

P09.6 Service user rights and responsibilities

1. What You Need To Know

Service users have rights and responsibilities when accessing services from Twenty10 incorporating *GLCS NSW (Twenty10)*.

Twenty10 is committed to child safety and wellbeing and the promotion and protection of children's rights by the organisation and its leadership.

If a service user thinks their rights are not being respected by the organisation, they can make a complaint. If a service user does not comply with their responsibilities to the organisation or does not follow the Safer Space Guidelines, there may be consequences. These consequences will be dependent on the context and circumstances surrounding the service user. Consequences are determined through discussion with staff, including management and evaluated on a case by case basis.

Service users have the right:

1. to have information regarding their rights and responsibilities that is easily accessible and easy to understand for children and young people
2. to have information kept private and confidential (*for more information, see [P01.6 Privacy and confidential information] policy*)
3. to be treated with professionalism, dignity and respect free from judgment or discrimination by staff and volunteers of Twenty10
4. to a space free from abuse (sexual assault, physical, emotional, financial), neglect or harassment of any kind. It is never ok for anyone to harass, bully or ostracise (ignore or exclude) others. It is never ok for anyone to vilify (put down), make jokes, comments or actions, play music or display material (including on clothes, accessories, tattoos or in artwork) which may be offensive or derogatory to others. This includes but is not limited to, harassment of women (misogyny), men (misandry), people who are transgender or gender diverse, people with intersex variations, people who are pregnant, people who are bisexual, people who are asexual, people who are same sex attracted, gay or lesbian, people with a refugee or migrant experience, First Nations people, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, any cultural or ethnic group (including people of mixed race), people of any religion, people with disabilities, people with mental or physical illnesses, people with learning difficulties, people with histories of abuse or trauma, people's work or financial status.
5. to professional relationships with all staff and volunteers. All interactions between service users and staff will be non physical. Staff will not initiate contact with service users outside of the Twenty10 context, or engage beyond saying hello if the service user initiates contact. The aim of this policy is to respect the personal space and boundaries of service users and staff, and to keep service users, volunteers and staff safe. If staff are approached by a service user outside of the Twenty10 context (such as in the performance of the service user's role, or at an event) staff are not obliged to speak to the service user. The staff member should attempt to maintain the privacy of the service user as a client of Twenty10, and limit further engagement where possible.
6. to a space free from non-consensual touch. Staff, volunteers, guests, students and clients will only have physical contact with service users for legitimate purposes and only when it is acceptable to both people (as per [P05.6 Professional ethics and conduct]). What is considered legitimate and acceptable can change depending on the context and the individual, but some potential examples might include the application of first aid, when appropriate, to assist someone with a disability, or shaking hands when meeting if the service user offers their hand first. Physical touch may be further restricted during times of pandemic.

7. to access information about themselves (as per [P11.6 Access to confidential information]) and to request a copy of their file, unless either would breach the privacy of others or pose a serious threat to the life or health of any person.
8. to explanations of the standard and scope of services they will receive. Services will be provided in a safe manner which respects the dignity and autonomy of the client; and is responsive to the social, cultural and physical needs of the client.
9. to choose the services they use and to refuse a service without prejudicing their future access to services.
10. to involve an advocate (support person) of their choice when first accessing services, during a complaint process, or any meetings with staff.
11. to provide feedback and be involved in elements of service planning and evaluation of the services they use (as per [P09.8 Service user and stakeholder feedback])
12. to be involved in creating, reviewing and implementing their case plan, if they have one, as per [P09.12 Case management and housing].
13. to be heard and provide feedback or make a complaint about services, staff or volunteers without the fear of retribution and to have that complaint dealt with fairly and promptly (as per [P09.9 Service User and Stakeholder Complaints and Appeals]). Twenty10 welcomes positive feedback and complaints about our services and activities by email feedback@twenty10.org.au; via the 'feedback' form on our [website](#); by mail to Twenty10 PO Box 78 Strawberry Hills 2013; via phone (02) 8594 9555); or by speaking to any staff member or volunteer.
 - a. Service users under 25 may provide feedback or complain to the [Department of Family & Community Services](#); feedback@fac.s.nsw.gov.au or ph: 1800 422 322.
 - b. Service users under 18 may provide feedback or complain to the [Department of Social Services](#); complaints@dss.gov.au or ph: 1800 634 035.
 - c. If your complaint is about a breach of privacy, you can also contact: [Australian Information Commissioner](#)
 - d. If your complaint is about harassment or discrimination, you could also contact: [NSW Anti-Discrimination Board](#) Phone (02) 9268 5555
 - e. You can also get advice from a community legal centre such as [ICLC](#) or [Legal Aid](#).

Twenty10's housing tenants also have a number of external avenues to resolve a dispute or make a complaint against Twenty10 as a housing provider:

- They may make an application to resolve a dispute with Twenty10 as their landlord under the *Residential Tenancies Act (2010)*, through [NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal \(NCAT\)](#).
- Appeals can be made to the [Housing Access Committee \(HAC\)](#) about certain decisions of FACS Housing Services or Twenty10 around housing; hac@fac.s.nsw.gov.au (02) 8741 2555.
- Complaints about Twenty10's compliance with with community housing legislation can be made to the [Register of Community Housing](#); e: registrar@fac.s.nsw.gov.au; ph: 1800 330 940

Service user responsibilities include:

1. to complete a New Client Form, attendance sheet or similar administration procedures when participating in events, programs, excursions or outings.

2. to follow the Safer Spaces Guidelines (as per section 3.3).
3. to abide by any guidelines or responsibilities set out in their tenancy agreement, case plan or support agreement, if they have one.
4. to communicate and behave in ways that respect the rights of other service users, staff, board members, volunteers, and anyone on student placements at Twenty10 incorporating GLCS NSW .
5. to be accountable for the results of their behavior and decisions while accessing services from Twenty10 incorporating GLCS NSW.
6. to actively listen to people who approach them about their behaviour while making a reasonable effort to be open and considerate towards the feelings of others.
7. to take an active and collaborative approach when engaging with support workers, volunteers, and the services that are being provided.
8. to notify Twenty10 staff or volunteers if there are any reasons they may not be able to access spaces shared with children, for example, the Twenty10 foyer, client spaces, meeting rooms, shared kitchens, toilets etc.
9. to maintain hygiene and follow safe food handling practices when handling, preparing, serving or eating food or beverages.

2. Procedures

2.1. Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that:

- It continues to meet the needs of our service users and our organisation
- It aligns to our Strategic and Operational Plans.
- It is in line with legislation, funder requirements, industry standards and other external requirements.

2.2. Complaints

Any complaints will be handled as per [P09.9 Service User and Stakeholder Complaints and Appeals]. This will ensure that our service users are treated respectfully and given insight into how their complaint/s are being managed.

2.3. Safer Spaces Guidelines

At Twenty10 we seek to create a space that is as safe, inclusive and supportive as possible. In order to create this space at Twenty10, its programs and events, we ask everyone to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. We also ask that everyone plays a role in upholding these guidelines in both physical and digital spaces.

See the Safer Space Guidelines attached as Appendix A and Online Safer Space Guidelines as Appendix B

2.4. Consequences

If a Safer Space guideline is breached or another responsibility isn't fulfilled, the service user will get a reminder from a staff member, volunteer, or someone on a student placement .

If there is another incident, the service user will be asked to participate in a conversation with a staff member, volunteer, or student about their behaviour and how changes can be made to this behavior.

All significant or repeated breaches of the Safer Space Guidelines will be recorded in a client's notes in the Client Information Management System (CIMS). There may be consequences to that behavior, determined by the context and circumstances surrounding the service user.

3. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How should I approach someone when they have broken the Safer Space Guidelines?

A: Take the person aside and remind them about the Safer Space Guidelines. Be as clear as you can about what guideline(s) has been broken. Ask another staff member, volunteer, or student to have this conversation if you need to.

Q: What should I do if someone approaches me because they're uncomfortable with something that has happened?

A: Listen to the person's concerns with empathy and openness. If necessary and appropriate, speak to the other person and/or help the person file a complaint (refer to [P09.9 Managing complaints]). Ask another staff member, volunteer, or student to have this conversation if you need to.

Q: A guideline has been broken and I don't know how to handle it. What should I do?

A: Ask another staff member, volunteer, or student for assistance and advice.

4. Where to Go For Help

For more information on this policy speak to the Client Services Manager.

5. Definitions

Responsibility: Something that someone (in the context of this document, the service user) is required to do.

Right: Something that someone (in the context of this document, the service user) is entitled to.

Safer Space: a supportive, non-threatening environment that encourages open-mindedness, respect, a willingness to learn from others, as well as physical and mental safety. It is a space that is critical of the power structures that affect our everyday lives, and where power dynamics, backgrounds, and the effects of our behaviour on others are prioritised...('safer' is used instead of 'safe' because) not everyone experiences spaces in the same way as others, so any one set of guidelines established to create safety may not meet the requirements of everyone and there may be complications or lapses in fulfilling those guidelines in practice.¹

Safer Space Guidelines: as set of guidelines to support service users, stakeholders, staff and volunteers in creating a respectful, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

6. Publication and distribution of information

The Office and Administration Office will be responsible for the publication of this document on Google Drive. The Co-Executive Director/s will be responsible for distribution of service information by uploading

¹ Coalition for Safer Spaces, <https://saferspacesnyc.wordpress.com/> Cited 16/05/2019.

and keeping information up to date on the Google Drive and advising staff of any major changes to the policy.

All Client Services staff are responsible for verbally communicating relevant information to service users.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	[P01.6 Privacy and confidential information] [P05.6 Professional ethics and conduct] [P09.6 Service user rights and responsibilities] [P09.8 Service user and stakeholder feedback] [P09.9 Service User and Stakeholder Complaints and Appeals] [P09.12 Case management and housing] [P09.18 Managing Challenging Behaviours] [9.24 Advocacy and Support] [P11.6 Access to confidential information]
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	Intake form Attendance sheets for groups and projects Safer Space Guidelines (appendix a) Online Safer Space Guidelines (appendix b)

Roles referred to this policy
Client Services Manager Community Capacity Building Manager Communications and Project Support Officer

Policy context: This policy relates to	
Standards or other external requirements	NSW Specialist Homelessness Services: Standards 1, 3 and 4 The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Legislation or other requirements	Federal Privacy Act (1988) Australian Privacy Principles Freedom of Information Act 1982 Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW) The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW); Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
Contractual obligations	The National Child Safety Framework

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Six months after initial release, then annually	Co-Executive Director(s)	Board Co-chairs

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	23/03/2021	Julie Catt	01/04/2022
2			
3			

Appendix A

The Twenty10 Safer Space Guidelines

- **Respect your own physical, mental, and emotional boundaries.**
- **Respect the physical, mental, and emotional boundaries of others.**
- **Respect each other, staff, volunteers, students, and the building.**
- **Consider the way your behaviour may affect others.** Your language, behavior, interactions and actions always have an effect on others; sometimes the effects can be negative despite what your intentions may be. We ask that you think about your impact on other people in the space and don't act in a way that silences people or makes them feel like their experience is bad or wrong.
- **Don't make judgements or be mean to people because they seem different to you.** Everyone has the right to be exactly who they are without feeling like someone is going to be mean to them or make fun of them just because they are being themselves.
- **Be aware of how you use your body.** Everyone who comes to Twenty10 has a different history, comfort level, need for personal space, and idea of how to communicate this. Check in with those around you often to make sure your interactions and behaviours are okay for them. Just because something was okay yesterday doesn't mean it's okay today.
- **Respect the space of others.** This means space to talk, space to eat, space to use the computer, space to be silent, space to be themselves, space to make their own decisions, physical space, and emotional space. Negotiating the space of others is an ongoing thing all service users, staff, volunteers practice using the Safer Space Guidelines.
- **Keep the space free of intimate touching, hugging, cuddling, and kissing.** It is sometimes really difficult for people to express their boundaries and consent in situations that are physical. This doesn't mean affection is bad in any way. We ask people not to touch one another in the space as something special that we can do for one another to help make this space as safe as we can for folks who come.
- **Consider how much noise you're making.** Twenty10 is a shared space where lots of things happen that need quiet. Consider that loud and boisterous behaviour can be intimidating or upsetting to others.
- **Share the resources that are available.** This includes the computers and food (especially gluten free, vegetarian, and vegan food).
- **Clean up after yourself.** This will help prevent pests and food-borne illness.

The Twenty10 Online Safer Space Guidelines:

Twenty10 also has digital spaces that are aimed at engaging young folks who attend our social support spaces. We will always let folks know if a digital space is aimed at younger people or if it is for people of all ages. Here are some additional guidelines for those spaces that we ask everyone adhere to:

- **Respect everyone in the public chat.** Remember that young folks could be tuning in- so please maintain G-rated language and topics to maintain an accessible space for younger folks.
- **If we have communicated the space is for younger people and you are over 25 please kindly leave the live chat/space.**

- For the safety and confidentiality of everybody in these online spaces, please refrain from recording or taking a screenshot of the live video and/or chat screen especially of any names/conversations. Screenshotting or recording would be a breach of our guidelines and may be against the law.
- You are welcome to be engaged online with a pseudonym to protect your identity, but please let moderators know who you are. You can do this through direct messaging the moderators.
- You are not obligated to be involved in the conversation.
- “Friending” moderators on their personal social media accounts is not permitted.
- Gain consent if “Friending” or “private messaging” other people in the chat group.
- All guidelines apply to screen names and profile pics as well. Make sure they are appropriate for a space with people as young as 12!