

Title	ACIA 023 - Protection of Participant Belongings Money and Household Items - Responsibilities
Purpose	This guideline is to assist service providers, support workers, Participants, carers, stakeholders and funders regarding their responsibilities in protecting Participant belongings, money and household items while delivering a community support or service and where the liability lies in instances of damage to Participant belongings or household items.
Background	<p>In the course of delivering a service a support worker may subject to agreement by both the service provider and the Participant/carer be required to use, touch or access Participant belongings, money or household items.</p> <p>While Participants/carers are encouraged to put valuable or treasured items and money away during service delivery, there are times this is not possible or not the decision taken by Participants/carers. In these instances, clarification is required on the responsibilities and liabilities of all parties.</p> <p>As Participant involvement and service direction has increased it is imperative to involve the Participant in all aspects of the service delivery and the direction of their services to their ability. It is further acknowledged that dignity of risk is an important part of this choice and control.</p>
Scope	This guideline applies to Australian service providers, support workers, funders, Participants and carers, whereby agreement has been reached between the service provider and the Participant, carer or funder for a support worker to deliver services in the Participant's home.
Disclaimer	This guideline is provided to help guide best practice in the Community Service industry. This information does not in any way replace legislative, regulatory or contractual requirements. Users of this document should seek appropriate expert advice in relation to their particular circumstances. ACIA does not accept any liability on the use of this guideline.
Definitions and Supporting Information	<p>Community Supports and/or Services is defined as the provision of paid supports and services in a participant's home or community. It includes but is not limited to, the following activities of daily living:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clinical supports • community access • gardening and home maintenance • higher risk supports • housework or domestic assistance • medication assistance or administration • nursing services • palliative care • personal care or support • respite care • social support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transport assistance <p>Support Worker is an individual who assists or supervises a Participant to perform tasks of daily living to support and maintain general wellbeing and enable meaningful involvement in social, family and community activities in the person’s home and community. The support worker is a paid person who has access to education, support and advice from the Service Provider line manager or team leader. Support worker has been commonly known as attendant care worker, disability worker, aged care worker, community worker, homecare worker, care worker or paid carer.</p> <p>Support Worker is an individual who assists or supervises a participant to perform tasks of daily living to support and maintain general wellbeing and enable meaningful involvement in social, family and community activities in the person’s home and community. The Support Worker is a paid person who has access to education, support and advice from the Service Provider line manager or team leader. Support Worker has been commonly known as attendant care worker, disability worker, aged care worker, community worker, homecare worker, care worker or paid carer.</p> <p>Service Providers are organisation or a person who are funded for the delivery of supports and services to Participants</p> <p>Funder is the organisation that is funding the service provision (e.g. Government department)</p> <p>Participant means the client, consumer or person receiving the nursing or community service or support. As Participant involvement and service direction has increased it is imperative to involve the participant in all aspects of the service delivery and the direction of their services to their ability.</p> <p>Service Agreement is signed by both the Participant/family and the provider where agreed actions or responsibilities are applied</p>
Desired Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants belongings and household items are protected and remain intact • Service providers, Participants, carers and support workers understand their responsibilities in regards to the protection of Participant belongings, money and household items, and liability in the event of damage to belongings and household items • Services are only delivered per the agreed and documented Plan and relevant agreement
Guideline	<p>This guideline sets out best practice for protecting Participants belongings, money and household items and seeks to clarify responsibilities in instances of breakage or damage.</p>

ACIA suggests service providers adopt the following guideline when negotiating service delivery Agreements/Plans with Participants/carers and support workers.

While delivering services in a Participant's home, support workers may be required to touch, access or use a Participant's property. *For example, dusting ornaments, using the Participant's vacuum cleaner as part of a domestic assistance service.*

While all due care is taken, it is suggested Participants/carers move valuable or treasured items they do not want touched or accessed to a safe place during service delivery and/or direct support workers **NOT** to touch these items.

If a Participant/carer elects to have support workers access valuable/treasured items, **the Participant/carer will own that risk** (the service provider will document).

It is also suggested money should be out of sight whenever an outsider visits the Participant's home. Unless documented in the **Plan** or Agreement, money handling on behalf of the Participant should **NOT** occur.

Participants/carers should not provide support workers with:

- Their banking details
- Blank cheques
- PIN number or Key Card

If Participants/carers want support workers to purchase items or handle money - this will be documented in the **Plan** and the appropriate forms will be left in the home to be completed on every occasion of money handling.

Breakages or Damage

If items are purchased or owned by the Participant/carer they remain the responsibility of that Participant/carer.

The service provider does **NOT** insure Participant households against breakage or loss and does **NOT** accept responsibility for breakages or loss.

In the event of **accidental damage** to Participant property/belongings by a support worker during service delivery, it is the Participant's responsibility to pay for repairs/replacement or any insurance excess where Home and Contents Insurance is in place

In the event of **deliberate/malicious damage** caused to Participant property/belongings by a support worker, **the support worker will be responsible for paying any costs/insurance excess** for repairs or replacement

	<p>When the support worker is liable, the service provider, the Participant/carer or property owner and support worker will negotiate the method and timeframe of payment. If a support worker cannot afford the full payment at once, the service provider may elect to make the payment and set up a repayment arrangement with the support worker. Any such negotiations are at the discretion of the service provider.</p> <p>Where Participant/carer owned equipment used in service delivery needs to be replaced due to age or general wear and tear, <i>e.g. a vacuum cleaner</i>, it is the Participant/carer's responsibility to pay for and organise replacement.</p> <p>Shared Support Living – Communal Items</p> <p>The service provider is NOT responsible for the purchases or ownership of furniture or household items etc. in shared supported living arrangements <i>unless documented and agreed with the funder.</i></p> <p>It is the responsibility of the funder who has supplied the furniture or household items to negotiate with the Participant/s regarding any repairs/replacements of these items.</p> <p>The service provider should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All responsibilities regarding protection of Participant belongings are explained to the Participant/carer and outlined in the Plan/Agreement • The support worker understands their responsibilities regarding Participant property, money and belongings and carries out their duties <i>as per the agreed Plan only</i> • Any instances where the Participant/carer elects to have support workers access valuable/treasured items or handle money are documented
<p>Resource Documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Community Industry Standard (ACIS) 2018