

Cash Handling Policy and Procedure

Introduction

During our work at Renaissance Group, we may sometimes be required to assist clients with financial management or transactions. While a client may need support with financial tasks, this should never override their right to access their own money and to decide how they wish to spend it. Our involvement in any financial transactions with, or on behalf of, a client must always be conducted in a manner which is entirely appropriate and is beyond reproach.

Scope

This policy applies to all Renaissance Directors, employees and any other contractors who may provide services on behalf of the organisation from time to time.

Definitions

Protection of Personal Property Rights Act 1988

- New Zealand legislation to provide for the protection and promotion of the personal and property rights of persons who are not fully able to manage their own affairs.
- Includes provision for a court to approve that a person's financial affairs be managed by a third party, such as a family member, medical practitioner or social worker on their behalf, where the person lacks the capacity to make decisions for themselves, or is unable to communicate decisions regarding their personal care or welfare.

Support Plan

- Individual Support Plan, which identifies the goals of the client and is used as a working plan between the Renaissance team including the Supported Living Facilitator (SLF) and the client.

Our Policy Statement

A client's right to control their finances and personal property is to be respected at all times.

Where an employee is authorised to handle a client's finances or valuables, this is always to be done appropriately and in confidence, as agreed in writing in the Support Plan. Training in managing client finances will be provided to relevant employees and must be undertaken.

Procedural Guidelines

This policy is designed to minimise any risk of criminal activity or financial abuse against the client, as well as ensuring the safety of the employee, by maintaining their integrity is beyond question at all times.

Details of any agreement to access client's monies by Renaissance employees, must be detailed in the risk management section of the client's individual plan, including any and all agreed processes. For guidance refer to the Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act 1988.

Practical financial requirements a client may need assistance with could include tasks such as:

- Managing monthly income and expenditure
- Writing cheques or bank slips for client to sign
- Paper work related to bill paying
- Assisting with Eftpos transactions

Assisting with financial management, budgeting or purchasing skills may be a part of our role, as a client seeks to find and maintain independent living arrangements in their own community. Employees may advise and support the client with budgeting and purchasing goals, which are identified and agreed to in the client's Support Plan.

As the goals are part of the Support Plan, the Service Coordinator will be familiar with the agreement, and must be aware of any financial involvement a SLF has with the client.

All receipts for financial transactions must be kept on behalf of the client and provided to family, whanau or caregivers where appropriate.

Travelling and Money Management

Sometimes the SLF may need to accompany the client on small journeys as part of their Support Plan, such as catching a bus, going shopping or visiting a social club. Assistance with money management may include tasks such as:

- Working with the client to calculate how much money they will need during the support session and ensure that they have the money at the start of the support session.
- Supporting the client so that they are able to pay for their fare, ticket or shopping in an independent manner.
- Ensuring change given is correct and is stored safely.

At all times when handling money on behalf of a client, the SLF must ensure they are aware of what is being paid for or is kept in your safekeeping. The SLF must seek signatures from a witness if he/she has to handle a client's money, and the client is unable to sign for a transaction.

Ethical & Professional integrity

The Employee Code of Conduct includes the following provision:

- All employees should strive to conduct business dealings and relationships with integrity, honesty, and respect for others. Employees should loyally and faithfully serve our principles, and always deal fairly and honestly with clients and others with whom we do business.

Gifts and Entertainment

The following policy is also contained in the Renaissance Employee Handbook:

Employees may not accept, directly or indirectly, any money, loans, and objects of value, travel or premiums from any person or company which has or is doing or seeking business with the company

Employees may accept only business-related meals, entertainment, gifts or favours when authorised by either your Supervisor or Manager, and when the value involved is not significant and clearly will not create an obligation to the person giving.

If, for example a client or the family offers to pay for a meal for you while you are on an outing, you must seek permission from your Service Coordinator or Manager before accepting.

Supporting Clients to manage their finances independently

If a client needs support to manage their money the Service Coordinator will work with the client to develop their financial plan as part of their Support Plan. The plan must include:

- Specific support needs around money handling or management for e.g. what the client needs to pay for
- How money and valuables are made secure
- An assessment of their money management skills and a plan to manage any risks e.g. staff training and responsibilities.
- Specifics of the responsibility of the SLF and the Service coordinator and how they will support this goal

Where the client needs on-going support with cash handling and budgeting, they should be referred to a budgeting agency.

Client Responsibilities:

- It is a client's responsibility to keep information pertaining to their bank account including but not limited to account balances and debit/credit/Eftpos PIN numbers confidential and not share with anyone including Renaissance employees without written consent from the client.
- Supports needed around money management should be discussed and agreed upon during the Support Planning and review process.
- Any concerns and complaints should be promptly communicated (preferably in writing) to the service manager.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Employees should not accept debit/credit/eftpos PIN numbers from clients under any circumstances.
- Provide information to help clients make decisions about managing their money and keeping it safe; ensure information is available in easy-read formats, and involve independent advocates to help clients consider their choices.
- Never handle a client's money without their agreement and prior approval from the Service Coordinator. Work with the client to ensure that they are making informed decisions when spending their money.
- Where you are required to handle cash for a client ensure the client has a goal for money management/budgeting identified

and agreed to on the Support Plan by the client and that there is a clear action plan which identifies the nature of support required.

- The employee must hold themselves to a high standard of professional conduct and ethical behaviour when supporting a client to manage their finances.

Abuse of Financial Privilege

If any employee becomes aware of a situation where a client's financial arrangements are being taken advantage of, or they suspect abuse of the client's trust by another member of staff, the employee must advise their Service Coordinator or Service Manager. Refer to the Renaissance Complaints Policy for your options on how to make a complaint.

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

Protection of Personal Property Rights Act 1988
 Renaissance Group Employee Handbook
 Complaints Policy
 Expense Claims Form
 Support Plan
 Professional Conduct and Ethical Behaviour

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