



## FEES AND CANCELLATIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy number		Version	6
Drafted by	Management Team	Approved by MC on	July 2023
Responsible person	Management Team	Scheduled review date	July 2024

<b>Applies to:</b> All Staff and Clients,	
<b>Specific responsibility:</b> Management Team & Management Committee	
Legislation / Standards or other external requirements	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 National Disability Insurance Scheme Rules and Guidelines 2018 - 2019 NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits NDIS Terms of Business for Registered Providers NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework, 2018 NDIS Code of Conduct for Workers 2018 The Privacy Act 1988 Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 Information Privacy Act 2000 Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 Associations Incorporation Act 2009 Associations Incorporation Regulation 2016
Contractual obligations	NDIS Service Registered Service Provider obligations Client Service Agreement

### POLICY STATEMENT

To ensure the financial sustainability of *Early Connections – Coffs Coast* (EC-CC), fees need to be collected from client families when services and supports are delivered. EC-CC uses the **NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits** <https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/6227/download?attachment> as an annual price guide for all the supports provided.

EC-CC is committed to –

1. The effective management of staffing resources, client schedules, appointment bookings and the organisation’s financial sustainability.
2. Informing clients of their obligations and rights in relation to cancellations of appointments.
3. Ensuring fee charging procedures are carefully considered and communicated in order to manage this process.
4. Ensuring all fees and charges align with the current NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits.
5. Ensuring all fees and charges are transparent for families, and families understand why they are being charged.



## POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to procedures and systems implemented by EC-CC for the delivery of supports and the payment of fees for these services and supports, provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

- On enrolment with EC-CC a *Service Agreement and a Schedule of Supports* is negotiated and signed by both parties outlining the roles and responsibilities of the service provider and the client family. This document includes statements in regard to –
  - How fees and charges are set out in the *Service Agreement* between EC-CC and the client family.
  - A *Schedule of Support* document for each client family, which includes a proposed list of supports to be delivered to the client family for the duration of their Service Agreement, and how much these supports cost.
  - The right to charge the client family for some costs related to late notice cancellations and travel costs.
- EC-CC will seek payment for supports in accordance with the relevant source indicated in the EC-CC Service Agreement with each client family, i.e. NDIA, Plan Manager, or the individual when they are self-managing.
- **Important:** If client families are Plan-Managed they must have a current Service Agreement in place with the nominated Plan Management Provider prior to signing a Service Agreement with EC-CC.
- EC-CC may implement changes to fees, or increases to fees as set by the NDIA, as they occur throughout the year. The NDIS publishes a new Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits guide at the start of each financial year. EC-CC will always refer to the new price Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits guide to determine if fees will increase each year.
- All client families will be notified in advance via email of any pending fee increases.

## FEES AND CHARGES –

EC-CC delivers supports which are funded by NDIS Plans - *Capacity Building Supports Early Childhood*. To achieve the best outcomes for client families these supports are delivered in the child's natural environment. All EC-CC early childhood professionals have a bachelor's degree or higher and relevant professional body registration. EC-CC builds a team around each child and family using the NDIS recommended best practice *Key Worker Model*.

EC-CC is a registered NDIS provider. EC-CC is audited bi-annually and has received high quality compliance reports. EC-CC complies with the NDIS Commissions Practice Standards and Quality Indicators for Early Childhood Supports and the NDIS Code of Conduct. EC-CC follows recommendations



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for fees and charges as set out in the current NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits. **The current hourly rate for EC-CC supports is \$193.99.**

Each appointment with a team member will include a standard fee for appointment planning and preparation. (see Table - page 7 and Billing Procedure for more details)

## PROCEDURE – CHANGES TO THE AGREEMENT - SHORT NOTICE CANCELLATIONS and NO SHOWS

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/4519/download?attachment> Page 22

- EC-CC will charge cancellation fees, this arrangement is detailed in the Service Agreement between the participant and provider.
- Where participants fail to present / cancel appointment (no show/ short notice cancellation) – being cancellations after **10.00am** the day before an appointment, EC-CC will charge a cancellation fee of 100% of that appointment fee.
- All client families must notify EC-CC of every cancelled appointment or charges will occur. The cancellation must be received by **10.00am** the business day before the appointment, this includes Monday appointments being cancelled on the Friday before.
- If a family develops a pattern of short notice cancellations / or no-shows this may place EC-CC in a position where we are no longer able to offer supports to that client family. All attempts to discuss these difficulties with the family will be made.
- In the event that either Party needs to make alterations to agreed supports or the manner in which supports are delivered, the party requesting the changes needs to give appropriate notice.
- For minor support changes such as a change to location for appointment, the participant must notify the Program prior to **10.00am** the day before the appointment.
- For major changes such as changes to service delivery a minimum of 2 weeks' notice is requested.
- When EC-CC cancels appointments, alternative supports will be offered where possible in an attempt to minimise disruptions for client families. For example, another member of the child's team may be offered to take the appointment, or an offer of production of resources / reports etc. may be made in place of the appointment.
- Should changes to supports become frequent, either or both parties may request a review of the Service Agreement, with any changes being in writing, signed and dated by both parties. Consistent and unreasonable frequency of cancellations or changes to supports may result in the suspension of supports.
- Confirmation of appointments is required AND confirmation of non-attendance is required. Both can be done in the following ways –
  - Responding **YES or NO** to SMS reminders (scheduled and sent approx. 8am the day before appointment).
  - **NOTE:** Last minute appointments i.e. Appointments that are booked a day before will not receive a text msg confirmation
  - **NOTE** – a 'NO' response must be provided prior to 10.00 am the day before the appointment to avoid a cancellation charge. If a 'NO' response is received, please expect



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a call from our administration staff to offer alternative service or reschedule appointment.

- The Early Connections - Coffs Coast Inc. administration team are contactable between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm. A message can also be left on the answering machine.
- Email: [bookings@earlyconnections-coffscoast.org.au](mailto:bookings@earlyconnections-coffscoast.org.au) Ph: (02) 6652 8080
- It is the responsibility of the client family to notify the EC-CC team member if the child is unable to attend an appointment. This is applicable for ALL appointment types including -
  - Home visits / Preschool / Child Care / School visits
  - Early Connections centre-based sessions
  - “Tele” Therapy sessions e.g. Microsoft TEAMS, Skype, FaceTime, phone consultations.
  - Group sessions
- A record of all cancellations and records of attempted contact with client families will be maintained in each child’s CRM file (Echidna).
- EC-CC management will use their discretion in determining whether *No-Show appointments* will or will not be charged. For example, in extenuating circumstances it may be determined that this fee should be waived.
- Where the client family fails to attend (No show), on 6 occasions (in excess of six hours), the Service Agreement may be discussed, and continuation of service may be renegotiated (or ceased) with the client family. See “Suspension of Supports” statement in Service Agreement.
- When considering fees and charges to client families, EC-CC is mindful of the complexity and challenges of modern family life with young children. Therefore, the organisation has set and structured our fee charging policies and procedures with families in mind. Our cancellation / no show policy is considerably less than the NDIS recommended time frame of 7 days’ notice.

### PROCEDURE - FEES FOR TRAVEL

- When determining fees for travel, EC-CC will follow the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits. Travel will be charged in accordance with the current NDIS Price Guide, which includes travel time and non-labour travel costs.
- EC-CC understands that working with children and families in their natural environments can mean more travel fees for families and will add an additional cost to services and supports. This will be discussed with families before signing the Service Agreement.
- EC-CC incurs costs when employees are travelling to deliver Face-to-Face supports to a client family, such as running costs of the vehicle, which an employee must be reimbursed for.
- Client families will be charged for mileage associated with provider travel. This will be at a rate of \$0.97 per km to cover the cost of maintenance and fuel for vehicles and is in addition to the provider travel time (already charged).
- The cost of this travel will be factored into all Service Agreements / Schedule of Supports-
- Funds for all travel costs are allocated into the Schedule of Support. Once travel funds have reached the agreed limit, EC-CC will allocate further travel funds to ensure home, preschool and/or community visits can continue. These funds will be reallocated from direct supports.



- More information on travel and how we claim for it can be found here - <https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/4519/download?attachment> Page – 19-20

## **PROCEDURE – CHARGES FOR GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS – *Programs of Support* –**

- *Programs of Support* are charged at the hourly rate per consultant divided by the number of participants.
- When a *Program of Support* is offered by Early Connections – Coffs Coast, a Service Agreement with the participant will be developed and agreed to, specifying the *Program of Support*, including its length, exit rules and intended outcomes.
- Participants are able to exit from the *Program of Support* without cost, subject to a notice period of no less than two (2) weeks.
- Supports delivered as part of a Program of Support are not subject to the short notice cancellation rules. Which means, if a client family DOES NOT attend they will still be charged.
- As long as Early Connections – Coffs Coast has the capacity to deliver the support, all instances of support in the *Program of Support* will be claimed as though the participant had attended (whether or not they did).
- Any additional 1:1 supports (e.g.: catch-up sessions for missed group sessions) will be charged at the individual hourly rate per consultant.

## **PROCEDURE – INVOICING and FEE COLLECTION**

- All client families will receive a tax invoice for supports delivered via email. Tax invoices will be emailed weekly.
- All tax invoices must be paid within 3 working days.
- All payment should be made by EFT as described on the Tax Invoice.
- If payment is not received within 3 days of the date of the tax invoice, the client family will receive a reminder email / letter requesting payment is received within 3 working days.
- If payment is still not received, a Letter of Demand will be sent to the client family. At this time suspension or cancellation of the Service Agreement may be considered.
- EC-CC reserves the right to take legal action to recover outstanding fees. All services and supports from EC-CC may be cancelled or suspended if this policy is not adhered to.
- All accounts that are unpaid will be forwarded to the NDIS for further action.

## **PROCEDURE - SUSPENSION OF SUPPORTS**

Early Connections - Coffs Coast Inc. may suspend the delivery of supports in the event that:

- The client family fails to sign off on or pay the required amount for supports delivered.
- The client family fails to comply with the terms in this agreement, and or EC-CC's policies and procedures.
- EC - CC. identify a risk to the child/family or Early Connections team, in providing supports.
- There are more than 3 short notice cancellations of scheduled appointments.

## **PROCEDURE - ENDING THIS SERVICE AGREEMENT**



Should either Party wish to end this Service Agreement they must give no less than 14 days' notice (in writing), however if either Party seriously breaches this Service Agreement the requirement of notice may be waived.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION –**

Early Connections-Coffs Coast may implement pricing updates or changes to fees for cancellations as guided by the NDIS in response to emergencies, pandemics or disasters.

**DOCUMENTATION**

Documents related to this policy		
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure</li> <li>- Case Management – Service Plan Policy</li> </ul>	
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service Agreement signed by both parties</li> <li>- Signed Schedule of Supports (quote) outlining agreed services and cost.</li> </ul>	
Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Annually	Manager and Management Committee	Management Committee

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	April 2018	Management Committee	June 2019
2	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Management Committee	July 2020
3	15.06.2020	Management Committee	June 2021
4	18.07.2022	Management Committee	Nov 2022
5	15/08/2023	Management Committee	Jan 2024

Management Committee:

Signed:

Name: Ian Braine

Date: 15/08/2023



## BILLING PROCEDURE -

- To ensure the financial sustainability of *Early Connections – Coffs Coast* (EC-CC), fees need to be collected from client families when services and supports are delivered.
- EC-CC uses the [NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits 2022-2023](#) as an annual price guide for all the supports provided.
- At enrolment a *Schedule of Support* document is developed for each client family, which includes a list of supports that may be delivered to the client family for the duration of their Service Agreement, and how much these supports cost.
- It is important that all team members are consistent when completing notes for invoicing / claiming.
- It is important that team members value their time and understand the cost to the services delivered and the time it takes when completing notes and reports.
- There is usually a cost for **Non-Face-to-Face support. Almost everything a KW does for a client should be billable.** The NDIS price limits include an allowance for overheads, including the costs of administration tasks and as long as the fee charged for Non-Face-To-Face supports is reflective of the needs of the participant in the context of the relevant support, and in agreement with the participant, we can bill for it.

Early Connections - Coffs Coast WILL claim payment for the following	Early Connections - Coffs Coast WILL NOT claim payment for the following:
<p><b>Direct Service Provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Visits</li> <li>• Early Childhood Education Setting or School Visits</li> <li>• Community or Centre Visits</li> <li>• Telepractice Video calls</li> <li>• Programs of Support               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workshops</li> <li>○ Parent Education Groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Non-Face-to-Face Support Provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication, Guidance and Advice (Phone-Call / Emails)</li> <li>• Appointment planning and preparation (15-minute default fee) / Activity Planning, Facilitation and Scheduling -               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Room and activity set up / pack away</li> <li>○ Planning and coordination of services,</li> <li>○ Accurate record keeping for NDIA compliance, <i>eg. completion of notes with all necessary information</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Report Writing &amp; Other Correspondence -               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Service Reports</li> <li>○ Reading or writing Other Reports</li> <li>○ Reading or writing Home Programs</li> <li>○ Completing Assessments, AT Report and/or Forms</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake meetings for new families</li> <li>• Developing the Service Agreement and the Schedule of Supports</li> <li>• Entering or amending your details in our system</li> <li>• Making service bookings</li> <li>• Making payment claims</li> <li>• Monitoring plan payments</li> <li>• Training and supervising staff</li> </ul>



- Completing Referral Forms or Letter of Supports
- Research, planning and recommendations directly related to a participant needs -
  - Low-Cost Assistive Technology
  - AT Equipment
  - Individualised best practice support
  - Support Planning Consultation for participant's next plan
- Creating visuals or other resources
- Team Collaboration -
  - Coordination / Case Discussion Meeting with the KW / Collaborative Team and other professionals
  - Consultation and reporting to other providers

#### **NDIA Requested Reports**

- NDIS Early Childhood Provider Report Form
- NDIA-requested Therapy Report that is stipulated as being required in a participant's plan

#### **Provider Travel**

- Labour Costs (Before & After Travel Time)
- Provider Travel KM's - Non-Labour Costs (Before & After Travel KM's)

**Short Notice Cancellations** (Appointments cancelled no later than 10:00am the previous business day)