

POLICY 4.7 – MANAGEMENT OF WASTE

Purpose

Wonderland Community Services (WCS) is committed to ensuring the safe and compliant management of all waste generated in the course of delivering services. This includes protecting participants/young persons, staff, visitors, and the broader community from infection, injury, and environmental harm.

This policy aligns with:

- **NDIS Practice Standards (2021)** – *Waste Management* and *Infection Control* requirements.
- **Queensland Child Safe Standards** – risk prevention and safe environments for children.
- **Human Services Quality Standards (Qld)** – Standard 4.2: *The organisation proactively prevents, identifies and responds to risks to safety and wellbeing.*
- **Relevant legislation**, including but not limited to:
 - *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 (Qld)*
 - *Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld)*
 - *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994 (Tas)*
 - *Public Health Act 2005 (Qld) / Public Health Act 1997 (Tas)*
 - *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) / Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)*

Definition – What is Waste?

Waste includes but is not limited to:

- **General waste** – food scraps, household rubbish, animal hair, garden refuse.
- **Infectious waste** – human and animal bodily substances (urine, feces, vomit, blood, mucus), used bandages, soiled cloths, disposable wipes, nappies.
- **Sharps** – needles, syringes, lancets.
- **Chemical waste** – cleaning agents, toxic substances, paints, solvents.

Policy Statement

WCS will:

- Store, handle, and dispose of all waste in a manner that is safe, hygienic, and compliant with legislation and local council requirements.
- Ensure waste management practices support infection prevention and child safety.
- Provide training, equipment, and clear instructions to all staff handling waste.
- Record and report incidents involving hazardous or infectious waste.
- Maintain emergency response plans for hazardous waste spills and contamination events.

Processes

A. Storage and Disposal of Waste

1. All WCS properties will have appropriately lined garbage bins, emptied regularly and tied before disposal into council wheelie bins.
2. Sanitary disposal units are provided in shared facilities and emptied by approved external providers.
3. Sharps disposal containers are provided where required and taken to licensed collection points (e.g., pharmacies).
4. Chemical products and hazardous substances are stored in locked, clearly labelled areas in accordance with WHS regulations.
5. Large or dangerous items are transported by Facilities Officers to designated council waste facilities.

6. Composting and recycling practices are encouraged where safe and suitable.
7. Spill kits must be available in all WCS-operated facilities and vehicles.
8. Waste contaminated by infectious material must be sealed in plastic bags and disposed of immediately in accordance with *Infection Control Policy 4.1*.

B. Reporting and Incident Management

- All incidents involving infectious or hazardous waste must be reported, recorded, investigated, and reviewed.
- Staff use the WCS App forms, including:
 - Incident Report Form
 - Notification of Hazard Form
 - First Aid Form
 - Property Maintenance Form
- Reports are automatically sent to senior staff for review and follow-up.

C. Emergency Waste Management Plans

- WCS maintains emergency procedures for hazardous waste incidents through:
 - *Emergency and Disaster Management Plan (Policy 2.10)*
 - *Infection Control Policy (4.1)*
 - *COVID Pandemic Plan (4.2)*
- Effectiveness is reviewed after each incident, and plans are updated annually or as required by the NDIS Commission or Child Safety Queensland.

D. Training and Protective Measures

1. Staff receive training in safe waste handling, PPE use, and infection control during induction and through ongoing refresher courses.
2. Additional training is provided for staff working with hazardous chemicals, sharps, or high-risk infectious waste.
3. PPE, including gloves, masks, and aprons, is available in all facilities and must be used where required.
4. Handwashing and hygiene signage must be visible in all waste-handling areas.

Responsibilities

- **Managers** – Ensure compliance monitoring, training provision, and policy updates.
- **Support Workers & Facilities Officers** – Implement safe waste-handling procedures and report incidents.
- **Housekeeping Officers** – Oversee cleaning schedules, waste disposal routines, and PPE availability.
- **Participants & Guardians** – Follow agreed waste disposal procedures where applicable in shared or supported living environments.

Related Standards & Legislation

- NDIS Practice Standards – Waste Management & Infection Control
- Queensland Child Safe Standards
- *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 (Qld)*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld)*
- *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994 (Tas)*
- *Public Health Act 2005 (Qld) / Public Health Act 1997 (Tas)*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) / Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)*

DATE	PERSON/S	DETAILS
14.08.2025	Becci Fazldeen	Review and update
10.01.2024	Bronwyn McMullen	Review and update
07.12.2022	Toni Megihan	Policy created