Anti-virus software is installed on all computers within EDAC and is updated regularly.
- 8) All EDAC computers are backed up on an independent server. A copy of the EDAC Client Management System is taken each Friday by the CEO and kept securely offsite.

5.6 RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF INFORMATION

- 1) All client files and data will be retained for a period of not less than seven years after exiting EDAC's Advocacy Service.
- 2) Upon exiting the Service, a client's file will be closed and archived by EDAC in an appropriate secure storage area or facility.
- 3) Files of clients exited for a period of seven or more years will be destroyed. Files to be destroyed will be shredded in-house or disposed in a secured bin.
- 4) Electronic information stored on the EDAC Database will be reviewed on a regular basis and stored on devices which may be archived in the same manner as files as outlined above.

5.7 LOSS OF CLIENT'S FILE

- 1) Loss of client's file or any confidential material must be reported to the CEO. There is a need to identify the Client, nature of material lost and an assessment of the potential impact on the client and on EDAC.
- 2) The CEO may report the loss to the Management Committee/Board and/or advise the client involved.
- 3) Every effort will be made to retrieve the lost file; or to re-compile needed records or information to continue the core business of EDAC in advocating for/supporting the client and/or their family/carer.

5.8 INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

- 1) Employees aware of upcoming meetings or interviews with clients must use a meeting room to ensure privacy.
- 2) In the event that an unscheduled meeting or interview is required to be conducted, an EDAC employee will endeavour to locate a suitably private space to conduct the meeting and record the details as soon as possible.

6 ADVOCACY

6.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1) EDAC believes that people with disability from CaLD backgrounds are doubly disadvantaged (due to disability and ethnicity), as a special group and should all be considered with priority especially as EDAC is the only disability advocacy agency for people of CaLD backgrounds in WA. However if resources are limited, people with high and/or complex needs for support disability will always receive first priority.
- 2) The agency provides a safe physical environment for its clients.
- 3) The services of interpreters are utilised where appropriate. For on-site interpreting, complete the (TIS) Request for pre-booking (**Request for Pre-Booked Telephone Interpreter Service Form**), and insert EDAC's booking code which is held by the Admin. Assistant. EDAC staff can access phone interpreting by using EDAC's Code Number and the accounts will be billed to EDAC.
- 4) EDAC is committed to ensuring fair and equal access to information, communications and services and will endeavour, to utilise the use of augmentative and alternative communication methods to supplement or replace speech or writing for those with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language. These methods include large print, easy English and accessible multimedia, information and communications technology.
- 5) Each person with disability is supported and encouraged to participate and be involved in EDAC activities when appropriate.
- 6) Valued status of all clients is ensured. Their Human Rights are protected, including rights to culture, freedom of expression, choice of service, safety, and well-being. (Please see Rights section in 6.2 below) Cultural diversity is positively valued and promoted. Cultural responsibilities and practices are met accordingly.
- 7) EDAC takes reasonable care to avoid foreseen risks without unduly limiting the ability of each person with disability to take responsibility for his or her own decisions.
- 8) Services are provided in a manner sensitive to the age, sex, and cultural, linguistic and religious background of each person with disability.
- 9) EDAC's advocates are independent and must represent consumers vigorously, without any conflict of interest. Please see the Policy and Procedure on Conflict of Interests including their definition.
- 10) EDAC staff members comply with other protective and safeguarding legislation, policies and procedures, including the National Standards for Disability Services.

6.2 RIGHTS

- 1) Every client is informed of their rights and EDAC's obligations (**refer to Information Flyer for Clients**) at the onset of EDAC accepting to advocate on their behalf. Each consumer is informed of the types of personal information that the agency holds and the reason for holding this information.

A copy of the document on their rights and EDAC's obligation is also given to the client.

- 2) The agency ensures the human and legal rights of people with disability are upheld within the service.
- 3) Each consumer's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life is recognized, protected and respected.
- 4) Each consumer has the right to see any information the agency keeps in respect of him or her. (Please refer to section 5.4 on Access to Client Files above)
- 5) Client Rights and Staff Conflict of Interests
 - a. Advocacy involves acting in the best interest of the client, without prejudice or bias.
 - b. Advocates: will ensure that the service delivery to clients must not be affected by any interest of the service provider (EDAC), any person, except the client's or the service provider's perception of the public interest
 - c. will not represent both parties who are involved in a dispute
 - d. when refusing representation due to conflict of interests, the staff member should provide the client with adequate information explaining the reasons and offer other options if possible.
- 6) EDAC staff will uphold the rights of clients and their families/carers to express their views, choices and concerns, in relation to the service and the effects it has on their lives.
- 7) EDAC recognises the role of families, carers and other advocates in safeguarding the rights and well-being of people with disabilities.
- 8) EDAC staff speak with clients and their families/carers about issues and never about them, in front of them.
- 9) EDAC supports clients and their families/carers to make decisions about their lives by providing accurate, timely information about their rights and responsibilities; and the responsibilities of the service.
- 10) EDAC will work to prevent, as far as possible; any abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm to its clients and their families/carers.
- 11) When an EDAC staff member is made aware of any breach of human rights of a client or family/carer; respond promptly with strategies to address the issue; including reporting incidents and putting safeguards in place. (Please see Policy and Procedures on Freedom from abuse and Neglect) Volunteers must report any alleged or observed abuse, exploitation or neglect to their supervising staff member who will follow the prescribed procedures to address the situation.
- 12) EDAC staff will provide clients and their families/carers with information about other supports, and when needed, access to advocacy support and/or referral to legal advice.

6.3 ENTRY PROCESS

- 1) EDAC will respond to requests for service from people from CaLD backgrounds who have disabilities and/or their carers, as well as referrals from agencies.

- 2) EDAC will provide information to individual consumers and families/ carers about their rights, how EDAC services work, and how they can access EDAC advocacy support.
- 3) Access to service is given on the basis of relative need and agency capacity. Other than relative need, the access of a person with disability to a service is decided on a non-discriminatory basis.
- 4) In cases where EDAC is unable to provide a person with disability access to its service, a referral to another similar service is made, where this exists.
- 5) The Manager of Advocacy Services or in her/his absence, the Chief Executive Officer has the responsibility of allocating clients to an appropriate Individual Advocacy Officer.
- 6) EDAC will distribute its information brochure on EDAC's services and distribute it through local area coordinators and major health, welfare, local government and other community outlets in the area, in accordance with its strategic plan.
- 7) EDAC will make information about its services available in a range of accessible formats, such as in braille, or other languages, as required.
- 8) Advocacy services will be provided to people who enter the service as soon as is practicable; and at an agreed date/time with the client.
- 9) EDAC staff collaborate with other relevant organisations and community groups/agencies to build and maintain a referral network.

NOTE – For further information please read the Policy on Access to EDAC's Services

6.4 ADVOCACY PROCESSES AND SERVICES

Individual Advocacy involves standing up for the rights of another person who may be disadvantaged in being able to access services, supports and entitlements. The process involves

- I. Speaking with the person and/or their family/carer to determine the issue(s) they are seeking advocacy support and information about.
 - II. Seeking consent to act on the person's behalf, in agreed ways.
 - III. Providing the client and/or their with information about a range of options they could take to address their issue or solve a problem.
 - IV. Devising a plan of action with the client whereby the Advocacy Officer will advocate for the meeting of their needs.
 - V. Advocacy may involve attending meetings with the person; speaking on their behalf in ways that have been agreed previously with the person, assisting them to, or writing letters on behalf of the person.
- 1) EDAC will assist consumers by linking them to the appropriate services they require, however some short-term contact will be maintained as service access may still be an issue.
 - 2) All clients who received a service are recorded as Individual Advocacy (authorised as a client) or Information Advocacy (short-term).
 - 3) For Individual Advocacy, EDAC will

- 3.1 Meet with each client and if appropriate their family/carers to discuss their needs and preferences for supports and what they want from the service.
- 3.2 This may include collecting necessary information to ensure the service can meet clients' needs, such as health, medical, safety, social and other personal information.
- 3.3 Develop an individual advocacy plan with the client and their family/carers clarifying the client's goals for desired outcomes; and advocacy strategies that the service staff will use to work with the client to work towards those goals. The plan will reflect the client's desires for the future, and current situation including their interests, strengths and skills, support networks and needs.
- 3.4 Ensure that service plans are relevant and responsive to client's diverse needs and preferences, including their age, gender, cultural background, faith, heritage, sexual identity, relationships and other relevant factors.
- 3.5 Provide advocacy services and supports to individual clients in accordance with their plan; and in least restrictive ways to facilitate their progress towards achieving their goals.
- 3.6 Collaborate with other community agencies and services to provide a coherent, relevant service which fosters links with other community organisations and supports.
- 3.7 Document the client's progress towards their chosen goals, and any changes /modifications that need to be made to goals and/or strategies to ensure the service is supporting the client and family/carers in ways that are beneficial to them.
- 3.8 Provide a copy of the individual service plan to the client and /or their family/carer if they wish.
- 3.9 Document all plan revisions and reasons for changes to goals and/or strategies.

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

- EDAC works with community agencies and government officers to help ensure that services and supports available to people with disabilities and their families/carers, from CaLD backgrounds are working to facilitate them being able to live their chosen lifestyles, have opportunities which are equal to other members of the community, and can pursue their goals or aspirations and their interests and talents as far as possible.
- EDAC staff advocate for the meeting of support needs for people with disabilities and their families/carers from CaLD backgrounds so they can pursue their chosen lifestyle choices and interests with the same ranges of opportunities that other members of society have; in accordance with their cultural values, family and community needs.
- EDAC staff will participate in advocacy activities at a systemic level by working with a wide range of community and government agencies and services in education, housing, health care, child care, local government services, employment, legal services, Centrelink, Department of Child Protection and Family Support and any other relevant agency; to advocate for the meeting of the needs of people from CaLD backgrounds in WA.

6.5 RECORD KEEPING AND DATABASE

- 1) All individual advocacy cases must be recorded in the EDAC Client Management Data System.
- 2) For cases where clients are referred to another agency or alternatively information provided or issues resolved without the need to formally gain consent, the brief details of the clients and details of the case are also entered into EDAC Client Management Data System.
- 3) EDAC staff maintains and updates client information and case development in the EDAC Data System regularly. Hard copies of client's supporting documents are securely maintained by the advocates involved.
- 4) Staff should acquaint themselves to the guidelines/manuals on how to navigate EDAC's Data System, from the Perth office and accessing the system remotely. The manual is available from reception.

6.6 PLANNED SERVICE APPROACHES

All information provided and discussions with individuals and family/carers will be done in ways which are understandable to the client and/or their family carer. Translation and interpreting services will be used where necessary.

6.6.1 Meeting Needs:

- Each person with disability and /or their family carer receives an advocacy service which is designed to meet, in the least restrictive way, his or her individual needs and personal goals.
- The agency, in consultation with each consumer, identifies and documents the individual, ongoing and changing needs of the person with disability and the approaches for advocating for the meeting of those needs.
- Each person with disability is provided with support in a manner which recognises, respects and prioritises support to family and community cultural care responsibilities and practices.
- The agency seeks to help maximise the client's and family/carer's potential to reach personal goals.

6.6.2 Decision-making:

- EDAC offers each person with disability and their family/ carer support to make informed decisions and choices in relation to the services he or she receives.
- Each person with disability has the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in making decisions about the events and activities of his or her daily life in relation to the services he or she receives and, as appropriate, also their family/carer and cultural community.
- Each person with disability can involve an advocate in making decisions about the service he or she receives.

6.6.3 Time-Frame:

- The agreed approach for meeting each consumer's ongoing and changing needs is implemented and reviewed with that consumer within the agreed timeframes.
- EDAC works to provide a responsive service, which is timely for clients and their families/carers; as much as possible.

6.6.4 General Community:

- EDAC considers the appropriateness of their family/carer and general community facilities and services in meeting the needs of each person with disability.
- EDAC informs each consumer of other services that might meet his or her needs.
- EDAC facilitates access to general community facilities and services and/or to other specialist agencies and/or services.

6.6.5 Participation:

- Clients are encouraged and supported to participate in the organised activities by EDAC and participate in agency review and decision-making.
- Each client is given the opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of the service to EDAC.

6.7 EXIT PROCESS

- 1) All cases which have not been active for more than a month after the “action date” should be followed up and if appropriate closed.
- 2) All files of clients who have not contacted EDAC for six months and over, are to be archived and noted in the EDAC Client Management System.
- 3) If a client wants to cease accessing EDAC, the service will discuss the reason for this with the client and/or their advocate and record the reason for the person ceasing use of EDAC services..
- 4) If EDAC is contemplating withdrawing services, arrange a meeting with the client, family and any advocate(s) they nominate to discuss the reasons.
- 5) EDAC will withdraw services only if requested by the client or family or if the organisation’s duty of care responsibilities to its clients or staff are severely compromised and reasonable efforts to rectify the problem have been made and shown to have failed.
- 6) If after the discussion the organisation decides to withdraw services, write to the client, family and advocates outlining the reasons behind the decision and advising them of their rights under the organisation’s Policy on Feedback and Complaints.
- 7) Maintain records of people who have exited EDAC, summarising reasons for their withdrawal or why service was denied so that any trends in dissatisfaction with EDAC can be monitored and used for service improvement.

7 PROJECTS

7.1 GOVERNANCE

- 1) The Management Committee /Board empowers the CEO to manage all projects and provide reports to them at their regular meetings..
- 2) Where practical, project steering committees to guide the projects should be established with consumers and stakeholders invited as members.

7.2 COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

- 1) EDAC will endeavour to minimize conflict of interests when collaborating and partnering other agencies in projects and in co-location or sharing of office accommodation.

- 2) EDAC will only collaborate and partner agencies that have similar values and service philosophies.
- 3) EDAC and the partner agency will develop a Memorandum of Understanding outlining areas of collaboration and safeguarding EDAC's stated policy, involvement and include conflict of interest procedures and resolution.
- 4) The Management Committee /Board is informed of all forms of collaboration that could give rise to potential conflict of interests.
- 5) The Management Committee /Board has the final decision in developing formal collaborative arrangement with agencies.

7.3 FUNDING SUBMISSIONS

- 1) EDAC is committed to ensuring that contracted projects are aligned to its Mission.
- 2) A project risk analysis will be conducted prior to any new project being planned.
- 3) Submissions for funding for projects should include the aims, intended outcomes, required resources and all costs and a planned time frame for the project.
- 4) Committee Members will be consulted with at every stage of the submission development process.
- 5) All submissions must be signed off by the CEO and where the value is above \$50,000, the submission must be signed by the President / Chair of the Management Committee /Board.

7.4 MANAGEMENT

- 1) Project staff can be recruited internally or advertised externally, depending on the duration and scope of the project and expertise required.
- 2) Employees will be given the opportunity to participate or undertake EDAC's projects to extend their skills and maximise their involvement before the positions are advertised.
- 3) A Project Action Plan must be developed and then approved by the CEO prior to commencement of projects.
- 4) Achievements against the Project Action Plan/Deliverables will be the key reporting strategy.
- 5) The CEO or appointed senior staff will be responsible for the financial management, the successful achievements and the quality of all the contracted outcomes.

7.5 ACQUITTAL

- 1) Projects must be completed within the contracted time-lines. Where necessary time extension must be obtained from and approved by the funding bodies.
- 2) The Treasurer or an appropriate office bearer is responsible for the approval of the Financial Acquittal of the project.

8 CLIENT COMPLAINTS/ FEEDBACK

8.1 PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK

- 1) Obtaining feedback is part of the service cycle which will enable EDAC to improve its services.
- 2) Clients are actively encouraged to provide feedback on their perception of services provided to them by EDAC by completing the “**Have your say**” form.
- 3) Completed forms are collated and analysed by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 4) Any unresolved issues or complaints raised by clients will be attended to. (Please see process 8.2 below)
- 5) A full report on Client Feedback will be submitted to the Management Committee / Board annually.

8.2 HANDLING COMPLAINTS

- 1) EDAC has a service culture which fosters and supports its clients to feel comfortable to talk out any issues with EDAC staff; to feel heard, and where EDAC staff are easily approachable.
- 2) EDAC will inform clients/family/carers in a number of ways, that their feedback is welcome; and that they are able to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the service they receive. For example; Complaints process posters on EDAC office walls; Complaint forms brochures in waiting areas; and staff informing clients/family carers of their options to make complaints if they feel the need.
- 3) People are informed that they may have an independent advocate of their choice with them for the purpose of making a complaint, and that EDAC uses fair processes to resolve complaints.
- 4) Complaints may be lodged with any staff member. EDAC uses a Client Complaint Form for the lodging of formal complaints.
- 5) Complaints Process:
 - 5.1 Complaints or issues of concern may be discussed and resolved with the staff member concerned in the first instance. If the client/family/carer wishes to have the complaint lodged; then they and/or a staff member can complete a Client Complaint Form, including the person’s name, contact number and the date.
 - 5.2 If the matter is not resolved from this discussion, the aggrieved person should be directed to speak with the Manager or his/her delegate or the Chief Executive Officer of EDAC.
 - 5.3 All complaints received must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer or his/her delegated staff member (Complaints Coordinator) immediately.
 - 5.4 The Chief Executive Officer will:
 - i. Contact the complainant within FIVE working days of receiving the complaint to determine the basis of the complaint.
 - ii. Ensure that the involved parties are interviewed to obtain relevant information in order to propose a course of remedial action within TEN working days after meeting with the complainant.

iii. Ensure all information relating to the complaint, the agency's action and responses are fully documented.

iv. Advise the complainant of his or her rights to take the matter directly to the Management Committee /Board of EDAC or an external body in the event that the proposed course of remedial action is unsatisfactory.

5.5 All complaints are dealt with in ways which respect the privacy of the complainant and ensure complaints records are kept confidential in accordance with EDAC Policies on Privacy and Confidentiality.

5.6 The Chief Executive Officer will provide a full report to EDAC's Management Committee /Board with proposed resolution and if necessary, recommendations to avoid future occurrence.

5.7 Also refer to the Complaint Process Flow Chart.

6) Complaints records should include

- a) the person(s) making the complaint;
- b) the stated complaint;
- c) all people attending the resolution meeting,
- d) the date,
- e) the actions taken for resolution
- f) the agreed time frame for resolution

7) The CEO will keep a record of complaints received and how they were resolved in a designated file, for reporting to the Management Committee /Board, for collation of any trends in reasons for dissatisfaction with EDAC services, and for use when designing service improvement strategies. These records should be reported to the Disability Services Commission as part of the Annual Self-Assessment.

8) If the grievance is still not resolved, the complainant should be provided with information about other services to help them resolve their complaint, including the Office of Health and Disability Complaints.

9. REVIEW OF THE OPERATIONS MANUAL

9.1 ENDORSEMENT

EDAC's Operations Manual and Policies and Procedures will be reviewed and endorsed by the Management at the first Management meeting of each year or whenever there are funding or administrative changes that would affect policy and operation procedures.

9.2 DEPLOYMENT

All employees, volunteers and students will be informed of revision and changes of the operations of EDAC.

10. STORAGE OF OPERATIONAL MANUAL, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES; RELEVANT FORMS AND INFORMATION

The Operations Manual, Policies and Procedures Manual, Administration, Staff and Client forms are accessible via the Shared Network Place which is located on each staff computer in Masterfile 3. Hard copies are also stored at the Reception.