Easy Guide to Service Agreements for Participants

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What is a Service Agreement?

A Service Agreement is a document.

It is for you and your service provider. The service provider is the person or organisation that provides you with supports.

The document says that you both agree about the services you are going to receive.

When you have agreed, you both sign the document.
What is this Guide to Service Agreements about?

We've written this Guide for you.

You are a person who is using the NDIS.

We call people who are using the NDIS ‘participants’.

We've also written this guide for service providers – the people who are offering services to you.

That way, the service providers also know what needs to be included in a Service Agreement.

And they can help you prepare a Service Agreement if that's what you need.
You will find a sample Service Agreement on page 35.

There is a useful checklist to make sure you’ve done everything you need to do when making a Service Agreement. You'll find this checklist on page 39.

If you would like any more information about Service Agreements, you can contact us.

Our contact details are on page 37.

There are also a range of useful tools from the Practical Design Fund to help you with Agreements.

These are available on the NDIS website.
Who can make a Service Agreement?

A Service Agreement can be made by a participant of the NDIS and their service provider.

Sometimes, you might ask another trusted person to enter into the Agreement for you.

This might be a family member, carer, friend or other person.

A service provider might be:

- An organisation that offers disability support, such as BeCoz We Care

- A community organisation.

- A mainstream service provider, such as a business that provides cleaning, health or gardening services.
How is a Service Agreement different to an NDIS Plan?

Your NDIS Plan explains what you want to do and what your goals are.

And it explains the support you will need to achieve your goals.

The Service Agreement is different.

The Service Agreement is about the working relationship you have with your service provider.

It makes sure that you and your service provider both agree about the supports you will receive and how these supports will be provided.

One of the big ideas behind the NDIS is that you have choice and control about the support that you use.
You get to choose who provides your supports. And you get to choose how you receive supports.

The Service Agreement is a good way to make sure you receive the services that are right for you.

And having a Service Agreement is a helpful way to make sure you have everything in writing if any problems occur.

Don't forget to keep a copy of your Service Agreement in a safe place.

Also, it's a good idea to take a copy of your NDIS Plan to any meetings you have about your Service Agreement.

If you want to, you can attach a copy of your NDIS Plan to the Agreement.
What should be included in a Service Agreement?

The Service Agreement should include information about the supports you receive.

It doesn't have to be complicated. It can be quite simple. It needs to say:

- What supports you will receive.
- When, where and how you will receive those supports.
- How much the supports will cost and how they will be paid for.
- How long you need the supports for.
• What is expected of you. This is about your responsibilities. We explain this in more detail on page 38.

• What is expected of your service provider. We explain this in more detail on page 40.

• How you can end or change the Agreement. We explain this in more detail on page 45-46.

• What you can do if any problems occur. We explain this in more detail on page 48.
What is expected of you?

When you sign the Service Agreement, it means that you agree to do the things that are expected of you. These are called your responsibilities.

Your responsibilities include things like:

- Telling BeCoz We Care, the service provider, about the supports that you want, and how you want to receive them.

- Being polite and respectful to the staff who work with you.

- Telling BeCoz We Care, the service provider, if you've got any problems.
• Telling BeCoz We Care, the service provider, if you can't make it to an appointment – you should always give them at least 24 hours' notice.

• Telling BeCoz We Care, the service provider, straight away if you want to end the Agreement.

• Letting BeCoz We Care, the service provider, know if your NDIS Plan changes or if you stop using the NDIS.

Every Service Agreement is unique.
The list above explains what we suggest you include.
This means that your Service Agreement may not have all of the things listed above in it, or it may have some other things in it.
This will depend on what you and your service provider agree.
What is expected of BeCoz We Care - the service provider?

Service providers, including BeCoz We Care, have responsibilities too.

Below is a list of our suggestions of what these should be.

You and BeCoz We Care, the service provider, may agree on other things to include on the list.

BeCoz We Care - the service provider's responsibilities include:

- Providing the services that you have asked for.
- Being open and honest about the work that they do.
- Explaining things clearly.
- Treating you politely and with respect.
• Including you in all decisions about your supports.

• Letting you know what to do if you have a problem or want to complain.

• Listening to your feedback and fixing any problems quickly.

• Telling you if they want to end the Agreement.

• Making sure your information is correct and up to date.

• Storing your information carefully and making sure it is kept private.
• Obeying all the rules and laws that apply. This includes the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* and the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Rules*.

• Providing invoices and statements for your supports.

• Checking whether GST applies.

• Checking that the Agreement is working well. You and the service provider will agree about how often the Agreement will be reviewed.
How to pay for your supports

There are different ways to pay for your supports.

Some people manage all of their NDIS funding themselves.

In this case, you pay the invoices from the service provider directly. An invoice is like a bill.

Some people have a Plan Nominee to help them. This is a person you trust, like a family member or friend. If the NDIA says it’s ok, this person can manage your NDIS funding for you.

In this case, the Plan Nominee pays the invoices from BeCoz We Care - the service provider.
Some people ask the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to manage the funding for them.

In this case, the NDIA pays the invoices.

Some people use a Plan Management Provider. This is a person or organisation who helps to manage their funding.

In this case, the Plan Management Provider pays the invoices.

In all of these cases, the way the invoice is to be paid – such as via electronic transfer, cash or cheque – will be written in the Agreement.

And the time allowed to pay the invoice will be included as well. This might be 7 days, 14 days or more.
How to change a Service Agreement

You and BeCoz We Care, the service provider, will need to agree about how changes can be made to the Service Agreement.

Most Service Agreements will say:

- That the changes need to be in writing.
- That the participant and BeCoz We Care, the service provider, agree on the changes.

You may need to sign a new document saying that you agree with the changes.
How to end a Service Agreement

If you want to end the Service Agreement, you must tell BeCoz We Care, the service provider.

You must let them know **before** you want the Agreement to end.

Usually, in the Agreement, it will say how much time you must give them before the Agreement can end.

This is called a **notice period**.

This may be 1 month or more.

If BeCoz We Care, the service provider, wants to end the Agreement, they must tell you – and give you notice too.

Sometimes, an Agreement can end without a notice period. This could only happen if you or BeCoz We Care, the service provider, broke the Agreement in some way.

Let's look at an example on the next page.
Angus was upset because his support workers never turned up on time.

He made several complaints to his service provider.

But the service provider didn't do anything to fix the problem for more than 3 months.

Angus decided to end the Agreement and find another service provider.

He contacted the NDIA for more information.

Don't forget – you have responsibilities too!

You have responsibilities to BeCoz We Care, the service provider too. If you don't do what's expected of you, BeCoz We Care, the service provider can end the Agreement.
What to do if you have a problem

The Service Agreement should explain who you can talk to if you have a problem.

It should give you the name of a person to talk to, and their contact details at BeCoz We Care.

If you don't want to talk to this person, or if your problem is not being fixed, you can contact the NDIA.

We can give you information about what you can do.

Our phone number is 1800 800 110.

You can visit one of our offices.

Or you can visit the NDIS Website

Word List

Invoice

A bill. It explains how much supports costs and when the payment is due to BeCoz We Care, the service provider.
Notice period
A period of time before a Service Agreement ends. This may be 1 month or more.

Participant
A person with disability who is using the NDIS.

Plan Management Provider
A person or organisation who helps to manage the funding.

Plan Nominee
A family member, carer, friend or other person. If the NDIA says it’s ok, this person can manage your NDIS funding and support you to make other decisions.

Responsibilities
The things that are expected of you or the service provider.

Service provider
The person or organisation that provides you with supports, like BeCoz We Care.
Checklist for Service Agreements

☐ I know who is making the Agreement.
   This might be me and BeCoz We Care, my service provider, or it might be my trusted person and BeCoz We Care, my service provider.

☐ I know what supports to include.

☐ I know what is expected of me.

☐ I know what is expected of BeCoz We Care, my service provider.

☐ I know how the supports will be paid for.

☐ I know what to do if I want to make changes.

☐ I know what to do if I want to end the Agreement.

☐ I know what to do if I have a problem and I know who to contact.

☐ I have written my Service Agreement, or I have worked with BeCoz We Care, my service provider, to write the Agreement.

☐ I have signed the Agreement.

☐ I have attached my NDIS Plan to the Agreement if I want to.

☐ I have kept a copy of the Agreement for my records.

Where can I get more information?

If you want more information about Service Agreements you can contact us:

1800 800 110

NDIS Website www.ndis.gov.au