

<b>Policy 17</b>	<b>ADVOCACY</b>
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<b>Record of policy development</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date approved</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
<b>1.4</b>	<b>December 2020</b>	<b>December 2022</b>
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<b>1.2</b>	<b>February 2017</b>	<b>February 2021</b>

**Policy purpose:** Coastlink respects each service user's (and/or their representative's) choice of advocate and, if required, assists the service user (and/or their representative) to access an advocate.

**Policy:**

COASTLINK is committed to the principles of respecting and protecting the legal and human rights of individuals and their right to services.

To this end COASTLINK supports the right of clients to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be in relation to assessment, reviews, complaints or any other communication between the client and this organisation. The organisation will work co-operatively with any advocate nominated by a client and treat them with respect.

COASTLINK is also committed to providing clients with advocacy and support when it is requested.

**Relevant Standards**

**NDIS Practice Standards:**

1. Rights and Responsibilities
2. Provider Governance and Operational Management
3. Provision of Supports
4. Support Provision Environment
5. High Intensity Daily Personal Activities
6. Specialist Behaviour Support
7. Implementing Behaviour Support Plans
8. Early Childhood Supports
9. Specialised Support Coordination
10. Specialist Disability Accommodation

**Aged Care Quality Standards**

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Consumer dignity and choice                    | 5. Organisation's service environment |
| 2. Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers | 6. Feedback and complaints            |
| 3. Personal care and clinical care                | 7. Human resources                    |
| 4. Services and supports for daily living         | 8. Organisational governance          |

### Related Legislation & References

[Aged Care Act 1997 \(Cth\), Schedule 2 User Rights Principles 2014. Charter of Rights and Responsibilities – Home Care](#)

[Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission](#)

[Better Practice Guide to Complaints Handling in Aged Care Services \(2013\)](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)

[Commonwealth Home Support Programme Guidelines](#)

[Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme \(Provider Registration and Practice Standards\) Rules 2018](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme Code of Conduct](#)

[NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

### Related Procedures

<b>Documents/Forms</b>	
Service User Handbook	Shared Drive
Authority to Act as an Advocate	Service user records

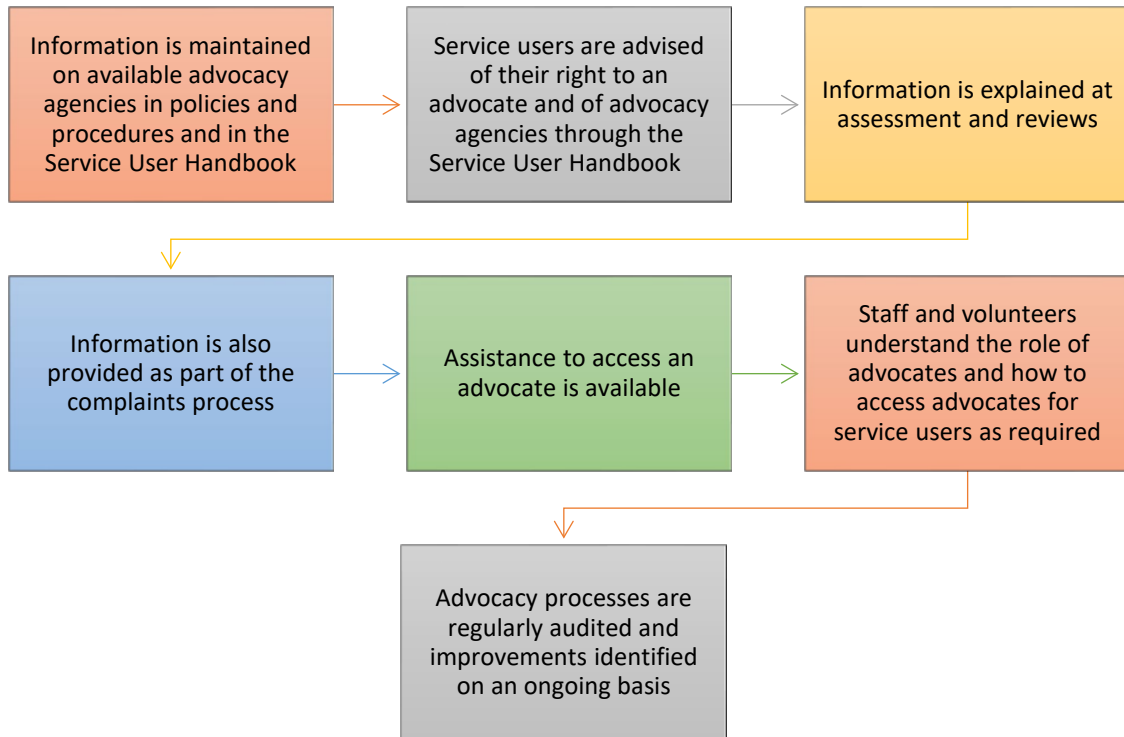
### Responsibilities and delegations

<b>This policy applies to:</b> Clients Employees/volunteers	<b>It will be distributed through:</b> Service User handbook, Coastlink website, Coastlink brochures Employee/volunteer handbook, shared drive
<b>Policy approval</b>	CEO

### Definitions

Refer to Definitions list at front of Coastlink Policy and Procedure Manual

## ADVOCACY PROCEDURE OVERVIEW



**ADVOCACY PROCEDURE**

### 17.1 Use of Advocates

Service users have a right to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service.

Advocates are accepted by COASTLINK as representing the interests of the service user.

Information on the use of an advocate is included in the Service User Handbook and is explained at entry to the service, assessments and reviews; COASTLINK reiterates to the service user/representative the local advocacy services available and respect the service user's choice of advocate. We also recognise that service users may choose a family member, friend or other person to advocate on their behalf.

Staff ensures service users are aware of their right to use an advocate, and remind them of this option whenever appropriate, including if a complaint is lodged.

Each client is provided with information about the use of an advocate (including an independent advocate) and access to an advocate is facilitated where allegations of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination have been made.

### 17.2 What is an Advocate?

An advocate is a person who, with the authority of the service user, represents the service user's interests.

Advocates may be used during assessments, reviews, and complaints or for any other communication between the service user and COASTLINK.

### 17.3 Appointing an Advocate

Service users wishing to appoint an advocate, inform COASTLINK in writing of the name of the person they wish for their advocate using the Authority to Act as an Advocate form.

Service users can change their advocate at any time and inform COASTLINK in writing using an Authority to Act as an Advocate form. If a service user has difficulty in completing the form due to language or literacy, COASTLINK staff will assist them or refer them to an advocacy agency to assist. COASTLINK assists and supports people with special needs to access an advocate of their choice by providing whatever support is required.

Completed authority forms are kept in the service user's record and noted in the Client Management System.

### 17.4 Guidelines for Advocates

Guidelines for advocates are detailed in the Authority to Act as an Advocate form; this is given to the service user and explained to them if they wish to appoint an advocate.

### 17.5 Advocacy and Complaints Investigation Contacts

Services that may advocate on behalf of service users (depending on the issue) or provide advocacy support to service users include:

**Disability Advocacy Finder**

Web: [Disability Advocacy Finder](#)

**People with Disability Australia (pwda)**

Web: [PWDA](#)

Phone: 1800 422 015

**SYNAPSE**

Web: [Individual Advocacy Service](#)

Phone: 1800 673 074

**Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS)**

Web: [IDRS](#)

Phone: 1300 665 908

**Ombudsman NSW**

Web: [Ombudsman NSW](#)

Phone: 1800 451 524 (outside Sydney metro)

**Department of Social Services**

Web: [Department of Social Services](#)

Phone: 1800 634 035

**Department of Human Services**

Web: [Department of Human Services](#)

Phone: 1800 132 468

**Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission**

Web: [Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission](#)

Phone: 1800 951 822

**NDIA - Feedback complaints and reviews**

Web: [NDIS Feedback Complaints and Reviews](#)

**Commonwealth Ombudsman**

Phone: 1800 800 110

Web: [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)

Phone: 1300 362 072

**NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission**

1800 035 544

Web: [www.ndiscommission.gov.au](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au)

