

The NDIS Practice Standard and my provider fact sheet



Resources for NDIS
Emergency and Disaster
Management

The NDIS Practice Standards are a set of guidelines developed to ensure high quality support and services for people with disabilities in Australia.

These standards outline the expectations for NDIS Providers to deliver safe, effective, and respectful care.

The Practice Standard for Emergency and Disaster Management Practice focuses on how NDIS providers should prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters to ensure the safety and wellbeing of NDIS Participants.

By following this standard, NDIS providers can better support their participants and help them get through challenging times with confidence and security.

What is Emergency and Disaster Management?

Emergency and disaster management means being prepared for unexpected events that could harm people or property. These events might include natural disasters like floods or bushfires, or a pandemic like COVID-19.

Why is it important for NDIS participants?

People with disabilities might need extra help during emergencies. This standard ensures that NDIS providers have plans in place to keep participants safe and supported during these times.

What must my NDIS Provider do?

NDIS Providers must:

1 Check for dangers: this is called risk assessment.

NDIS providers should look for things that could hurt people – NDIS Participants and their staff – in the areas where they operate. This could include risks from natural disasters, like floods or storms, including risks to individual participants they support when those things happen.

They should make plans for how they will avoid these things wherever possible, or how they will manage if they do happen,

They should regularly review these risks and update their plans.

2 Make plans for emergencies: this is called Emergency and Disaster Management preparedness.

NDIS Providers should write down:

- what to do if something happens, like a fire or a flood,
- how they will help people when an emergency or disaster is happening, and
- how they will help people once it is over.

NDIS providers must have plans for what to do during emergencies. These plans should cover various scenarios, such as evacuation procedures and communication strategies.

Plans should be in formats that are clear and easy to understand.

3 Make plans to keep supporting individuals: this is called continuity of support

NDIS Providers should talk to NDIS Participants about how they will stay safe, and how they want to be supported if something happens, like a fire or a flood.

These arrangements should be written down. NDIS Providers must include how they will keep supporting you during an emergency or disaster – even when things are difficult – as well as afterwards while things are getting back on track.

Your plan should be regularly reviewed to make sure it includes up-to-date information such as your emergency contact people, the medication you take, and any extra support you might need when something happens.

4 Talk to people: this is called consultation.

NDIS Providers should involve NDIS Participants and staff in planning, as well as tell everyone important information during an emergency or disaster.

This means you should have the chance to provide feedback on your NDIS Provider's Emergency and Disaster Management Plan

Communication methods should be in formats that NDIS Participants and staff can understand.

5 Teach staff and participants: this is called training.

NDIS Providers should make sure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Staff should receive training on how to implement emergency plans effectively.

This includes:

- how to avoid danger if possible,
- how to assist individual participants during emergencies, and
- how to use any special equipment that might help – like gloves and masks during a pandemic.

Participants should also receive education on what to do during emergencies and how their NDIS Provider will support them.

6 Get better: this is called continuous improvement

NDIS Providers should keep practising and improving the emergency plans to keep everyone safe.

They should also regularly review and test their emergency plans to ensure they are effective.

Feedback from participants and staff should be used to improve these plans over time, especially after an emergency or disaster has happened, so that everyone can learn and do things better next time.

Do all NDIS Providers have to do the same things?

NDIS Providers come in all shapes and sizes, and they provide different types of supports to people. So, it makes sense that the way they meet the NDIS Practice Standards might also be different.

When NDIS providers do a risk assessment, they think about how big the danger is and how much they need to do to keep everyone safe. They think about how likely something bad is to happen and what they need to do to prepare for it.

For example, they might do more to prepare for a big flood than for a small one. They make plans that fit the situation. It's like deciding what kind of clothes to wear for different weather. If it's just a little rainy, you might take an umbrella. But if there's a big storm coming, you might need a raincoat, boots, and even a waterproof bag.

This is called proportionate risk.

Things that can affect how NDIS Providers do this are the size of their organisation, the types of NDIS supports they offer, and you – NDIS Participants.

NDIS Providers have to find the right balance to keep everyone safe while respecting each individual's choices about how they want to receive supports.

Imagine two NDIS providers.

Provider 1 is a small local organisation that offers therapy support to a few NDIS Participants in a small town.

All the people they support live independently in the community on their own or with friends or family.

Provider 1 has a simple emergency plan, with a list of emergency contacts.

Their staff have basic first aid training and infection control training.

They have talked to each of their NDIS Participants about what they will do if they cannot provide therapy because something like a fire or flood happens.

They documented these arrangements in each participants' Service Agreement.

Each year they check that their participants' contact details are accurate, and that they are still happy with the support arrangements discussed.

Each year when they review their risk assessment and organisational emergency management plan they send a letter to their participants to ask if they have any feedback.

Provider 2 is a large national organisation that supports hundreds of participants across multiple states and provides accommodation support as well as community supports.

They have an Emergency and Disaster Management Plan for their organisation, as well as individual plans for each of the accommodation services they operate.

Provider 2 has regular emergency drills for staff and participants across all their services.

Participants they support in their accommodation services all have an individual Emergency Management Plan.

Some participants who receive community support from Provider 2 already have plans with another NDIS Provider. Provider 2 has asked to be included in that plan - what they will do to keep supporting those participants if something like a flood or fire happens.

Provider 2 has documented whether people have an individual plan – or have alternative arrangements – in each participants' Service Agreement which they review every year.

Once a year, Provider 2 provides ways for their participants to give feedback about all the organisational plans, policies, and procedures, including ones that are about emergency and disaster management.

Each provider adjusts their preparations based on their size and the types of support they offer, making sure they are prepared for emergencies without overwhelming themselves or their participants.