

Independent Advocacy Statement

What is this statement about?

This statement explains how ADEC provides independent advocacy.

It tells you:

- What advocacy is
- What you can expect from ADEC
- What your rights are
- How to make a complaint



Who is ADEC?

ADEC has helped people from multicultural communities, especially people with disability, since 1982.

ADEC works to:

- Protect human rights
- Support fairness and equality
- Help people be heard
- Stand up against unfair treatment



What is advocacy?

Advocacy means:

- Speaking up for your rights
- Supporting you to have your say
- Helping you make your own choices
- Making sure you are treated fairly



Advocacy can help one person or many people.

Our promise to you

ADEC promises to provide advocacy that is:

- Independent
- Respectful
- Safe
- Fair
- Focused on you



Who is this statement for?

This statement applies to:

- People in the community looking for advocacy support
- People supported under State or Commonwealth advocacy programs
- Individuals and families using ADEC advocacy
- Our advocates and staff



What is independent advocacy?

Independent advocacy means:

- The advocate works only for you
- The advocate is not part of the government
- The advocate is not an NDIS service provider
- The advocate does not decide for you



Your advocate:

- Listens to you
- Follows what you want
- Supports your choices
- Connects you to other people who can help you

Important rule about independence

ADEC provides advocacy and NDIS services, but they are kept separate.

This means:

- If you get advocacy from ADEC, you cannot get NDIS supports from ADEC
- If you get NDIS or disability supports from ADEC, you cannot get advocacy from ADEC



In this case, ADEC will help you find someone else who can help you.

This helps make sure advocacy is:

- Fair
- Honest
- Free from pressure

Your rights in advocacy

1. Your rights come first

- You have human rights.
- ADEC's Advocates must respect and protect them.

2. You are in charge

Advocacy is person-centred, which means:

- You decide your goals
- You say what matters to you
- The advocate does not push their own ideas



3. You can make your own choices

You have the right to:

- Make decisions about your life
- Take risks if you choose

Advocates will:

- Explain things clearly
- Give you the information you need
- Support you to decide for yourself



4. Advocates believe in your ability

Advocates:

- Assume you can make decisions
- Understand that decision-making can change
- Support you before saying you cannot decide



How ADEC Advocates work

1. Honest and Open

Your advocate will:

- Tell you what they are doing
- Explain why they are doing it
- Talk with you about what might happen



2. No Conflicts of Interest

Your advocate must:

- Work only for your best interests
- Report any conflict straight away
- Follow ADEC rules about fairness



3. Support, not Replace

Your advocate will aim to:

- Help you speak for yourself
- Build your confidence
- Step back when you feel stronger



4. Safety and Protection

Your advocate must:

- Help keep you safe
- Act if they see abuse, neglect, or harm
- Follow the law about reporting harm



5. Privacy and Confidentiality

Your advocate will make sure your personal information is private and kept safe.

Information is only shared:

- If the law says it must be
- If someone is in serious danger



6. Advocacy for Everyone

ADEC makes sure advocacy is:

- Accessible to all cultures and languages
- Safe and respectful
- Inclusive of all disabilities



How to Make a complaint

You have the right to complain.

You can:

- Complain without fear
- Say no to a service
- Disagree with your advocate

Advocates must:

- Explain how to complain in a way you understand
- Help you make a complaint if you ask



Who can you complain to?

About advocacy services

You can contact:

- Victorian Disability Services Commissioner 1800 677 342
- Complaints Resolution and Referral Service 1800 880 052



About NDIS services

You can contact:

- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission 1800 035 544
- NDIS Fraud Reporting and Scams Helpline 1800 650 717



For more information, visit:

- ADEC's website at www.adec.org.au
- The Victorian Disability Services Commissioner at <https://odsc.vic.gov.au/>