

**QUEENSLAND PARENTS FOR PEOPLE
WITH A DISABILITY INC. (QPPD)**

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

2009

11th August 2009



DATE.....SIGNED.....

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SECTION 1

INFORMATION ABOUT QPPD

BACKGROUND

QPPD is a parent based, state-wide advocacy organisation advocating for people with disability, by parents, against abuse and exclusion, for justice and rights. Its Mission is:

QPPD vigorously defends justice and rights for people with disabilities by exposing exclusionary practices, speaking out against injustices and promoting people with disabilities as respected, valued and participating members of society.

History

In 1980 the National Women's Advisory Council held a national conference in Brisbane for Mothers of the Disabled. There was a report on this conference called "My Child was Born Disabled".

In Brisbane in The International Year of the Disabled, 1981, a group of women, some of whom had been at the previous conference, applied for funds to run a conference in Queensland. They were successful and in 1981 Queensland Parents of the Disabled (QPD) held a conference in Brisbane called "Access 81". The report from this conference was called "The Future Should be Theirs". These were the founding documents and set the organisation on a clear track of systems advocacy.

In 1988 QPD gained Commonwealth funding as a Demonstration Project for Systems Advocacy. In 1991 QPD secured recurrent funding to continue in this role.

QPPD has always been focussed on systems advocacy. The organisation was clear about the need for systems advocacy and that QPPD should not be an advisory mechanism nor would it provide individual services.

Influence on Advocacy in Queensland

Over its 27 year history QPPD has had a key role in developing advocacy in Queensland by providing skills and development for parents that not only strengthens their own individual advocacy efforts but enables them to work at a systemic level. QPPD also auspiced two new advocacy organisations Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) and Gold Coast Advocacy.

Why the Parent Voice is important in Advocacy

Parents have a recognised natural authority in the lives of their sons and daughters. They are the legal guardians whilst their sons and daughters are children and this often continues into adulthood.

It is typical that parents:

- Are committed to and take responsibility for the well being of their son or daughter
- Know their son or daughter best from long term observation and insight
- Are attributed decision makers especially when the person has impaired capacity
- Bear witness to the performance of services
- Are there for the long haul and relatively free of vested interest
- Bring talents, knowledge and experience
- Know the real life stories

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Criteria

QPPD has four types of individual membership:

- *Ordinary Membership* – open to any person who has or had a child with disability, including natural, adoptive and foster parents
- *Associate Membership* – open to any person interested in furthering the objects of the organisation who do not qualify as ordinary members
- *Life Membership* – may be awarded to members of the organisation in recognition of outstanding and long term contributions to QPPD
- *Honorary Membership* – may be granted to an individual associate member of QPPD who has demonstrated a high level of commitment to furthering the mission and objects of the association.

Membership Fees

A membership fee (currently \$20.00) will be charged for a year's subscription. Fees fall due on 1st July each year. However:

- A 12 months waiver is available for Ordinary Membership each year upon request to the Board of Management
- If the person joins in April, they are deemed a member for the next financial year

The administrative officer is responsible for keeping accurate, up-to-date records of membership. All persons on the data base will receive an invoice for membership by the end of June each year together with the announcement of the Annual General Meeting. Records of membership will be archived after 30th September each year if the person is unfinancial.

Membership supports

Members are supported through:

- Information about advocacy issues and the state of the organisation being distributed at least four times per year
- Development of advocacy strategies via workshops, forums, booklets and website
- Parents and staff are encouraged to identify and support new members, to welcome them in and to nurture their involvement in the organisation
- QPPD provides a 1800 free phone line and accepts reverse charges from callers

Allies

The organisation recognises the contribution member allies who support QPPD's values and priorities can make to the organisation by:

- Distributing information on QPPD's priority issues through their own networks
- Linking into or hosting teleconferences
- Joining and supporting campaigns and coalitions
- Co-sponsoring workshops and projects
- Actively encouraging and nurturing members to take positions on the Board

It is expected that members of the organisation join because they uphold the values of QPPD and its mission, as well as the principles of advocacy and the principles and objectives of the Commonwealth *Disability Services Act* (1986).

As the organisation is part of the wider advocacy network, QPPD will choose to network with others involved in the social advocacy movement locally, nationally and internationally around issues and developments that lead to inclusive lives for people with disability.

ADVOCACY SERVICES

Who does the Advocacy?

The day-to-day operation of the organisation and supervision of staff is undertaken by a Director. The Director ensures that the vision and mission of QPPD and yearly strategic direction set by the Board of Management are carried out. In the main QPPD's advocacy is conducted by the voluntary efforts of its members who generously give their time and expertise in a number of roles and capacities. This ensures the organisation remains close to the community and is in continual conversation with people at the grass roots. Parents are supported in these efforts by paid staff.

Parent Advocacy

QPPD recognises and encourages the unique contribution parents make in advocating on behalf of sons, daughters and others with disability by:

- Supporting parents' vision of inclusive, ordinary lives for people with disability
- Providing advice and support to parents to enable them to advocate for their own son or daughter.
- Doing advocacy development according to QPPD's vision
- Liaising and communicating via parent networks
- Enabling parents to come together to engage in systemic advocacy according to QPPD's stated priorities
- Actively fostering parent leadership in advocacy throughout the State
- Supporting parents, from time to time, to attend events which will strengthen their advocacy skills
- Publishing and distribute a newsletter to inform families about what is happening in Queensland in relation to advocacy for better lives for people with disability

Systems Advocacy

QPPD parent members influence political, bureaucratic, social and service systems about important issues in the lives of people with disability and their families through:

- Promoting the vision of quality lives for people with disability and their families
- Promoting disability as a human rights issue
- Uniting families around a set of key ideas and issues
- Monitoring legislation, policies and practices regarding people with disability and their families
- Speaking out about systems that oppress, segregate and reject people with disability
- Lobbying people in positions of power to make positive changes to policies and practices
- Developing and running campaigns on issues of high priority to families and people with disability

Family Advocacy

QPPD works with parents and family members to enable them to act as advocates with and on behalf of a family member with disability. Family advocates work with parents and family members on either a short-term or an issue-specific basis. Family advocates work within the fundamental principle that the rights and interests of the person with disability are upheld at all times.

Through family advocacy:

- Family members are provided with advice and support
- The person with disability is assisted via the family member being directly supported by the agency to advocate on their behalf.

General Advocacy Development

QPPD contributes to the development, maintenance and safeguarding of strong independent advocacy in Queensland and Australia by:

- Supporting the continuation of advocacy development in Queensland
- Developing and maintaining strong connections to the advocacy movement in Queensland and Australia

SECTION 2

ADVOCACY

Definition of Advocacy

Speaking out, acting or writing on behalf of the interests of a disadvantaged person or group, in this instance people with disability, in order to promote, protect or defend the well-being and rights of the individual or group. Advocacy is:

- Primarily concerned with fundamental needs and rights of people with disability
- On the side of the disadvantaged person and no one else
- Remains loyal and accountable to the disadvantaged person and remains there for the long haul
- Strives to be as independent as possible and to minimise conflicts of interest
- Carried out in a determined and vigorous way
- Frequently costly to the advocate in personal, social and financial terms as it is constantly in opposition to dominant attitudes and practices which tend to devalue, isolate, congregate and segregate
- Distinctly different from service delivery in the way that it operates and is evaluated

Principles of Advocacy

Advocacy is based in the principles of social justice which are:

- *Equity* – a fair distribution of economic and material resources and political power, with full recognition that resources and power are not necessarily equal
- *Access* – fair and equal access to venues, goods and services
- *Participation* – opportunity for inclusion in the social and political life of the community and in the decisions which affect one's life
- *Equality* – equal opportunity to be involved without discrimination

Systems Advocacy

Systems Advocacy:

- Is primarily concerned with influencing and changing systems in ways that will benefit people with disability as a group within society
- Encourages changes to negative legislation or policies and practices of government or non-government organisations which are detrimental to people with disability
- Encourages positive changes in community attitudes.

Advocacy Development

Advocacy development is those actions and processes that enlist the energy and commitment of individuals and groups in our community so that they choose to take a considered action called advocacy on behalf of and alongside people with disability.

Advocacy Development:

- Is guided by a heightened sense of the vulnerability and needs of people with disability
- Seeks out, supports and mentors people who are potential advocates and who stand with/for people with disability
- Seeks to embed advocacy in local communities

- Encourages links between people involved in advocacy in local communities and at the state and national levels
- Encourages and strives for better understanding within the advocacy community of advocacy principles, including the need for advocacy and program independence, minimised conflict of interest and vigour
- Seeks to support emerging groups and formalised advocacy agencies to undertake activities which will assist with their growth and development, continuity, stability and effectiveness
- Seeks to encourage openness of relationships within the advocacy community
- Seeks to identify and develop parent leaders

SECTION 3

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

This Section contains Policies and Procedures for Standards 1-9

- Standard 1. Service Access
- Standard 2. Individual Needs
- Standard 3. Decision Making and Choice
- Standard 4. Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality
- Standard 5. Participation and Integration
- Standard 6. Valued Status
- Standard 7. Complaints and Disputes
- Standard 8. Service Management
- Standard 9. Staff recruitment, employment and training

Note: All Policies and Procedures will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management following the AGM.

ACCESS TO SERVICE

This Policy refers to Service Standard 1 – “Service Access” – *Each consumer seeking a service has access to a service on the basis of relative need and available resources.*

Background

Access to Queensland Parents for People with a Disability (QPPD) differs to that of direct service providers as it does not provide a service to individual ‘consumers’, but rather advocates at a systemic level on their behalf. QPPD began 27 years ago as a systemic advocacy organisation. Systemic advocacy seeks to influence or secure positive long term changes that remove barriers and address discriminatory practices to ensure the collective rights and interests of people with disability are upheld.

QPPD is not funded to carry out Individual Advocacy, therefore when people with disability, their family members or concerned citizens ring requesting this, staff will suggest these people contact agencies which do Individual Advocacy, as well as other organisations which may be able to assist. QPPD has a list of agencies which carry out Individual Advocacy. In our reports to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, QPPD reports the number of people who have requested Individual Advocacy.

Access

Although QPPD is not a service we welcome members of the public to our office. Adequate parking, including adequate disability parking, is available. The office has a wheelchair accessible ramp and a wheelchair accessible toilet.

Those who are unable or who do not wish to come to the office can also contact our office by email, fax or phone. Phone access includes an 1800 number for those within the state.

Entry Policy

QPPD welcomes membership from all Queensland parents of sons or daughters with disability who align with its Mission and Principles. The united voice and collective action of QPPD’s parent membership drives systemic advocacy reflective of parent concerns for better lives for people with disability.

Entry to QPPD is not based on relative need and is therefore accessible to all parents who may choose to become members. It is envisaged that all people with disability would benefit from its advocacy efforts whether they, their parents or families are members or not.

QPPD’s advocacy work is driven by our mission. The capacity of the organisation to respond to the possible range of advocacy targets in our systems advocacy is limited by the resources (Human/financial etc) so priorities are set by the organisation to ensure that our resources are well-directed to areas of greatest need. At the same time, the models of parent advocacy and systems advocacy allow QPPD members to join together informally to work on issues of personal interest.

Procedure

Process for Ordinary and Associate Membership

- Applicant completes application form
- Information is then placed on the data register
- The Application is presented to the Board of Management for approval
- If application is approved, a letter of approval is sent to applicant with a QPPD Orientation Kit and a Receipt for membership payment
- Payment is waived if applicant is unable to meet the fee

Non-discriminatory access for Ordinary and Associate Membership

- Consistent with the *Anti-Discrimination Act (1991)*, QPPD does not discriminate with respect to age, gender, race, culture or religion.
- QPPD staff will attend training about Anti-Discrimination legislation as it arises and will also access other training courses as required
- If required people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will be referred to appropriate agencies, for example, AMPARO
- QPPD will distribute information to relevant Indigenous agencies throughout the State requesting that they pass this on to their constituency

Advantages of being a Life Member

A Life Member does not require annual renewal and may, from time to time, be called on by the sitting Board to provide organisational advice; in all other ways Life Members have the same rights and responsibilities as an ordinary member.

Advantages of being an Honorary Member

When a person has been nominated to become an Honorary Member, they have the same rights and responsibilities as other ordinary QPPD members.

Process for Life and Honorary Membership

Criteria for selecting a Life Member

Life Membership is generally considered to be the highest award an organisation can bestow upon one of its members. A member may be nominated to be a life member under the following criteria:

- They must be a member of QPPD
- An individual must, in the life of their membership, have been involved in a variety of capacities, including but not limited to, Committee/Board Member, part of a subcommittee/network, have played an active part in QPPD's projects which have made a significant improvement in the lives of people with disabilities.
- They have demonstrated a significant and sustained commitment toward the enhancement and reputation of QPPD
- They have consistently contributed to advocacy efforts for people with a disability over an extended period of time

Criteria for selecting a Honorary Member

Honorary Membership may be granted to an individual associate member of QPPD who has demonstrated a high level of commitment to furthering the mission and

objects of the association. All of the following criteria are necessary for an Associate Member to be accepted as an Honorary Member of QPPD

- They must already be an Associate Member of QPPD
- They have demonstrated a significant and sustained commitment toward the enhancement and reputation of QPPD
- They have consistently contributed to advocacy efforts for people with a disability over an extended period of time

Selection Procedure for Life and Honorary Membership

Any board member or voting member of QPPD may nominate a person to become a Honorary Member as long as they meet the above criteria.

- Only one person may be selected for recommendation at the AGM
- Such nominations must be submitted in writing to the President of QPPD at least 120 days prior to the QPPD annual meeting. Nominations may include at least three letters of recommendation.
- Prior to the close of the nomination period, 120 days prior to the QPPD annual meeting, the President of the Board will appoint an Honorary Member Selection Committee, which must be approved by the QPPD Board.
- The Honorary Member Selection Committee will consist of 3 members, of which one will be a current Board member.
- At the close of the nomination period, the President of QPPD will forward all of the nominations to the Honorary Membership Selection Committee for their consideration and recommendation.
- The Honorary Member Selection Committee will then evaluate the nominations to determine if any of the nominees meet the criteria for Honorary Membership. If none of the nominees meet the criteria for Honorary Membership in a given year, the Honorary Member Selection Committee will recommend that no Honorary Membership award be granted that year.
- If more than one nominee meets the criteria in a single year, the Honorary Member Selection Committee will determine which one of the nominees will be eligible for Honorary Membership that year.
- The Honorary Member Selection Committee may not recommend more than one nominee for Honorary Membership in a single year.
- The Honorary Member Selection Committee will submit their recommendation to a regular QPPD Board meeting at least 60 days prior to the QPPD annual meeting.
- The Board will authorise information about the nominee for Honorary Membership to go out to all members in the AGM pack.
- At the AGM members will be asked to ratify the nominee for Honorary Membership.

Membership Information

All new members will be provided with a Member Information Package. This package contains the following information:

- Welcome letter
- Beliefs brochure
- Complaints brochure
- Guiding Principles of the Organisation

- Constitution
- Any other information or booklets which may be helpful to the member

Access to resources

QPPD has many resources that are available to members and these are available on request. Books, videos and CD's/DVD's may be borrowed, however other paper resources may be photocopied and posted to the individual or where possible emailed. There is no cost to these paper resources. However where books, videos and CD's/DVD's are lost or considerably damaged the individual may be asked to pay for replacement.

Exit Policy

Advocacy efforts are long term and on-going in nature: there is therefore no sense of 'exit' from this process. However, advocacy efforts that have been prioritised and have become a project within QPPD may come to completion or disband if the desired outcome is reached or as new advocacy priorities are established.

Individual members may choose to exit at any time. Where a member chooses to terminate membership the Director on behalf of the Board will contact the member to understand their reasons for terminating membership. E.g. their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the organisations work, whether they would rejoin at a later date and whether they would refer consumers to QPPD.

QPPD may terminate membership as set out in the Constitution. The member concerned shall be given a full and fair opportunity of presenting their member's case and if the Board resolves to terminate the membership it shall instruct the secretary to advise the member in writing accordingly.

The member has the right to appeal the decision.

The Board of Management will choose to decline involvement with projects and activities that do not support QPPD's values or the principles of advocacy.

Procedure

According to QPPD's Constitution:

- Individual members are required to inform QPPD of their of resignation in writing
- QPPD may terminate a person's membership when:
 - their arrears exceed two months
 - a criminal offence is considered injurious to QPPD
 - a person/s espouse/s principles or practices which are not aligned to QPPD's Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

Appeal process

The above terminations may be appealed by:

- The aggrieved person writing to QPPD stating their case
- A General Meeting will be convened within three months of receipt of appeal and a vote taken
- The person will be notified in writing of the outcome

Monitoring Process

Service Access and Service Exit will be monitored by:

- Recording new membership numbers
- Recording numbers of members who resign from QPPD
- Calling members who are resigning to ascertain their reason for resigning

Legislation

Commonwealth Disability Services Act (1986)

Anti-Discrimination Act (1991)

Implementation

In order to implement its policy and procedures on Service Access, QPPD has in place:

- Board Members Orientation Folder
- Staff Induction Kit
- QPPD Information Package for new members
- Brochures which outline the membership requirements/benefits
- Newsletters which from time to time seek new members, outlining the process
- Website – application for membership is available on-line
- Director's Monthly Report to Board of Management contains membership information
- 1800 number for free access to QPPD
- Email contact – hard to reach or out of contact members are either phoned or emailed to re-establish membership

To further implement its policy on Service Access, QPPD uses, where appropriate, various forms of documentation such as:

- Application form (Membership forms)
- Membership Welcome Pack which includes Standard letter of welcome; information regarding being a member of QPPD; latest publications – Newsletter; other publications depending on the individual's area of interest; and complaints form etc.
- Renewal letters
- Termination letter

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

This Policy refers to Service Standard 2 – “Individual Needs” – *Each person with a disability receives a service which is designed to meet, in the least restrictive way, his or her individual needs and personal goals.*

Background

Whilst QPPD does not undertake planning with individuals it does offer advice and support to members to carry out their own advocacy. QPPD recognises the benefit of collective advocacy and to this end carries out systemic advocacy. For QPPD, the process of planning is in the form of Strategic Planning and the setting of strategic goals and establishing priorities for its systemic advocacy work.

Policy

QPPD undertakes systems and family advocacy guided by consumer driven and strategic priorities which reflect the collective needs, concerns and issues which are raised by Queensland parents on behalf of their sons or daughters with disability.

Procedure

The collective needs of persons with disability are established through:

- Consultation with parents, advocates and other allies in a variety of ways, such as:
 - Forums
 - Direct contact with people with disability, parent or allied networks throughout the State
 - Informal ‘get togethers’ with parents who have sons or daughters with disability
- Surveys or questionnaires
- Recording issues of people with disability, parents, and others who make contact with QPPD
- Being made aware of issues raised in other advocacy networks of which QPPD is a member
- Liaison with relevant non-government organisations to hear about the issues and concerns of their client group

Once this data is to hand the various networks or sub-committees undertake a process to establish the systemic priorities for the year. These priorities are then incorporated into a Strategic Plan and implemented through various responses such as:

- development of sub-committees/projects who then develop their own operational plan
- submission writing
- lobbying government departments
- forming synergies with other advocacy agencies and networks

Implementation

In order to implement its policy and procedures on Individual Needs, QPPD has in place:

- Information Package for new members
- Website information

- Information tailored to individual requests
- Information that continues to inform members of what systemic advocacy activities are being undertaken and at what stage the activities are at are sent in either print form or electronically.

To further implement its policy on Individual Needs, QPPD uses, where appropriate, the following Forms:

- Quarterly reports from each of the Networks on their work to date
- Monthly report from QPPD Director to Board of Management on the activities of the Networks and other events
- QPPD's Policy is available on its website and in hard copy to all members in appropriate formats on request and depending on available resources
- Updates will be posted as they come to hand.

DECISION MAKING AND CHOICE

This Policy refers to Standard 3 “Decision Making and Choice” – *Each person with a 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.*

Policy

QPPD respects the right of every individual to have choice and participate in making informed decisions which affect their lives. To this end, QPPD seeks to advocate, at a systems level, for the right of people with disability and, where appropriate, their family or advocate, to be involved in planning, developing and monitoring their own support strategies which best meet their needs.

Procedure

Systemic responses

To ensure people’s rights to be involved in decision making processes, QPPD will work at a systemic level to:

- Identify barriers and systemic frameworks in society which prevent people from participating in decision making processes
- Strive to change or modify attitudes or negative images which represent an unequal status for people with disability and which may exclude them from decision making processes which affect their lives
- Support the notion that decisions and decision making processes on behalf of people with disability with impaired capacity should be in the person’s best interests
- Involve people with disability (through their parents) in defining and developing advocacy strategies which support inclusion in the decision making processes
- Ensure staff and Board demonstrate their commitment to people’s right to self determination through their language, personal and organisational philosophies and actions
- Respond to issues that negatively impact on the equity of people with disability, particularly issues relating to gender, culture, disability, religion or sexuality

Systemic advocacy involves a wide range of activities and the appropriateness of particular advocacy methods is guided by a principles analysis of goals and strategies and available resources.

Information

Any information relating to QPPD’s policies and procedures, QPPD’s work and operations are made available to members and others by:

- Collecting or developing resources that respond to the needs of people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Providing information in different languages when required and as resources permit
- Providing information and materials in alternative formats when requested and as resources permit
- Placing current, relevant information on its website
- Distributing information through newsletters and networks

Involvement in decision making

QPPD's members may become involved at any time in the organisations systemic work. Members are informed about networks and teleconferences that inform them about the strategic plan and the organisations work.

Review of consumer participation

QPPD's consumers – parents of people with disability - participate in collective decision making regarding setting of advocacy priorities and this process is reviewed annually. The following process is followed:

- Consultation is undertaken with people with disability, parents of people with disability and other networks throughout the year to determine issues and areas of concern affecting parents of people with disability
- These issues are collated and discussed with relevant networks
- Advocacy priorities are nominated from this collective decision making process
- Individuals may become involved in systemic advocacy activities of their choice.

Decision Making in Management of the Organisation

Members are encouraged to give feedback and input into the governance of QPPD however according to QPPD's Constitution only full members and those Associate Members who are voted into the position of Honorary Member are allowed to vote or become Board Members. There is a selection criteria and process to becoming an Honorary Member.

Referrals

People with disability, parents of people with disabilities or other individuals who make contact with QPPD seeking assistance are, where possible, put in touch with other parents of people with disability preferably in the caller's region, who have similar issues. If there is no parent contact for a particular issue, then the caller is informed of other services or advocacy agencies that might suit their needs.

PRIVACY, DIGNITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

This Policy refers to Standard 4 - "Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality" *Each consumer's right to privacy, dignity and in all aspects of his or her life is recognised and respected.*

Policy

QPPD recognises the right of its members, staff and individuals to privacy and confidentiality and it will recognise the right of all people to be treated with dignity. QPPD will ensure that only information deemed necessary for the provision of advocacy will be collected.

Definitions

Dignity – treating someone with respect and consideration that reflects their culture and community and positively influences their self-esteem

Privacy – freedom from intrusion and public attention

Confidentiality – protection of a person's written and spoken information from access and use by unauthorised persons.

QPPD will adhere to the Principles from the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act (2000)* (for full details see www.privacy.gov.au/publications) when using or managing personal information.

Procedure

Dignity

- When recruiting staff, an applicant's responses towards acceptance, tolerance and respect for people with disability will be assessed before being employed
- A 3 month probation period for all new staff provides time for management to determine the level of dignity and respect that new staff members accord to parents and people with disability
- All literature produced by QPPD will promote the dignity of people with disability
- All staff will seek every opportunity to portray people with disability in a way that promotes dignity and engenders respect and acceptance from others
- Staff will be required to be aware of the Code of Conduct policy. This will be monitored through staff training, supervision and appraisals.

Privacy and confidentiality of information about Members

- The only information held by QPPD about a member will be information necessary to assess membership.
- QPPD keeps records about the members which is kept on the office database and is only accessible to the Board of Management, the Director, the Administrative Officer/Bookkeeper, Advocacy Worker and the Administrative Assistant (for maintaining files)
- Minimal objective information will be kept.
- The member has the right to withhold information for privacy reasons
- Information about a member will not be shared with another member, service of agency without the permission of the member or his/her legal guardian or advocate.

- Other paper-generated information regarding members is stored in a filing cabinet, which is kept locked when the office is unattended.
- All QPPD computers are password protected

Privacy and Confidentiality of information about Staff

- Staff members have a right to confidentiality. All personal details of staff will be located in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to the Director, except where a staff member gives express written permission for another person to access their file
- Details from performance appraisals and supervision sessions will be kept in the locked cabinet
- Staff are entitled to see any records held about them. Request should be made to the Director
- The time and date of access will be recorded in the file
- No personal information will be given out about staff

File Management

- Member records and contact forms will be stored in lockable filing cabinets when not in use. The Director and Administrative Officer/Bookkeeper will hold keys to these filing cabinets.
- Staff files are confidential and are kept in a locked filing cabinet. The Director has the key to this filing cabinet.

Phone or Email Enquiries Procedure

- QPPD receives calls from members of the public who have enquiries regarding their family member who has a disability. Under the Terms and Conditions of QPPD's funding agreement, QPPD is obliged to provide the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs with non-identifying information with regard to people the organisation assists. During the conversation the staff person must advise the caller in a sensitive manner that they are completing a written document. Information the staff person must give is as follows:

"I'm taking notes of the information that you are giving me. We keep this information for our records and we also provide some non-identifying information to the Commonwealth Government as part of our funding agreement with them. We don't include names and addresses in this information and we do not give any information to any other organisations without your permission."

- The caller then is given the opportunity to agree with this request.
- Information taken is keyed into a computer database that is separate to all other databases.
- The written documentation is filed in the locked filing cabinet. The Director has this key.
- If the staff person is unable to offer any support, we may suggest another member contact the enquirer. When permission is given the office staff person completes a Consent to Release Contact Details form on behalf of the enquirer. This form is attached to the "Blue Contact" form.
- A staff member such as the Project Officer of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs may request to view the

database; however the names column will first be hidden by the QPPD staff member.

- After twelve months, all the Blue Contact Forms are shredded.

Requests for Individual Advocacy

Even though QPPD is not funded to carry out Individual Advocacy we still receive enquiries requesting assistance. QPPD is mindful of the needs of those people requesting Individual Advocacy and staff will offer information and advice to a parent to enable them to do their own advocacy. If this is not what the person is seeking QPPD will suggest the names of other organisations which may be of assistance.

QPPD will:

- Keep information of callers recorded on the Blue Contact forms.
- Keep the contact names of organisations and will pass these names on the enquirers.
- Prepare reports for the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and are required by them to provide the numbers of people who have requested Individual Advocacy.
- No individual details (names, addresses etc) are reported.
- Information is kept on the database that is separate to all other databases and the written documentation is filed in the locked filing cabinet with all the other Blue Contact Forms. The Director has the key.
- After twelve months, all the Blue Contact Forms are shredded.

Advocacy Correspondence Procedure

- QPPD posted incoming and outgoing correspondence, and emails both incoming and outgoing, will be recorded, date stamped and dealt with in a timely manner
- Incoming (posted) correspondence is opened by the Administrative Assistant and entered on the Incoming Correspondence form. This mail is then delivered to the appropriate person who deals with this mail or delegates the Administrative Assistant to deal with this mail.
- Any mail that is for or requiring attention by the Board of Management must be scanned and saved on the computer under the appropriate folder.
- All incoming and copies of relevant outgoing mail are filed by the appropriate person or the delegated office person.
- All outgoing posted mail is recorded in the postal book and copies of outgoing mail are recorded for the Board of Management
- A list of all incoming and outgoing relevant correspondence (including new membership) is circulated to the Board of Management members one week before each Board meeting. Any urgent correspondence requiring immediate action will be circulated to Board of Management members as is necessary.
- Any information about forthcoming events, plus newsletters from other organisations and general information is available for QPPD Board of Management, staff and members' perusal. This information can be found in the 'in' trays located in the main meeting area.
- Material which is more than two months old is filed in the library shelves.
- All mail is filed in the filing cabinets in the appropriate area. QPPD has a files list to assist the person doing the filing.

Safeguards to guide best practice when advocacy actions involve the media.

The media is only one strategy used among many to bring attention to and highlight the issues affecting QPPD's constituency. When dealing with the media, QPPD will take into account the following:

- The process and outcomes of contacting the media must be in the best interest of those QPPD represents and not make them more vulnerable.
- Use media only if the issue is a matter of public interest
- All information provided is cast in a systemic light and no individual names are given except with that persons consent and active involvement.
- QPPD will be mindful that a positive image of the people with disability is portrayed.
- QPPD will endeavour to read all media articles prior to their release.

Implementation

In order to implement its Policy on *Privacy, dignity and confidentiality*, QPPD has in place:

- A Code of Conduct
- A staff recruitment process which assesses potential staff members attitudes
- Communication material which uses respectful language
- Staff Induction Folder

To further ensure implementation of its Policy on *Privacy, dignity and confidentiality*, QPPD uses, where appropriate, the following Forms:

- Employee/volunteer statement on privacy and confidentiality
- Consent to release contact details
- Professional development and training records

PARTICIPATION AND INTEGRATION

This Policy refers to Standard 5, "Participation and integration" – *Each person with a disability is supported and encouraged to participate and be involved in the life of the community.*

Policy

QPPD recognises the unique contribution parents can make in advocacy on behalf of their sons and daughters and others with disability. QPPD actively encourages all members to assist with advocacy at a systems level, on behalf of all parents and their sons and daughters with disability for people with disability to participate and be fully included in the community as a valued member.

Procedure

QPPD will advocate on behalf of parents and their sons/daughters with disability for:

- Services which are provided in a way that facilitates the integration and participation of each person with disability into his/her community
- The right to be treated with respect and be a valued, contributing member of the community
- Breaking down barriers which create exclusionary practices

How individuals become involved

- Parents advocating for their son or daughter can become involved.
- Parents contact the organisation for advice/assistance and may request information about QPPD
- Parents may have contact with a QPPD member and learn about QPPD and are invited to join
- Parents throughout Queensland may look up QPPD's web site which details the organisations work and are able to download a membership form

New members are offered the opportunity to attend events, for example, morning coffees, fork dinners and workshops; they then may choose to become involved in a range of ways.

How members participate in the Advocacy work of QPPD?

QPPD works with parents throughout Queensland who hold the values and mission of QPPD by:

- Supporting parent's vision of inclusive, ordinary lives for people with disabilities
- Actively fostering parent leadership in advocacy throughout the state through advocacy development around QPPD's vision
- Operating via parent networks
- Enabling parents to come together to do systemic advocacy around QPPD's advocacy priorities
- Actively encouraging them to be involved in QPPD's priorities
- Including them in organisational decision making
- Allocating resources to allow state-wide involvement
- Actively encouraging and nurturing members to take on positions on the Board

QPPD encourages its members to participate in the systemic advocacy work each year and to be involved when priorities are set. Once the priorities are set the Board

decides upon the Strategic Plan. All members can then decide whether or not they will actively participate in the network groups or other QPPD activities to take action in line with the strategic plan.

Board Members

The Service Management policy has detailed job description and responsibilities pertaining to becoming a Board member.

Volunteering

- Assisting in the QPPD office doing various office duties, any volunteer work will be guided by the Director of QPPD
- Responding to lobbying letters sent out in QPPD's mail outs
- Assisting QPPD staff in lobbying techniques such as writing draft letters and attending meetings with Director
- Becoming QPPD's representative for allies network, reporting back to QPPD's Director

The networks of QPPD are multi-functional, serving the organisation, the membership, and the wider community. These functions are-

- To collect anecdotal evidence from the grass roots community that provides examples of poor practice and shows the disparity between policy and practice and provides the basis of our systemic advocacy.
- To provide informal support and mentoring to members and potential members.
- To coordinate volunteers to undertake the tasks of the network and advocate at a systemic level on behalf of QPPD. To offer support to families to develop their advocacy skills to do this work.

Parent Leadership

QPPD provides information and educational opportunities to parents (such as workshops, seminars etc) run either by QPPD, allies (CRU, Pave the Way, Mamre for example) or other groups such as Ed. Qld. or various Universities. QPPD can also provide sponsorship for parents around the state to attend such workshops through its sponsorship program.

Sponsorship to participate in Events

Wherever financially possible, members are sponsored by QPPD to attend events for their own personal learning and development or to present information on behalf of QPPD or to represent QPPD, both within Queensland and in other States.

Sponsorship may but not necessarily cover the costs of:

- Attendance fees
- Travel
- Support for family members
- Accommodation

Sponsorship is intended to assist full members, including honorary or life members to attend events where the total cost to the member would be prohibitive.

Eligible events include events organised by QPPD and other government and non-government organisations. In general, QPPD will favour applications for events, which develop disability advocacy skills or provide background knowledge relevant to disability advocacy. Events that provide information about a specific disability are unlikely to be funded.

Members can apply for sponsorship by contacting the Board and indicating the amount of assistance required. Acceptance of sponsorship will indicate a willingness to participate and contribute. Applications from members for sponsorship should outline the purpose of the event, the anticipated costs and what the expected gains will be.

The Board in granting sponsorships will use the “match” between QPPD’s Mission Statement and the goals of the applicant in attending the event as the primary criteria.

Principles of Sponsorship to Guide the Board Decision Making

- Applicants for sponsorship from QPPD must be financial full members (as per guidelines regarding memberships that apply to natural adoptive and foster parents). Family members who are in fact acting in parental roles may be considered on individual merit for full membership.
- The Board reserves the right to sponsor representatives from groups of allied organisations on a case-by-case merit.
- Applicants must reside in Queensland.
- The event for which sponsorship is requested is aligned to the work of QPPD or will contribute important information.
- Applicants are willing to provide QPPD with information or feedback about the event that can be shared with the membership. E.g. a newsletter item or a presentation.
- Support to prepare the application is available from a Board Member. This support does not imply that the application will necessarily be successful.

Member Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of members to:

- Submit their application for sponsorship prior to a Board Meeting
- Speak and act in accordance with the Mission and Objectives of QPPD
- Conduct themselves so as to uphold and enhance QPPD’s credibility as a disability advocacy organisation.
- Ensure that information gained is shared with the organisation.
- Meet any other Board requirements relevant to the specific sponsorship. (For example, act as a representative of the Board in putting a particular policy viewpoint.)

Board Responsibilities

- The Board will appoint a representative as a point of contact for members who may require assistance with the preparation of sponsorship applications.
- The Board will prioritise applications for sponsorship based on the needs and priorities of the organisation.

Decisions by the Board regarding sponsorship will always include current budgetary considerations. Sponsorship decisions are final.

Any member who has been sponsored, but failed to attend the sponsored event or to meet the above requirements, without good cause, is unlikely to be considered for further sponsorships.

Implementation

In order to implement its Policy on *Participation and Integration* QPPD has in place:

- Principles which support the participation of people with disability
- Information kits which include anecdotes/research/models of participation which parents can access
- Education and Transition from School to adult life *Position Statements* which promote participation and inclusion
- “How to do Advocacy” kit for presentation to parents which promotes participation and inclusion.

To further ensure implementation of its Policy on *Participation and Integration* QPPD uses, where appropriate, the following documentation:

- Website information

VALUED STATUS

This Policy refers to Standard 6 – “Valued Status” *Each person with a disability has the opportunity to develop and maintain skills and to participate in activities that enable him or her to achieve valued roles in the community.*

Policy

In line with its mission statement, QPPD will promote the abilities and achievements of people with disability at every opportunity. QPPD will affirm the capacity of people with disability to fulfil valued roles in the community. QPPD promotes the principle of social inclusion and the inherent worth and ability of people with disability to be valued members of their community.

Procedure

QPPD promotes the valued status of people with disability through advocacy priority setting efforts according to the priorities set at the annual workshop.

Prioritisation

Systemic priorities aimed at promoting valued status are determined and committed to at the organisation’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) by QPPD membership. For a priority to get to the point of nomination it is filtered through a number of critical questions which assists decision making, for example:

- Does this priority fit with the mission and goals of QPPD?
- Is QPPD the appropriate/right/best/only group to do this?
- Can the organisation support and resource this initiative?
- Where does this rate within the priorities we already undertake?
- Does this use the resources of QPPD efficiently?
- What do we expect the outcomes might be for
 - QPPD as a whole
 - People with disabilities
 - Families

Networks/Projects

Networks/Projects are established to develop and implement the priorities. These Project groups are made up of parents who have a particular interest in the issue and volunteer their time to address the issue from a systemic perspective. Project groups are supported and resourced by the organisation.

All Networks/Projects uphold, through both written documents (see Position Statements, Submissions etc) and through dialogue with all stakeholders, including government, the principle of always striving for a person with disability having valued status in the community.

Other

The Board of Management may from time-to-time have brought to its attention or identify an emerging systemic issue. This may provide an opportunity for QPPD to stress the importance of people with disability having valued status in the community. It is at the discretion of the Board of Management if and how organisational resources will be directed toward delivering an advocacy response.

COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

This Policy refers to Standard 7 “Complaints and Disputes” – *Each consumer is free to raise and have resolved any complaints or disputes he or she may have regarding the service.*

Policy

The staff and Board of QPPD will endeavour to provide potent and vigorous systemic advocacy for people with disability. Any suggestions regarding the planning and operation of our advocacy work will be welcomed, as the input of members is valued, and we aim to remain open to positive change and development. We recognise that members, consumers and staff have the right to access fair and equitable procedures for dealing with complaints or grievances.

Any complaints about the service or access to it will be dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially, and without retribution. We will ensure that our Complaints Policy is publicly available, in appropriate formats and where resources permit, that the service promotes and practises a policy for dealing with and monitoring complaints. Complaints or disputes will be handled in a manner consistent with QPPD policies on privacy and confidentiality.

The procedures will allow for the participation of the members/consumers advocate.

Complaints

- QPPD will ensure that operation of its Complaints Policy complies with the principles of natural justice.
- Complaints will be handled in a confidential and sensitive manner consistent with QPPD’s policy on privacy and confidentiality.
- QPPD welcomes information and feedback from members/consumers, which will enable it to improve the quality of our systemic advocacy.
- All members will be made aware of their right to complain.
- Members/consumers have a right to complain about the way in which QPPD undertakes its work without fear of retribution and can expect complaints to be dealt with fairly and promptly.
- The member/consumer has the right to use an independent advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf with the staff and/or management of QPPD. The advocate may be a family member or friend.

Access

- Information on the complaints procedure of QPPD is to be included in the information given to new members in their information pack when they first join QPPD.
- The Policy will be made available to all members, in a form that is in plain English, is appropriate and understandable.
- Consumers who wish to complain will be sent the same Complaints Brochure that is provided for members.

Procedure for Members and Consumers

- Members/consumers are encouraged to raise their complaint with the staff member concerned in the first instance.

- If the member/consumer is not satisfied with the outcome, or not happy to discuss the issue with the staff member concerned, they should contact the Director.
- Person/s affected by the complaint should be fully informed of all facts and given the opportunity to put their case.
- All complaints are to be recorded on the Complaints Record Form, which is to be completed by the Director.
- If the issue is still not satisfactorily resolved or if the complaint concerns the Director, the member/consumer should raise the issue with the President of the Board of Management.
- If after approaching the above people, the issue is still not resolved, the member/consumer can complain to QPPD's funding body, the Commonwealth Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- If the member/consumer is still not satisfied contact should be made with the Alternative Dispute Resolution Service of the Department of Justice.
- A member/consumer will be clearly informed in writing within two weeks of receipt of a complaint and of the estimated time frame for the investigation to occur.
- The member's permission should be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties which may be desirable to involve in order to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.
- QPPD will ensure that the Director and the Board of Management are competent in managing complaints and disputes with fairness and equity by discussion of development through appropriate resources.
- The member/consumer shall be informed of the outcome of their complaint and asked for their feedback on the complaints procedure.
- The procedure will be reviewed annually.

Confidentiality of Complaints

As far as possible, the fact that a member has lodged a complaint and the details of that complaint should be kept confidential amongst staff and Board members directly concerned with its resolution.

Complaints by Staff

Should a permanent, casual or voluntary staff member have a grievance with another member of staff or a member of the Board of Management, he or she has the right to a fair and equitable hearing, and initiation of the grievance procedure without fear of retribution. All staff members involved in a grievance process with QPPD are bound to maintain confidentiality in relation to that grievance. All procedures should remain consistent with the relevant award conditions.

Background information

- Complaints shall be handled in a confidential and sensitive manner consistent with QPPD's policy on privacy and confidentiality.
- The principles of natural justice shall be the foundation of this process.
- The duties and parameters of staff members will have been described in the Job Description, Specification and Contract of employment. The grievance should relate to these.

Procedure for Staff

- Resolutions and agreements will be recorded through all stages of the grievance procedure. All parties will be supplied a copy. Follow up will occur within an agreed time (or at least 10 working days)
- Confidentiality of the proceedings and decisions relating to staff matters need to be carefully monitored by all parties involved. All parties have the right to request an advocate and/or Union representative to be present at all stages of the process.
- A problem that occurs at the workplace should be identified then:
 - Where possible both parties involved should try to resolve the issue together. A mediator may be requested to assist this process.
 - If this is not possible the complaint may then be taken to the Director with documentation of previous attempts to resolve the issue in question. The Director will meet with all parties at a mutually acceptable time to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve the issue. This meeting will be minuted and minutes supplied to all present.
 - Where the complaint is against the Director, and both parties try to resolve the issue without satisfaction, the complaint should be sent in writing directly to the Board.
 - If there is no resolution, the person making the complaint will be offered the opportunity for the Board to assist. The complaint should then be sent, in writing, to the Secretary of the Board of Management. Included should be documented evidence of previous attempts to resolve the complaint. The complaint shall be acknowledged within 5 working days.
 - At least two Board of Management members will meet with involved parties at the earliest possible time to attempt to resolve the issue. Again this meeting will be minuted and copies provided to all parties.
 - Should all attempts at resolution with the Director and/or the management representatives fail, the aggrieved staff member shall attempt to resolve the complaint with the President and/or full Board of Management, as determined by the President, and shall be entitled to have a union representative present if the staff member so desires. The President will initiate an investigation, and will if possible, implement actions or a course of action to rectify the matter e.g. through an independent mediator. The President shall prepare a report of the matter detailing the grievance and the actions taken to remedy the position and will table the report at the next meeting of the Board of Management.
 - Where any such attempt at settlement has failed, or where the dispute or claim is of such a nature that a direct discussion between the staff member and his/her immediate supervisor or QPPD would be inappropriate, the staff member may notify a duly authorised State representative of the Australian Services Union, who, if she/he considers that there is some substance in the dispute or claim, may forthwith take the matter up with QPPD, and a meeting shall be arranged.
 - The arrangement of a meeting shall take place within seven working days of notification to the QPPD Board of Management of a complaint.
 - Whilst conciliatory procedure is being followed, work shall continue normally where agreed. In other cases work shall continue on QPPD's Board of Management instruction.
 - If the matters are still unresolved it shall be submitted to the appropriate government industrial relations authority.

- Upon satisfactory resolution of the complaint and after a three-month period, members of the Board of Management will destroy all related documents they may hold. A single copy should be kept on file at the QPPD office. Should a complaint be between a member of staff and the Director, the member of staff after having tried to resolve the complaint by Step 1, may go directly to the Board of Management.

Warnings Policy for Staff

When QPPD's Board of Management believes a permanent staff member to be guilty of an infraction (but not a legal cause for instant dismissal) the matter will be discussed with the staff member and a Board representative, and the staff member cautioned. A maximum of three such cautions will be issued prior to dismissal actions being implemented. When QPPD believes a casual or voluntary staff member to be guilty of an infraction, the Director will deal with the matter initially. Subsequent offences will be dealt with by the Director or referred to a Board representative, at the discretion of the Director.

Procedures

- Where a staff member, through actions short of misconduct, dishonesty, drunkenness or insubordination is guilty of an infraction as to work practices, procedures, attendance or misbehaviour of lesser degrees (the QPPD Board shall decide), the staff member shall be cautioned and such caution may result in a written warning being issued.
- Where a staff member is cautioned or issued with a warning, a file note will be made on their employment file as "Sanction One". A copy of the sanction will be tabled at the next Board of Management meeting by the Director.
- In cases where it is necessary to again caution or warn a staff member for a second infraction, then a written warning will be issued and their employment file will have a "Sanction Two" recorded thereon.
- Where a staff member, subsequent to being issued with a second written warning, is again determined by QPPD to be guilty of a further infraction, then the staff member will be issued with a "Final Warning" in writing, which will be duly recorded on their employment file as "Sanction Three" and the staff member notified that any further infraction may result in dismissal.
- In conjunction with the issue of written warnings the staff member so involved will be given guidance, either by the Director or, should management feel it necessary or advisable, by some other agency.
- The process of issuing three written warnings will apply to permanent staff only. Staff employed on a casual basis or voluntary staff who are deemed to be guilty of an infraction will be cautioned by the Director, with decisions on disciplinary action to be taken left to the discretion of the Director, dependent on the seriousness of the infraction.

Paid Staff termination

Staff have their own policy in Standard 9 of the policy and procedure manual

SERVICE MANAGEMENT

This Policy refers to Standard 8 “Service Management” – *Each service adopts sound management practices which maximise outcomes for consumers.*

Governance of the organisation

QPPD is governed by a Board which steers the organisation according to the Strategic Plan. When possible, the Board is to include at least two members from outside South East Queensland. For the purpose of this policy South East Queensland covers the area within 90 minutes normal driving from the QPPD office. Advertising of positions vacant at the Annual General Meeting and the filling of casual vacancies must reflect this policy.

Policy on roles and functions of the Board

The role of QPPD Inc. Board is to manage the Association within the approved budget and in accordance with QPPD Inc. stated objectives, policies and procedures as specified in this Policy and Procedures Manual to ensure the organisation is going in the right direction.

Terms of Agreement have been developed for each Board position, specifying their role. Board Members are required to sign a Terms of Agreement on appointment. The Terms of Agreement (on appointments) may have to be reviewed annually by the Board prior to the Annual General Meeting.

The QPPD Board should make sure at all times that it is fulfilling its role and responsibilities.

The responsibilities of the Board are:

- Legal Responsibilities to ensure that QPPD operates in line with
 - Constitution
 - The Associations Incorporation Act 1981
 - Commonwealth Funding Agreement
 - Relevant Federal, State and Local Government laws and regulations.
- Ensure the organisation has adequate insurance cover;
- Financial Responsibilities - ensuring that the financial policy and procedures set down by the Board are followed.
 - QPPD has an approved budget for the year, and that expenditure is within the budget;
 - Ensure that QPPD has sufficient income to meet the budget requirements;
 - Ensure funds are effectively and efficiently used to achieve the goals of the organisation
 - The conditions of Funding Agreements are followed
 - Funds are properly accounted for and that an audit is completed every year.
- Policy and Planning Responsibility
 - QPPD has clear goals
 - Plans are developed and evaluated on an annual basis
 - High quality and effective advocacy is undertaken

- The Policy and Procedures Manual is kept up-to-date and is put into practice.
- Staff
 - Ensure the recruitment of dedicated and skilled personnel
 - Ensure all staff have support, direction and supervision.
 - Ensure staff employment agreements are complied with, proper tax is deducted, and safe working conditions are provided;

Insurance Coverage

The organisation will ensure that insurance is provided in the following areas:

- Business Insurance (Fire, Accidental, Burglary, General property and other damage)
- Public and products liability
- Association Liability
- Workers' compensation – Accident Insurance policy
- Volunteer insurance - personal accident insurance

Financial Management

Systems requirements

The systems employed by QPPD for the management of financial resources and reporting are:

- *Effective* – be able to carry out all financial and reporting tasks in a timely manner.
- *Efficient* – be able to carry out all financial and reporting tasks in a cost-effective manner.
- *Relevant* – provide appropriate financial and reporting cover of financial transactions conducted by QPPD staff, Board and funding body.
- *Concise* – provide necessary details to meet acceptable accounting and legal requirements so that it can be readily read and followed by Board, staff and funding agencies.
- *Objective* – financial accounting statements must be based on verifiable transactions e.g. cheques written from an invoice, receipts issued from money received.
- *Reliable* – statements must represent what they say and how they say it i.e. expenditure shows what we have spent.
- *Complete* – provide financial and reporting documents so that all information about income and expenditure is available.

The information must not only be complete but it must be undistorted by the value judgments or attitudes of the person preparing it.

Standards of performance

The Director is responsible for compliance with the policies and procedures of QPPD.

The Director is also required to:

- Encourage staff to take a proactive role in the cost reduction and revenue enhancement opportunities.
- Present clear updated budget statements to the Board of Management on a monthly basis along with recommendations where necessary. All reports are to be concise, comprehensive, accurate and timely.

- Ensure there is always sufficient money in the bank to pay cheques. Invoices must be settled on a timely basis and any disputed accounts must be settled as soon as possible.
- Comply with legal and contractual obligations. All legal documents of value, for example, contracts from funding bodies, are acknowledged where appropriate, referenced, recorded and filed in a place of security. Any directions must be authorised through meeting minutes of the Board.
- Take responsibility for communicating financial policies and procedures to staff so that they fully understand the implications of failing to comply with a particular policy or procedure. If a procedure is not practical it must be modified as soon as possible so that the high level of effectiveness and efficiency of the financial system is maintained.

Salary Packaging

QPPD has a policy of paying salary sacrifice to staff.

Claiming Expenses

QPPD does not have fringe benefits for use of a car or claiming expenses. However if a staff member uses their car for work purposes the staff member will record the mileage in a log and claim the mileage in the appropriate form. Any expenses incurred by the staff member in the line of their work will be paid according to the QPPD policy and procedure for claiming expenses

Bank Accounts

To enable full reporting and control of funds, all money received must be placed in the cheque account. QPPD will maintain a minimum number of bank accounts.

Funding Accountability

The organisation is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and as such will adhere to the Financial Terms & Conditions of Agreement under Section 10 of the Disability Services Act 1986 by:

- Maintaining an Assets Register of all equipment
- Providing the Department with an audited statement of income and expenditure, a statement of assets and liabilities and a certificate certifying that all moneys received were expended for the purpose of and in accordance with the Agreement, by 30 June following the funding year
- Receiving money from membership and other non funded sources which can be used to support the non funded activities of the organisation
- Maintaining a full record of income and expenditure in accordance with the Constitution and the Auditor's requirements
- Ensuring QPPD signatories to cheque accounts and Interest Bearing Deposits are the President, Secretary, Treasurer and Director
- Ensuring all cheques have two signatures
- Paying an amount over \$100 by cheque or visa card
- Maintaining a Petty Cash float at \$150
- Presenting all payments monthly for ratification by the Board of Management
- The board approves that the Director is able to approve expenditure of anything up to \$500.

With prior agreement and on receipt of supporting documentation, QPPD will support parents and staff doing advocacy on behalf of the organisation by reimbursing out of pocket expenses by:

- Paying a mileage rate to staff consistent with the SACS Award and subsidising parent member travel at an equivalent rate
- Using Taxi Charge Vouchers collectively or when other transport is unavailable
- Reimbursing for telephone calls and postage made on behalf of QPPD
- Paying a meals allowance of up to \$30 per day when away on overnight travelling advocacy trips.

Staff or members who receive payment from other sources for work done in the name of QPPD are requested to bank the money into the organisation's account.

Members will not be paid to do the work of QPPD.

QPPD strives to be economical at all times when organising travel and accommodation for workshops and will continue to do so by:

- Making airline bookings at the economy rate which include a Saturday night stay over, booked a minimum of 3 weeks in advance where possible; booking twin share accommodation at a moderate cost
- The Director and the Administrative Officer or Bookkeeper developing an annual budget for presentation to the Board of Management in the first month of the financial year.
- The Treasurer and Director presenting monthly financial statements to the Board for endorsement. The Treasurer and Director should highlight any issues requiring Board consideration.
- Appointing a qualified auditor at the Annual General Meeting to undertake an annual audit. The Treasurer will present the audited report for the previous financial year at the Annual General Meeting.

Being effective, efficient and accountable

The organisation will set yearly priorities and develop strategies to achieve them by:

- Priorities will be set by the networks and consultation with members
- Networks will plan according to the identified priorities.
- Board of Management members, staff and invited members of the wider network may attend meetings

QPPD's funding and human resources will be used in line with the priorities for the year.

The Board of Management will be inclined to reject involvement in work outside priority areas.

QPPD's work is open to scrutiny by:

- Yearly internal evaluation of the organisation's work
- Where possible periodic external peer evaluation of the organisation's work will occur
- Informing membership of the appointed Board of Management and staff each year

- Preparing an annual report that will be sent to membership after each Annual General Meeting, together with the stated priorities and complaints mechanism for the following year
- Having a detailed complaints procedure, updated yearly, which is given out to each new member and is publicised by the organisation

Membership information and other mailing lists will be kept private:

- Mailing lists are not given out to other groups, however the organisation may choose to do its own mailout of others' information if it is in line with the values and priorities of QPPD

Annual budget

Following planning by the networks a budget will be prepared for the next twelve months of operation.

Budget Benefits

The development of a budget will be used to:

- Identify how much money we have, how much money we receive and how much money we have spent.
- This is done for all our projects.
- Budget will be used to check over- or under-spending

Procedures

- The budget will be ratified by the Board of Management and will be revised quarterly if necessary.

Monthly Financial Reporting

The Director will provide the Board of Management with the following information each month:

- Transaction List
- Profit and Loss (monthly and quarterly year to date)
- Visa Card statements
- Bank statements and reconciliation

The procedure for this is under the Administration Officer/Bookkeeper's job description.

STAFF, RECRUITMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

This Policy refers to Standard 11 “Staff, Recruitment, Employment and Training” – Each person who has an employment relationship with Queensland Parents for People with a Disability Inc, will have appropriate skills and competencies.

Background

QPPD is an equal opportunity organisation which does not discriminate in regards to recruitment and selection of staff to work within their organisation. Recruitment, selection and development and support of staff that ensures they have the relevant values, skills, knowledge and competencies to support the work of QPPD. Those selected will also need to be able to comply with the vision and mandate of the organisation. That is:

Queensland Parents of People with a Disability vigorously defends justice and rights for people with a disability by exposing exclusionary practices, speaking out against injustices and promoting people with disabilities as respected, valued and participating members of society.

The organisation employs staff to support the advocacy and advocacy development functions of the organisation by:

- Providing knowledge and expertise about advocacy and its development
- Providing information about systems and the big picture in relation to the lives of people with disabilities
- Utilising their time and skills in managing, writing, speaking out, facilitation or Administration
- Running an office in Brisbane which connects with members throughout the state

QPPD also has volunteers who work together with the paid staff to fulfil its mission. They may work in the office on a casual basis, or may work in groups or networks looking at systemic issues. Further information about volunteers is found further in this document.

Members of staff will uphold the values of QPPD and its mission, as well as the principles of advocacy and the principles and objectives of the Commonwealth Disability Services Act (1986).

The organisation will employ staff under the relevant awards, with key staff employed under the Social and Community Services Award.

In the day to day running of the organisation, staff are responsible to the Director.

The Director is responsible to the Board and will be in contact and meet regularly with the president or a nominated person to discuss the work of the office.

Staff grievance procedure is found under the policy on “Complaints and Disputes” (Standard 7).

Permanent positions or long term project work will be advertised publicly with usual selection processes embarked upon in line with funding requirements.

Part time and Casual positions can be filled by decision of the Director and the Board.

STAFF RECRUITMENT

All staff are recruited according to QPPD's policy to ensure that the person chosen is the best person for the job regardless of:

- Race, colour and national origin;
- Physical, intellectual or psychological impairment
- Gender;
- Marital status (including de facto);
- Parental status (including pregnancy);
- Religious or political beliefs, activities or practices.

QPPD will focus on the requirements of the job rather than questions or assumptions about the applicant's circumstances or background.

QPPD Inc. will establish and monitor all employment policies, practices and procedures to ensure that equal opportunity principles are followed in all areas of staff management including:

- All permanent vacancies will be advertised externally
- The Board of Management will ensure the Director has all paid staff positions filled in a timely manner when vacant.
- In consultation with the Board the Director will be responsible for the recruitment of paid staff.
- Job descriptions and selection criteria;
- Selection panels for the Director will comprise three people, including the President and at least one other Committee member.
- Interview questions and processes;
- Appointment procedures;
- Staff training and development;
- Transfer, promotion and higher duties;
- Discipline and dismissals.

QPPD will provide information and training to all staff and management group members involved in the staff advertising, selection and appointment process.

Recruitment Procedure for Paid Staff

- Clarify the need for and role of the worker and develop or review the Job Description.
- Work out who will be involved in the short listing and interviewing.
- Advertise the position.
- Send applicants a copy of the job description.
- Shortlist applicants on the basis of their relevant skills and experience.
- Interview.
- Select the most suitable applicant.
- Check References
- Advise the successful applicant in writing.
- Sign a contract of employment.

- Write letters to unsuccessful applicants.
- Orientate the new worker.

Advertising Positions

Positions will be advertised widely throughout allied organisations and on the internet or through newspaper advertisement. A copy of the most recent advertisement for all positions must be kept on file.

Short listing and Interview Panel

The interview panel should carry out short-listing of all applicants. The panel should decide on the basis of the job description, what skills and experiences are essential in order to do the job, and what skills and experiences are desirable.

Applicants who, on the basis of their written application, appear to have the essential skills and experiences should be short listed for an interview.

For the employment of the Director the short listing and interview panel will comprise of:

- The President
- One other Board member
- One other external person with recognised experience of systemic advocacy.

For the employment of other staff, the short listing and interview panel will comprise of:

- The Director
- Two members of the Board of Management.

Interviewing

- The selection panel should draw up a list of initial interview questions prior to the interviews.
- Other questions may be asked according to applicants responses.
- The questions will aim to explore the applicant's relevant skills and experience to perform the duties.

Selection process

- All members of the interview panel must be in agreement when selecting of the best candidate for the position.
- Selection must be made according to the responses to the selection criteria.

Reference Check

- Two or more references may be checked as necessary by phoning the referee

Notification of applicants

All applicants must be notified in writing as to whether they were selected for the position

EMPLOYMENT

Procedure for signing new person onto the staff

- All staff will be required to sign an agreed contract
- Staff file will be set up for each individual staff member.
- All staff must apply for a Blue Card. QPPD will be responsible to pay the cost of this form.

- All staff and volunteers will notify the Director of any instance where a criminal charge may be or has been laid whereby the Blue Card is in jeopardy of being cancelled.
- Contact detail form must be completed
- Record of next of kin and contact details is completed
- Superannuation form will be completed to allow for superannuation to be transferred into the requested Superannuation fund.
- Taxation forms will be completed and submitted to the Taxation department
- Staff must read the Privacy and Confidentiality policy and sign the attached form.
- Conflict of interest document must be read and if they have a conflict of interest, the staff person will sign the conflict of interest record form. Conflict of interest can result from the following: e.g. if they are on the management of another organisation, have a child with a disability etc
- The file will include copies of all of the above forms as well as the position description.
- All staff are to complete staff induction and training appropriate for their position

Hours of Employment

- All full time staff are employed for 38 hours per week
- Office hours are:
09:00am – 16:30pm Monday to Friday
- However, flexibility is allowed with starting and finishing times, with the aim being to ensure that the office is always staffed during normal office hours.
- Lunch is a half hour break normally taken from 1pm – 1.30pm, though flexibility in timing is permitted.

Salaries

- Staff are employed under the Social and Community Service Award of Queensland (1996) (SACS AWARD).
- A copy of the Award is kept on file and is available to staff at all times.
- The conditions of employment are detailed in the SACS Award. Variations to these conditions and procedures may occur if agreed by both parties.
- Wages will be paid fortnightly directly into the staff members' bank account
- No overtime will be paid; rather staff will be offered time off in lieu (TOIL).
- QPPD will pay superannuation according to the current superannuation legislation.
- Paid staff are entitled to reimbursement of travel/parking expenses where use of their private car is necessary to complete QPPD work
- Paid staff are entitled to annual leave and special leave on written application to the Director.
- The Director must apply to the Board of Management for annual leave or special leave.
- Paid staff may apply for salary sacrificing according to the Salary Sacrifice policy. (see below)
- Paid staff will receive holidays according to the SACS award without deduction of pay:

Procedure for payment of salaries

- Staff must complete their own time sheet and submit it to the Administrative Office/Bookkeeper on the Wednesday of the pay week by 9am.
- The Administrative Officer/Bookkeeper is responsible for calculating wages, superannuation, reimbursement of expenses, salary sacrifice payments etc.
- The Multipay Lodgement Advise must be signed by two Board members or one Board member and the Director.

Salary Sacrifice for paid staff

Background

- Salary packaging is allowing staff to receive part of their pay in a form other than take-home pay (cash). By packaging their salary, staff members receive part of their pay as cash and part of it as a benefit. The benefit is paid on the staff members behalf by QPPD; the staff member receives less pay and, therefore, pays less PAYE income tax on their reduced income.
- Salary sacrificing may be referred to as 'salary packaging' or 'flexible remuneration planning'.
- Salary Packaging allows staff members to save tax without any cost to QPPD. Salary Packaging is a widely accepted and legal way for staff members to save tax without any cost to QPPD.
- Where a staff member requests a salary sacrificing plan that causes extra costs to QPPD this will not be approved.
- The following is an example of what can be salary sacrificed: Bills such as telephone, rates, electricity, credit card repayments.
- The maximum amount an staff member is allowed to sacrifice from their salary is \$500 per pay.

Procedure

- The paid staff person must complete the salary sacrificing form provided by the Administrative Officer/Bookkeeper recording the amount to be sacrificed and the frequency (e.g. per pay, per month etc)
- Each time a "bill" is paid the Administrative Officer/Bookkeeper must be given a copy of the account form.
- The Administrative Officer/Bookkeeper will write a cheque to the company to pay the account and give the cheque to the individual paid staff person provided the staff member has sufficient funds held in his/her name.
- Individual records showing the staff members contributions and "bills" are kept and reconciled to the general ledger.
- Salary sacrifice contributions for bill repayments are "grossed up", and recorded as reportable fringe benefits in the staff members PAYG payment summaries.

Confidentiality

QPPD staff will ensure that all work is undertaken in a manner, which upholds the rights of the members and allies to privacy and confidentiality.

Committee members, Students and Volunteers are to sign a confidentiality declaration.

Sick Leave

- A full or part time staff member who becomes sick and unfit for duty is entitled to sick leave as per the SACS award.
- Staff must complete the appropriate form for signature by the Director.

Annual Leave

- Every staff member (except casual) shall at the end of each year of employment be entitled to an annual leave holiday on full pay.
- Annual leave for full time workers (i.e. those who work 38 hours per week) is not less than 4 weeks.
- For health and safety reasons all staff members are requested to apply for annual leave at their earliest possible convenience. QPPD does not have a relief staff budget
- Annual leave shall be given at a time determined by mutual agreement between QPPD and the staff member. Annual leave should be taken when the period not exceeding six months from the right to annual leave has accrued. QPPD wishes to prevent the accrual of excessive annual leave credit above 8 weeks.
- Annual leave attracts the loading of 17.5%. Loading shall not be paid in respect to pro-rata payments on termination. In relation to staff members' deferral of annual leave entitlements QPPD can agree to the deferral of leave loading due to that annual leave credit.

Director on Leave

When taking leave, the Director will ensure that the President is informed of any tasks or issues which will require decision making during his/her absence. Responsibility for particular tasks may be delegated to particular staff members.

Other Leave Entitlements

All (special) leave must be verbally expressed and then placed in writing. The Director and the staff member must agree to a mutually acceptable arrangement for the taking of any other leave entitlements set out in the SACS Award.

Time off in Lieu - TOIL

TOIL is not encouraged for occupational health and safety reasons due to the additional pressure longer hours places on staff, and because of the additional demands it places on the organisation when it is taken, as we have no staff relief budget to cover TOIL or overtime.

However, TOIL is unavoidable at times. Therefore to reduce the negative impact on staff the following policy applies:

- TOIL should be taken as soon as possible once accrued. Small amounts of TOIL taken have a lesser impact than large amounts.
- Time off in lieu is the preferred method of overtime.
- Toil is accrued for additional hours worked outside normal office hours.
- Toil should not exceed a maximum of 20 hours in total.
- TOIL, in exceptional circumstances, may exceed the 20 hour limit to an absolute maximum of 38 hours. But only with the Director's PRIOR approval.
- In the Director's absence a Board member must give this approval.

Travel

Where a staff person or volunteer is required to use their car for QPPD work they are entitled to reimbursement. A reimbursement Claim Form must be completed and signed for by the Director before the Bookkeeper issues payment.

Staff Meetings

All staff where possible will attend weekly staff meetings. Where a staff person is unable to attend the meeting the Director will be notified ahead of time. A copy of each meeting

is available for each staff member. The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate the growth of the staff as a team and to discuss and enhance the organisation's development and successful operation.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Policy

QPPD is committed to ensuring that all newly appointed staff members receive a timely induction that is appropriate to their needs.

Induction refers to the process of assisting a staff member to adapt to a new work situation and providing them with the initial information they require to contribute effectively to the work. Induction is not an in-depth training program. It is primarily intended to ensure new staff members have a working knowledge of their responsibilities and entitlements and to indicate where they might find further information that they may need to do their job well.

Induction involves all permanent, temporary, casual, part-time and volunteer staff. Induction reduces a staff member's anxiety about starting in a new work situation or environment. The content of an induction process will vary according to the individual's level of knowledge and experience with the:

- duties and responsibilities of the job;
- history of the organisation
- knowledge of advocacy
- conditions of employment

The time taken to complete induction will also vary between individual needs and positions.

Procedure

It is important that all new staff and those moving into new positions will be supported in their role. QPPD will ensure that staff are adequately given induction into work of QPPD to ensure they can carry out their work in a professional and satisfactory manner.

- Each new staff person will be asked to read the office copy of the Staff Induction Manual.
- Each new staff person will be asked to read and sign the Privacy and Confidentiality policy document.
- Depending on the new staff members role induction may include spending time with all members of the staff to gain information that will assist the person in the daily activities of their work.
- The new staff person will spend time with the Director to understand
 - Role and work
 - Line of authority
 - How the work of the organisation is carried out
 - Meetings
 - Networks
 - Workplace health and safety
 - Clarification and assistance with the Induction manual information
 - Role in Governance
 - Systemic advocacy

- Advocacy Development
- The staff person will be given the opportunity to meet Board Members
- Network groups
 - Depending on the work of the new staff member, time will be allocated for the staff person to contact and speak about the work of the individual networks – how they work and what are the current systemic issues.
- Depending on the needs of each staff member they will be given the opportunity to meet
 - Allies
 - ~ to learn more about their organisations work.
 - Parent members
 - ~ Members with a long history in the organisation are a good source of information in relation to the history of the organisation and the advocacy work of the organisation.
 - ~ Time will be allocated for the staff member to contact parent/s
- The need for supervision will be assessed, planned and monitored

Employees' Compensation Insurance Cover

All staff members must:

- Record the actual time they start and finish work, for Workers Compensation Insurance purposes;
- Report to the Director any injury to themselves during the course of working, or when traveling to or from work in order to be entitled to make a claim under the *Workers Compensation Insurance Act*;
- Provide a written statement of the injury (Incident Form), how and when it occurred, signed by the staff member and witnesses and be forwarded to the office as soon as possible;
- Complete a 'Workers' Compensation Claim form' along with necessary documents to be filled out by the injured staff member and immediately return to the Director who will ensure all necessary documents are forwarded to the Workers' Compensation Board; and
- Before returning to work, obtain a medical clearance from an appropriate medical officer and forward this to the Director.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Policy

QPPD is committed to ensuring the work environment is safe and healthy for all staff. It is the responsibility of all staff (paid and volunteers) and the Board of Management to ensure that the work they carry out and the manner and attitude they carry it out, will provide a safe and enjoyable place of work.

Workplace Health and Safety applies to:

- everyone who may affect the health and safety of others because of workplaces and workplace activities;
- everyone whose health and safety may be affected by workplaces and workplace activities.

QPPD will comply with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*.

This means QPPD:

- has an obligation to ensure the workplace health and safety of staff (paid and volunteers);

- has an obligation to ensure the health and safety of the Board members or the members which may be affected by the way the QPPD conducts its activities;
- a work place is deemed by QPPD as any place where work is carried out for or by an individual. This includes offsite locations where QPPD work is carried out. This does not include the person's private home;
- workplace health and safety is the responsibility of all persons – QPPD Management, staff member, volunteer and members;
- when QPPD hires offsite locations the staff will enquire about any issues which may compromise the safety of themselves and those attending the function. QPPD staff will not hire offsite locations where the environment is known to be unsafe.
- when a safety issue at an offsite location is identified and where QPPD does not have control over the area, the QPPD staff person or member should inform the site representative. Other QPPD members attending the site will be made aware on their arrival. This issue should then be reported to the Director following the work being carried out.
- individuals who work or visit QPPD or are part of any workshops are expected to support QPPD's commitment to workplace health and safety by becoming aware of safe work practices and assisting others to carry out work in a safe manner;
- all staff, volunteers, members and board members are not expected to carry out work which is unsafe;
- it is the joint responsibility of everyone to ensure safe working practices are followed at all times.
- where staff, volunteers are not familiar with equipment they will be given training so that this equipment can be operated safely.

Procedure to ensure workplace health and safety

- Where there is a potential workplace health and safety issue, the Director with the assistance of staff and others will:
 - identify the hazard;
 - assess the risks that may result because of the hazards;
 - decide on control measures to prevent, or minimise the level of the risks;
 - implement control measures; and
 - monitor and review the effectiveness of the measures.
- QPPD will inform support staff of their health and safety responsibilities in accordance with the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995, including the following areas, as appropriate for each individual:
 - fire safety;
 - use of equipment;
 - healthy and safe work practices; and
 - First Aid.
- Staff will report injuries to the Director or another staff member or person if the Director is not available.
 - The staff person involved will complete the Incident Form as soon as possible after the incident has occurred.
 - The incident will be investigated by the Director and any hazardous equipment is either repaired or removed from use.

STAFF APPRAISAL

Background and Purpose

Queensland Parents for People with a Disability Inc (QPPD) has designed a Staff Development and Performance Appraisal policy and process for paid staff, which ensures that QPPD's mission and organisational priorities flow from the top of the organisation to the personal objectives of each individual staff member.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that a consistent approach is followed when implementing the Staff Development and Performance Appraisal process and that staff member's job-related skills and knowledge, competencies, and behaviours are developed and evaluated in line with agreed standards and organisational priorities.

This policy applies to paid staff members only.

Policy

QPPD is committed to supporting staff to improve their own efficiency and effectiveness.

Staff are expected to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to show a high level of personal commitment to providing a quality, professional service at all times.

Staff appraisals are a formal process in which the staff members and the Director discuss the achievement of mutually agreed performance targets that have been developed from job descriptions and organisational priorities.

Staff members need to clearly understand the expectations on them in terms of performance and to be able to identify and access necessary training to make sure that they can maintain and acquire expertise.

The aims of the Staff Development and Performance Appraisal system are:

- To identify the training and development needs and priorities of staff members;
- To allow free and confidential discussions between the staff member and Director;
- To provide a structured process for feedback to staff;
- To discuss the staff member's job performance in comparison with agreed standards;
- To identify and acknowledge good work performance;
- To discuss any work problems and search for solutions; and
- To discuss means of improving work performance and enhancing work skills.

Procedure

- It is the responsibility of the Director to work with all new staff members during their first three months of employment to develop a Staff Development and Performance Appraisal Plan (see attached form) for the remainder of the current financial year. The Plan outlines the staff member's performance targets and developmental goals and activities.
- Each subsequent Staff Development and Performance Appraisal Plan will cover the full 12 months of the financial year and will be used for reviewing achievements against the previous Performance Targets and developmental goals and activities. Staff members should initially draft their full 12 months Staff Development and Performance Appraisal Plan and then meet with the Director so that the Plan can be agreed and finalised.

- The performance targets and developmental goals and activities should align with the organisation's mission and priorities, the staff member's job description, and identified training and development needs and priorities. Consideration should also be given to the individual's long-term career objectives.
- The Staff Development and Performance Appraisal Plan is designed to establish targets that provide some challenge to staff members. During the year, Staff Development and Performance Appraisal Plans can be amended to incorporate changes in QPPD's priorities or other organisational requirements.
- The Director will conduct a formal Annual Performance Appraisal with each staff member within the first three months of the new financial year. Progress reviews are conducted at regular staff supervision meetings, which should be held at least monthly. If either the staff member or Director identifies performance issues and problems, these should be discussed when they arise and not held in abeyance until the annual Performance Appraisal. If issues are discussed sooner, it is more likely that mutually satisfactory solutions will be found.
- The Director must review the staff member's performance against his or her agreed performance targets and skills required to achieve these performance targets.
- To ensure that a degree of objectivity is apparent throughout the review process, a nominated member from the Board will be kept informed of the review process and must agree with the review and sign it off.

Note:

Two nominated members of the Board are responsible for working with the Director in developing his/her Staff Development and Performance Appraisal Plans and for conducting the annual Performance Appraisal. This is undertaken in the same way as the process for staff members, as listed above, with the Board members undertaking the Director's tasks.

Review of performance appraisal

Where agreement cannot be reached between the person being appraised and the appraiser on the overall performance assessment, a review of the appraisal must be sought from the Board. The Director is responsible for making sure that the review occurs. Both the staff member and the Director should attach a memo outlining their position, and forward the Performance Appraisal Plan to the President of the Board for a final decision.

The Board may review all staff performance appraisals conducted by the Director and nominated members of the Board.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the President of the Board and the Director to:

- Familiarise themselves with the Staff Development and Performance Appraisal policy and procedure;
- Carry out their responsibilities according to this policy;
- Ensure that the Staff Development and Performance Appraisal system supports the achievement of QPPD's mission and priorities and fairly and consistently evaluates each individual's performance against these priorities.

It is the responsibility of employees to:

- Participate openly and honestly in planning and assessing their own performance objectives and receiving feedback from the Director.

It is the responsibility of the Board members to:

- Ensure that the Director is aware of their responsibilities in the Staff Development and Performance Appraisal process; and
- Provide ongoing support and guidance to the Director when managing staff performance issues, including securing advice and assistance from external experts such as industrial advocates, as needed.

Students on Placement

Students on placement have the same rights and responsibilities and are entitled to the same benefits as any other member of staff.

Students on placement with QPPD, shall have access to all employment entitlements (except financial) including grievance procedures, staff working hours etc.

- Students on placement shall be reportable and responsible to the Director and their QPPD and external supervisor.
- Students will be made familiar with the philosophy and mission statement of QPPD.
- The Director or QPPD supervisor shall have direct input and report on student progress.
- Students can expect to be involved in all support activities as appropriate, and this shall be decided at the discretion of the Director and their QPPD supervisor.
- Students shall at all times act in accordance with legitimate direction and comply with all regulations set out for QPPD.

Volunteers

Volunteers have the same rights and responsibilities and are entitled to the same benefits as students. Volunteers shall have access to all entitlements of staff including grievance procedures.

- Volunteers are accepted as well as other members of staff.
- Volunteers shall be made aware of the philosophy and mission statement of QPPD.
- Volunteers at all times shall act in accordance with all legitimate direction and comply with all regulations set out by QPPD.
- Volunteers must be eligible for a Blue Card or already have a current Blue Card

Payment

- Members, apart from paid staff, will not be paid to do the work of QPPD
- Members who receive payment from other sources for work done in the name of QPPD are requested to bank the money in the organisation's account

Compensation for use of a private vehicle

- Employees/volunteers must have a current valid driver's licence and a registered vehicle if they are to use their personal vehicle to, from and during their work.

- Employees/volunteers will be reimbursed for the use of their vehicle as per the appropriate award.

Policy for when staff resign

QPPD believes all its staff are valuable, however staff may choose to resign at any time. The Director on behalf of the board will ensure that resignations are dealt with in sensitive and respectful manner. Staff will be provided with the necessary support and information to ensure that their decision to cease employment is well considered and made with full knowledge of their options and the implications of their decision.

Procedure

- The staff member must inform the Director in writing of their desire to resign. The letter needs to include their last day of work which should be in line with the SACS award requirements.
- The Director will notify the Board members and other staff members of the resignation.
- The staff member will be provided with an Exit Survey prior to cessation and requested to complete and submit the survey. Completion of the survey is on a voluntary basis.
- During the period up to their resignation, the staff member will endeavour to complete tasks that are in progress and where this is not possible they will update the Director who will assign the work to another member of the staff.
- Salary to be paid to the staff member will be in line with the SACS award requirements.

SECTION 4

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Code of Conduct

Conflict of Interest

CODE OF CONDUCT

Background of the Code of Conduct

Queensland Parents for People with a Disability (QPPD) recognises the importance of implementing a clear, comprehensive Code of Conduct for all staff members, volunteers and Board members. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, students and Board members to be familiar with the content of the Code and to ensure his or her professional behaviour and communication is consistent with the expectations for the standards of conduct required.

Definition

The Code of Conduct is a set of standards of acceptable behaviour at work. It serves as clarification to all staff, volunteers, students, and Board members what is expected and reduces confusion and possible conflict within the organisation.

Policy

QPPD operates according to the *Associations Incorporation Act (1981)* and also according to the funding agreement it has with the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The following requirements will apply:

- The Director will have an understanding of the Act and the funding agreement relevant to the operation of QPPD, and will explain to staff and volunteers their obligations during the induction process.
- Staff and volunteers will conduct themselves in such a way that the Act and the funding agreement are not contravened.
- Staff and volunteers will respect the law in the general sense and will work in a way that will not contravene the law.
- Any alleged illegal activity in regard to their carrying out the duties as a staff member of QPPD will be investigated and, if necessary, reported to the police and action will be taken.

QPPD work Standards & Employment Responsibilities

Procedure

All QPPD staff members, Board members, volunteers and students should:

- Abide by the mission of QPPD, focusing on working as a member of the QPPD team, with cooperation and mutual support and understanding
- Act in the best interests of QPPD, the community and individuals to which QPPD serves, and in a positive and respectful way
- Be industrious and hold a positive attitude in performing their duties to the best of their ability and with proper care and attention
- Where unable to complete tasks or act on the best interest of QPPD, to promptly report to the Director or Board President for guidance and supervision
- Carry out their duties lawfully and impartially
- Uphold a sense of integrity when interacting with families and or people with disabilities and follow the complaints procedure if observing behaviour in others that indicates the potential for lack of integrity.
- Be responsible for maintaining a good working knowledge of the policies and procedures related to their role within QPPD
- Be aware of one's own behaviour, values and attitudes in representing QPPD in public.
- Be respectful of confidentiality in all work that is done in respect of QPPD

Official Conduct

All QPPD staff members, Board members, volunteers and students should:

- Be respectful of the law in the general sense
- Have an understanding of the legislation and policies relevant to the operations of QPPD
- Carry out instructions unless a health or safety risk is apparent, a conflict of interest or conscience exists, it appears to involve illegal or criminal actions, it does not comply with QPPD policy and practice, or it goes beyond what is reasonable in all circumstances (e.g., you do not have resources or competence to comply)
- Use the QPPD Grievance policy and procedure in the appropriate manner maintaining confidentiality of all parties when a grievance or difficulty occurs
- Declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest and refrain from influencing any decisions where any conflict of interest may exist, including between staff and/or Board members at QPPD and the families being served
- Expect those in authority (e.g., Director or Board President) to be open and respond promptly to constructive questions, offering reasonable justification of his or her decisions and instructions to the staff or Board member

Personal Conduct and Behaviour

All QPPD staff members, volunteers, students and Board members should:

- Realise they are the “face of QPPD” to the community and treat colleagues, consumers and members of the community fairly, with respect, dignity and cultural sensitivity, acknowledging that they come from a wide range of backgrounds, with a variety of views and expectations and experiences that may differ from those held by the individual, staff and/or Board member. The same conditions apply to staff members, Board members and volunteers treating each other respectfully.
- Use appropriate, respectful, and courteous language in all communication amongst staff, Board members and towards each other along with consumers and members of the community.
- Ensure that all behaviour is conducted in a professional and ethical manner that is not discriminatory, offensive, threatening, abusive or belittling
- Ensure appropriate usage of agency resources and communication tools (including phone and internet) and be mindful of confidentiality at meetings held in the community and within QPPD and in email correspondence
- If a staff, volunteer, student or Board member has concern regarding abusive behaviour (e.g., physical, emotional, verbal, sexual or financial) whether directed towards them or another colleague, the concern should be reported to a person of authority
- Take note that if a staff or Board member has a question regarding what is sound and/or ethical; it is their individual responsibility to address their query to the Director or another member of the Board.
- Whilst in the office, respect each colleague’s individual privacy and the privacy necessary to work effectively, while being sensitive of their time and tasks to be completed
- When working with parents, families or people with disability ensure that their rights and dignity are safeguarded and upheld in line with QPPD’s mission statement and policies and procedures. Follow all reasonable and lawful instructions related to their work given by a person of authority

- When working with consumers and/or networks and steering groups, be respectful and attentive and respond professionally and courteously to their individual needs and voice.
- All staff members, Board members, volunteers and students must be eligible for a Blue Card at all times.
- All staff members and Board members must be agreeable to criminal history checks.

General Behaviour

All QPPD staff members, Board members, volunteers and students should:

- Ensure the dress style projects a professional image for QPPD, consistent with the job or position role within QPPD, and indicates respect for individual co-workers, Board members, consumers and members of the community; and reflects appropriate workplace health, safety and security considerations applicable to the job and work environment.
- Not take illegal drugs and only consume alcohol in a responsible manner when at work.
- Not participate in any involvement with alcohol/drugs which adversely affects the work performance and reputation of QPPD.
- Not behave in an unlawful or dangerous manner while driving to a work related function/meeting or transporting a client, such as: speeding, incurring traffic infringements, use of mobile phone, etc.

Conduct at Work

All staff and volunteers are expected to

- Follow QPPD's Code of Conduct. (See Code of Conduct policy and procedure)
- Declare a personal interest in any decision making to the Director,
- Perform a 'fair day's work'.
- Ensure work is carried out with a duty of care. That is each person has an obligation not to willfully place themselves and others at risk.
- Avoid negligent conduct by giving sufficient consideration to their actions and decisions, and by obtaining direction and advice from the Director.
- Report for work and remain at work in a condition to perform assigned duties free from the effects of alcohol and illegal drugs.
- Not smoke inside the building

Summary of Code of Conduct

Staff members, volunteers, students and Board members are responsible for abiding by QPPD's Code of Conduct. Failure to abide by it may lead to possible disciplinary action by either the Director or the majority of the Board.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Definition

Conflict of interest is when the personal or professional concerns of a Board member, staff member, student or volunteer affect his or her ability to put the welfare of the organisation before personal benefit. Conflict of interest refers to situations where a conflict arises between public duty and private interest which could influence the performance of official duties and responsibilities.

Conflict of interest can involve financial or non-financial interests. They can involve the interests of the individual or their family or relatives (where those interests are known), business partners or associates, or friends. Enmity as well as friendship can give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interests.

Types of conflict of interest:

Conflicts of interest arise when an individual finds themselves in situations where they are in a position to influence the outcomes of decisions. These could include:

- Decisions regarding appointment, promotion or other personnel decisions relating to staff members
- Decisions regarding grievance, discipline or dismissal procedures
- An individual is bound by prior agreements or allegiances to other individuals or agencies that require them to act in the interest of that person or agency or to take a particular position on an issue.
- An individual or their close friends or family members may make a financial gain or gain some other form of advantage

Situations which are not a conflict of interest

For example:

- Membership of other organisations where there is no possible benefit or perception of benefit
- Union representation or membership
- Board approved collaboration with other organisations

Scope

This policy will apply to all members of the Board of Management and staff and/or volunteers if applicable.

Policy

QPPD is committed to ensuring that personal or individual interests that conflict with the interests of the organisation are identified and managed so that they do not affect the services, activities or decisions of the organisation.

A conflict of interest will be assessed in terms of whether the interests or personal circumstances of a Board or staff member could influence, or could appear to influence, the performance of duties assigned to the Board or staff member.

Procedures

In order to implement this Policy, the following procedures will be in place:

- **A Register of conflicts of interest will be kept.** Any potential or actual conflicts of interest that exist when a person joins the organisation or that arise

during their involvement with the organisation must be declared. The Register will be maintained by the President of the Board of Management and kept at the office by the Director. This Register will contain:

- The name of the individual
 - The nature of the interest they hold
 - The date of record
 - Reports of any incidents that arise which constitute conflict of interest, the date of the incident and a summary of how it was managed
- **Conflicts of interest are identified and declared.** All Board members, staff members and volunteers are required to declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest they are aware of by:
- Informing those present when a conflict becomes apparent. This should always be applied when the individual is about to take part in a decision-making process
 - Notifying the Secretary, in writing (for Board of Management members and the Director) or the Director (for staff or volunteers)
- **Management of conflicts of interest.** In managing conflicts of interest the following steps will be taken:
- Identification or declaration of the interest
 - Assessment of whether a conflict exists
 - Decision about the individual's continued role in the issue, if any. The individual concerned should not take part in the decision and, in most instances, should not be present when the matter is discussed

Summary

This section will be reviewed at least annually or more frequently if changes are deemed necessary. The Board of Management will be responsible for undertaking this Review in conjunction with senior staff. The Review will take into account any recorded incidents of conflicts of interest, the frequency of incidents and any difficulties with following Procedures. Any changes to the policy will be documented and dated.

Notice of Termination

- When a paid staff member decides to terminate their employment they must give the period of notice specified according to the SACS award 16.2.1.
- Where the paid staff member fails to give the required notice as per the SACS award, QPPD has the right to withhold monies due to the paid staff member but only according to section 16.2.2 of the award
- Where QPPD terminates the employment of a paid staff member, QPPD must give suitable notice as specified in the SACS award 16.1.1 and 16.1.2, 12.1.3.
- Termination of employment shall not be harsh, unjust or unreasonable.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policies reflect a deliberate choice by an organisation of a course of action to which the members are committed. They outline how the service will provide the activities of the organisation. The development of policies is a management responsibility, but as staff are responsible for their implementation, it is advisable that both parties are actively involved in their development. Once ratified by the Board, policies provide guidelines for new and existing members of management and staff, with a consistent, documented approach to management tasks and to the work of systemic advocacy.

The Policy Statement provides the direction, whilst the procedures detail how the policy will be operationalised. Practices represent the implementation of policies through habitual performance. Policies and procedures should be consistent with strategic plans, performance indicators and disability service standards.

Development of Policy

- Procedures are approved by the Board after consultation with all the staff affected by them.
- The development of a draft policy that affects a particular group e.g. staff, members, Board Members, should be developed with some involvement from that group, a policy effecting administrative staff should be developed by a group including an administrative staff person.
- Any staff person may raise the need to develop or alter a policy or procedure.

Review of Policies and procedures

- All policies and procedures shall be dated and signed by the President.
- All policies and procedures shall include a review date and will indicate the person responsible for review.

Procedure for Policy Development

Any QPPD member, staff person, Network, or Board member may identify the need for a policy.

Those identifying the need for a policy may:

- Refer the need for the policy to a Board meeting where the need for the policy will be determined and the process for it's development decided, or
- Propose a policy or issue to be covered to a staff meeting. The staff meeting may:
 - Refer the issue to the Director and Board

