



Safeguarding & Incident Management Policy

Policy Owner: Director

Applies to: Workers, including employees, casual employees, interpreters, volunteers, contractors, consultants, and representatives acting on behalf of Echo Interpreting.

Effective Date: 27 May 2026

Review Cycle: Every 2 years or as legislation changes or operational requirements change.

1. Purpose

Echo Interpreting is committed to promoting and protecting the safety, wellbeing, dignity, rights, and inclusion of clients, participants, children, workers, and members of the community.

This policy establishes Echo Interpreting's framework for:

- Safeguarding individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, discrimination, harassment, or misconduct.
- Responding appropriately to incidents, concerns, and risks.
- Supporting safe, respectful, and ethical service delivery.
- Meeting legal, safeguarding, and NDIS obligations.
- Ensuring incidents and concerns are identified, reported, managed, and documented appropriately.

Echo Interpreting has zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, harassment, grooming, discrimination, or unlawful conduct.

As an interpreting and communication access provider, Echo Interpreting recognises that workers may provide services in sensitive settings including healthcare, education, legal, government, workplace, community, and NDIS environments. Workers have an important role in maintaining professional boundaries, confidentiality, and appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all work activities undertaken by or on behalf of Echo Interpreting, including:

- Interpreting assignments
- Office-based work
- Remote and online work
- Work at client, community, healthcare, education, legal, government, or third-party sites;
- Work-related travel
- Work-related communications and interactions.

This policy applies to all workers and representatives of Echo Interpreting, including:

- Employees

- Casual employees
- Interpreters
- Volunteers
- Contractors or consultants where applicable
- Management and representatives acting on behalf of Echo Interpreting.

3. Legislative Framework

This policy is informed by and aligned with relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks, including but not limited to:

- NDIS Act 2013 (Cth)
- NDIS Code of Conduct Rules 2018
- NDIS Practice Standards (where applicable)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Safe Standards (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- Work Health and Safety Acts and Regulations in other Australian states and territories, where applicable
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Relevant professional standards and codes applicable to interpreting services

4. Safeguarding Principles

Echo Interpreting is committed to safeguarding practices that are:

- Person-centred
- Rights-based
- respectful and inclusive
- culturally safe and responsive
- trauma-informed where appropriate
- accessible and responsive to communication needs
- focused on prevention, early intervention, and safety

Echo Interpreting recognises that all individuals have the right to:

- Feel safe and respected

- Be treated with dignity
- Raise concerns without fear of retaliation
- Access services free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, or violence

5. Worker Responsibilities

All workers are responsible for supporting a safe, respectful, ethical, and professional service environment:

- Act professionally, ethically, respectfully, and safely
- Treat clients, participants, children, colleagues, and stakeholders with dignity and respect
- Comply with Echo Interpreting's **Code of Conduct Policy** and relevant organisational policies and procedures
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Maintain professional standards relevant to their role, including applicable qualifications, certifications, professional standards, and ethical requirements
- Protect privacy, confidentiality, and personal information
- Identify and report safeguarding concerns, incidents, risks, unsafe behaviour, or inappropriate conduct as soon as practicable
- Take reasonable steps to prevent or reduce harm where safe and appropriate to do so
- Cooperate with reviews, investigations, or inquiries where required
- Comply with lawful reporting obligations

Interpreters engaged by Echo Interpreting are also expected to maintain professional practice consistent with relevant interpreting standards, including maintaining appropriate certification, professional competence, impartiality, confidentiality, and ethical practice requirements.

Workers must not:

- Engage in abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, violence, grooming, intimidation, or misconduct;
- Ignore, conceal, minimise, or fail to report safeguarding concerns
- Misuse their position, role, or access to information
- Engage in conduct that compromises the safety, dignity, rights, or wellbeing of others
- Victimise or disadvantage individuals who raise concerns or complaints in good faith

6. Definitions

Safeguarding Concern

A safeguarding concern is any concern relating to the safety, wellbeing, rights, dignity, or protection of an individual.

This may include suspected:

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation
- Harassment
- Violence
- Grooming
- discrimination
- Misconduct
- Unsafe or inappropriate behaviour

Incident

An incident is any event, behaviour, situation, allegation, or circumstance that:

- Causes harm
- Could have caused harm
- Creates a safety or safeguarding risk
- Breaches organisational policy, professional standards, or legal obligations

This may include:

- Injuries
- Aggressive behaviour
- Threats
- Unsafe work environments
- Privacy breaches
- Safeguarding concerns
- Inappropriate conduct
- Near misses

Reportable Incident

A reportable incident is an incident that may require notification to an external authority, regulator, or other organisation under legal, contractual, safeguarding, child safety, workplace safety, or NDIS obligations.

7. Incident Management and Reporting

All safeguarding concerns, incidents, hazards, injuries, near misses, or inappropriate conduct must be reported as soon as reasonably practicable.

Workers are expected to:

- Prioritise immediate safety

- Seek emergency assistance where required
- Remove themselves from unsafe situations where necessary
- Promptly notify Echo Interpreting
- Complete required incident reporting documentation where applicable

Echo Interpreting will:

- Assess incidents and safeguarding concerns appropriately
- Take reasonable steps to protect affected individuals
- Maintain appropriate records
- Investigate matters where appropriate
- Implement corrective or preventative actions where required
- Meet applicable legal, safeguarding, and reporting obligations

Where appropriate, incidents may be escalated to:

- Emergency services
- Police
- Child protection authorities
- The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- WorkSafe or other regulators

8. NDIS Reportable Incidents

Where applicable, Echo Interpreting will manage and report NDIS reportable incidents in accordance with legislative and regulatory obligations.

Reportable incidents may include:

- Abuse or neglect of a participant
- Unlawful sexual or physical contact
- Assault or violence
- Exploitation or serious misconduct
- Unauthorised restrictive practices
- Serious injury or death connected to service delivery

Workers must immediately report any suspected reportable incident to Echo Interpreting

9. Child Safety

Echo Interpreting is committed to child safety and has zero tolerance for child abuse, grooming, neglect, exploitation, violence, or inappropriate conduct involving children or young people.

All workers are expected to:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people
- Comply with applicable Working with Children Check requirements
- Report concerns relating to child safety immediately
- Act in ways that promote the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of children and young people

Concerns relating to child safety may be escalated to external authorities where required

10. Confidentiality and Privacy

Safeguarding concerns and incident information will be handled confidentially to the extent reasonably practicable.

Information will only be shared:

- On a need-to-know basis
- Where required for safety, investigation, legal, safeguarding, or regulatory purposes
- Where disclosure is authorised or required by law

All records will be managed in accordance with Echo Interpreting's **Privacy & Confidentiality Policy**.

11. Support Following Incidents

Where appropriate, Echo Interpreting may provide or facilitate support following significant incidents or safeguarding concerns.

Support may include:

- Debriefing
- Adjustments to work arrangement
- Referral to support services
- Review of operational or safety arrangements

12. False or Malicious Reports

Reports made in good faith will not result in victimisation or adverse treatment, even where concerns are not substantiated.

Deliberately false or malicious reports may be treated as misconduct.

13. Related Documents

This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with:

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy & Procedure

- Work Health & Safety (WHS) Policy
- Privacy & Confidentiality Policy
- Privacy & Data Breach Procedure
- Incident / Near Miss Reporting Procedure/Form

14. Policy Acknowledgement

All workers are required to acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this Policy.