



**LIFE  
WITHOUT  
BARRIERS**

**My rights**

**Nothing about me, without me**



## Introduction

Life Without Barriers has made a promise to support your human rights, keep you safe and provide a great service to you.

A right is a rule that says what all people can expect to have and do in their life. It is something that should not be taken away from you.

The United Nations has a set of rules called the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Life Without Barriers is committed to upholding these rights. You can learn more about your human rights by asking your support person or visiting our website <https://www.lwb.org.au/disability/our-approach/your-rights/>.

## My rights: nothing about me, without me

Life Without Barriers has a longstanding commitment to listen to the people we support because people are the experts in their own lives and have a right to make decisions about the services they receive.

With help from VALID, an independent disability advocacy support group, we asked many different people who use our disability services why human rights are important to them and what they want us to do to support their rights.

A 'Co-design working group' of clients and staff then listened to what the people we support said about their rights and together made this 'My Rights' booklet..

## What this booklet says about 'My Rights'

It gives examples of what each right means and what you can expect from Life Without Barriers when using our disability services.

It says what you can do, what the people who support you at Life Without Barriers can do, and what the leaders of Life Without Barriers can do to help you have your rights.

It also says how you and your support people can work together to get your rights, while also following the rules and laws made by the government to keep you and other people safe and well.

It tells the people in your support network and the community that your rights are important and that Life Without Barriers has promised to support your rights.

This booklet also tells you how you can find out more information about your rights, and what you can do if you are not getting your rights at Life Without Barriers or in other parts of your life.

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Human rights ensure that all people regardless have the same opportunities to participate in everyday life.

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Human rights are important because without them we would not be able to make decisions that would affect the way we live.

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If you don't know your rights, you don't know what you can and can't do.





# My rights

## I have the same rights as everyone else

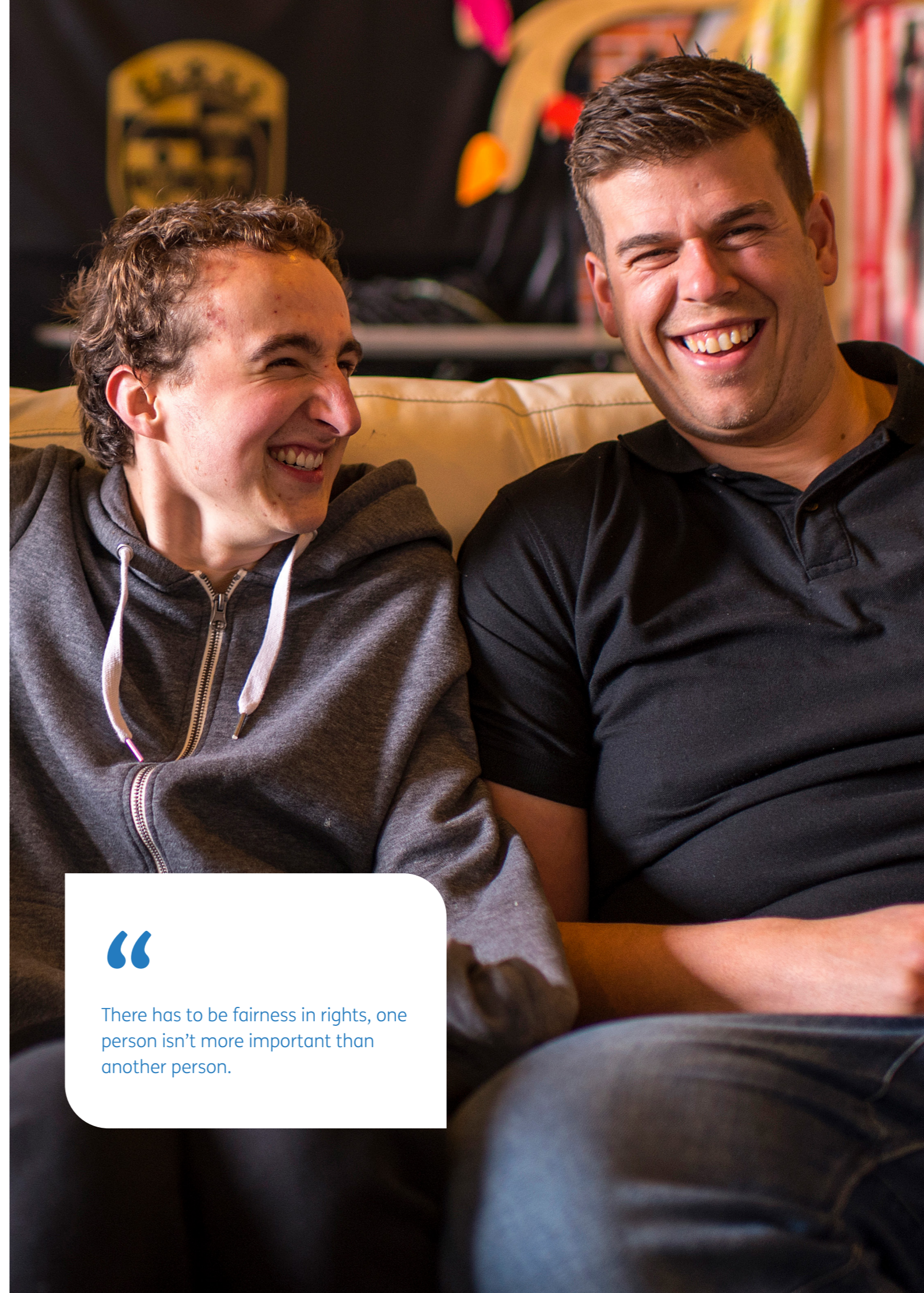
This means I won't be treated differently or unfairly because I am different to someone else.

For example, I have the same right as anyone else to:

- Have my privacy respected in my own home.
- Have friends and consensual romantic or sexual relationships.
- Live how I want and with who I want in my home.
- Make choices about the things I want to do in my life.
- Practice my culture, religion or speak my own language.
- Communicate in ways that suit me
- Be listened to.
- Have the opportunity to do meaningful work and contribute to society.

### Some of the ways people who support me can help me have equality are:

- Learn about the rights of people with disability and what they can do to support me to realise my rights.
- Understand and respect that I have the same rights as they or anyone else does.
- Give information about my rights to people in my support network, including my family and friends or authorised decision maker, to help them understand that I have the same rights as everyone else.
- Talk to me regularly about my rights and give me the chance to ask questions about my rights and talk about any problems I might be having getting my rights.
- Understand that I might get upset and stressed when I'm not getting my rights and talk to me in a way that makes me feel safe and listened to.
- Work alongside me to find ways to solve any problems I might be having getting my rights.
- Be honest with me and explaining if there is a rule or law or something else that stops them from helping me get rights.
- Talk to me to me about how I might be able to advocate to change the rules or laws that might be stopping me getting my rights.
- Help me find someone who can advocate for me if I need help to get my rights.
- Take action if they see or hear that I am not getting my rights, such as a colleague, manager or independent advocate.



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There has to be fairness in rights, one person isn't more important than another person.



## I have the right to make my own choices

This means I decide what I do and don't want to do in my life.

For example, I have the right to choose:

- What time I go to bed or get up in the morning
- How to spend my money
- Who helps me make decisions if I need help
- The people who work with me and how they support me
- How my family is involved in my life
- What information is shared about me with my family and friends
- How I express my identity and culture
- How I communicate
- What I do in the community
- The religion I follow
- What I eat and drink
- The TV shows I watch
- The exercise I do
- The people I talk with
- The people I love
- The clothes I wear
- The jobs that I do.



### Some of the ways people who support me can help me have choices are:

- Empower and support me to build the skills and confidence to make my own decisions about choices and risks.
  - Understand that I can make my own choices and decisions and take risks that others might not agree with.
  - Talk to me about my choices and what they can do to help me with those choices.
  - Talk to me about any risks or consequences of my choices for me or anyone else.
  - Be active, imaginative and flexible in finding ways to manage any potential risks from my decisions.
  - Work with me to find the safest and least restrictive way possible to do the things that I want, including when taking risks.
  - Listen to me about why the choice or risk I want to make is important to me.
  - Be patient with me and give me the time and information that I need to help me make informed choices and risks.
  - Always include me in any decisions being made about me, including if I have a guardian or authorised decision maker who helps me make decisions about my life.
  - Give information to my family and friends about my right to make choices and take risks and the rules Life Without Barriers must follow to help me make choices and have the dignity of risk.
  - Be open and honest with me if a rule or law stops them from being able to help me make a choice or take a risk—for example, if they have a duty of care to keep me or someone else safe.
  - Explain to me how I can challenge a rule or law if I think it is unfairly stopping me from making choices and taking risks.
- Not stopping me from making choices because of their own personal values, beliefs or opinions.
  - Only share information about my choices with someone else, including my family, if I give consent. If a rule or law says that they have to share information about me with someone else without my consent, tell me why. But explain to me when they have to share some information about my choices with someone else because of a law or rule.



My support worker gives me choices and I choose what I want to do.





## I have the right to be respected for who I am

This means I should always be treated as a unique person with the same worth as anyone else.

For example, I have the right to:

- Have my unique self and life experiences understood and considered in how people support me, including my disability, gender, sexuality, identity, culture and religion.
- Not be assumed to have the same needs and preferences as someone else just because I have a similar disability or medical diagnosis.
- Be treated like an adult, not a child, including if I have someone help me communicate or make decisions about my life.
- Be told the truth about my services and supports, and any decisions that impact my life.

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[My staff] support me to make difficult choices.

### Some of the ways people who support me can help me be respected are:

- Learn about my identity, culture, personality, interests and life experiences and how these things make me the unique person I am.
- Be curious and take an interest in getting to know me by talking to me about the things I like and value in my life.
- Listen to me without judgment about what I think and feel about the things I care about in my life.
- Don't force me to talk about things in my life that I don't want to.
- Understand that my interests and values are as important and worthy as anyone else.
- Work alongside me, not over me by always listening to what I think and feel and including me in any decision about my life.
- Work with me to solve any conflicts we might be having.
- Be open, honest and transparent with me about my services and supports and any decisions that impact my life.

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We should all get respected the same way.



## I have the right to be safe

This means I will not be hurt, abused, neglected or exploited by anyone, including by:

- My support workers or any other Life Without Barriers staff
- The people I live with
- The people I work with
- My friends, family or anyone I am in a romantic or sexual relationship with
- People in the community

It also means I have the right to tell someone I trust if I'm not safe and they will take action and get someone to help me.

### Someone might be hurting me if they are:

- Using violence, such as hitting me or threatening to hit me.
- Calling me names, including saying racist, sexist or homophobic things to me or about me to other people.
- Talking about me unfairly behind my back to other people that I live with, work with or am supported by.
- Not letting me or others speak up about what is happening to me or how I feel
- Unfairly restricting me from activities that other people like me are doing at home or at work.
- Spending my money without telling me or asking me about it.
- Not helping me with personal care if I need help to do these things, such as giving me food, changing my clothes, or going to the bathroom.

### Some of the ways people who support me can help me be safe are:

- Not hurt, abuse, neglect or exploit me.
- Build a trusting relationship with me where I can feel safe and comfortable to tell them if I am unsafe.
- Listen to me and take action if I tell them I am not safe.
- Ask someone else for help if they are unsure about how to keep me safe, for example, a manager or an independent advocate.
- Make sure that I can talk to someone outside my support network If I want to tell someone who doesn't work with me directly.
- Do something if they see or hear that someone is hurting me, including if its someone they know and work with or are friends with.
- Be aware that I may have trauma if someone has hurt me now or in the past and understand how to help me in a way that keeps me safe and well.
- Be aware of my culture and how to work with me in a culturally safe way. Ask for help if they don't know how to do this.

## I have the right to get the same chances as everyone else to do the things I like in my life

This means I won't be stopped from getting the things I need or want in my life because of my disability or because I am different to someone else.

For example, I have the right to have the same chances as anyone else, including if:

- I have an intellectual, psychosocial, physical, sensory or neurological disability, or if my disability appears invisible.
- I am non-verbal or need help from others to communicate or make decisions about my life.
- I am a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.
- I am a man, a woman or a trans or gender diverse person.
- I come from a different culture or part of the world, have a different religion, or speak a different language.
- I am attracted to or have consensual romantic or sexual relationships with people of the same or different gender
- I am a different age.
- I live in a regional, rural or remote location.

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[My support worker] listens to me, give advice about things, I feel safe.

### Some of the ways people who support me can help me have the same chances are:

- Take the time to fully understand my preferences.
- Treat me the same way, regardless of my disability or anything else that makes me different to anyone else.
- Be patient and listen to me if I can't communicate the same as someone else.
- Give me the same opportunities as anyone else regardless of how well i speak, or if i have someone who helps me make decisions.





## I have the right to access and be a part of my community

This means I can do the things in my community that I want to do, just like anyone else.

For example, I have the right to:

- Use my own language and communication methods to talk with people.
- Spend time with people I choose to be with at home and in the community if I want to.
- See my family in my home and where they live, including on country if I am a Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.
- Have the transport (car, bus, public transport, bicycle) that I need to get where I want to go.
- Participate in cultural or religious events, groups or activities.
- Vote and join a community group or political party and get assistance if needed.
- Have meaningful work and be given fair pay.
- Use the Internet and social media to get information and communicate with other people.
- Play a sport or join another type of community club.
- Have the technology and aids I need to access the things I want to do in the community, in my home, or at work.
- Do hobbies and activities that I like.

Some of the ways people who support me can help me access and participate in the community are:

- Communicate with me in a way that I can understand.
- Make it a priority to help me participate in the community, including spend time with my family on my country if I am a Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.
- Empower and support me to participate in social or leisure activities that I like in the community.
- Be open and honest with me if they aren't able to help me access or participate in the community how I want.
- Work with me to find ways to access and participate in the community as much as is possible.

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[My support worker] she definitely listens and explains things to me in a way that I understand, ... she knows how to break things down clearly which is really important to me.

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You should have the right to do what other people do.





## I have the right to get justice

This means I can make a complaint or take people to court if I have been treated unfairly or unlawfully.

It also means that I will not be treated differently or have something bad happen to me if I make a complaint about my services or supports at Life Without Barriers.

For example, I have the right to make a complaint to Life Without Barriers about:

- The services and supports I receive.
- The people who support me.
- The managers, corporate staff and leaders who make decisions and rules about my services and supports.
- The people I live with or work with.

I can also make a complaint to other organisations about Life Without Barriers, including:

- Independent advocacy and support organisations, such as VALID.
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- Ombudsman or public advocate services.
- Australian Human Rights Commission.
- State government departments.
- Police.
- My local member of parliament.

I have the right to ask someone for help to make a complaint.

### Some of the ways people who support me can help me get justice are:

- Talk to me regularly about my services and supports and give me information about how I can provide feedback or make a complaint if I am not happy with something.
- Make sure I get the help I need to give feedback or make a complaint.
- Listen to me without judgment if I share a problem or make a complaint about them or someone they know.
- Work together with me to help any solve problems I might be having in my life and with my supports.
- Don't treat me differently or unfairly because I made a complaint.
- Keep my feedback or complaint confidential. If there is a rule or law that means they have to tell someone else about it, make sure you explain this to me.
- Talk to me about how I can get support or help from an independent advocate or counselor if I need help when making a complaint.
- Tell me if my feedback or complaint is sent to someone else and allow me to talk to them directly about it.
- Give me information about what is happening with my feedback or complaint.
- Listen to my suggestions on how my supports and services can be improved.



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Everyone has to find that individual they can open up and talk to about those things

## What can the leaders and the people who make decisions at Life Without Barriers do to help me get my rights?

The leaders at Life Without Barriers make the rules (also called policies and procedures) that all staff at Life Without Barriers must follow to uphold your rights and keep you safe.

Sometimes there are also rules (called laws and regulations) that the government makes that service providers like Life Without Barriers must also follow to make sure you are getting your rights, are safe and receiving good services.

Sometimes the rules and laws to keep you or someone else safe might mean that the people who support you can't always help you with a choice you might want to make. If this happens there are still rules that the people who support you must follow to make sure you understand why they can't help you and that you are still being treated fairly. To learn more about these rules, you can ask your support person or read the rules about Independence and Informed Choice on our website: <https://www.lwb.org.au/disability/our-approach/your-rights/>.



To make sure that the rules and decisions are fair, our leaders and any other people who make decisions at Life Without Barriers can:

- Learn about your rights and what they can do to help you get them.
- Make decisions that uphold your rights and keep you safe.
- Give you a say about the decisions and rules that they make that impact your life.
- Educate you and your support network about your rights and any rules, laws and regulations that impact your rights.
- Make sure everyone at Life Without Barriers knows about your rights and knows how to apply 'My Rights'.
- Empower and support the people who support you to help you get your rights by providing them with the training, knowledge and practical skills to support your rights.
- Regularly check that you are getting your rights and holding people to account if they are not following the rules to support your rights and to keep you safe.
- Making it easy and accessible for you to give feedback and make complaints about your services and supports and making sure that you do not experience repercussions when you make a complaint.
- Giving you and the people you work and live with, the guidance and support you need to build safe and trusting relationships and resolve any problems or conflicts in a safe way for everyone.
- Identify opportunities to tackle any systemic barriers that are stopping you from getting your rights, including advocating to the government and community for change to policies, laws and attitudes.

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Bring leaders closer to the people ...  
to be the eyes and ears for all clients



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Be my advocate if someone else is  
not protecting my rights.

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Don't let us down - if you say you  
are going to do something and if you  
can't let us know.

## How can I find out more about my rights?

You can learn more about your rights by asking your support person or visiting our website using this address <https://www.lwb.org.au/disability/our-approach/your-rights/>.

You can also visit the websites of other organisations such as:

The United Nations - [OHCHR | Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

The Australian Human Rights Commission - [Know your rights: Disability discrimination | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

The NDIS - [www.ndis.gov.au/participants/your-rights-and-responsibilities](http://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/your-rights-and-responsibilities)

## What can I do if I'm not getting my rights?

If you are not getting your rights, you can talk to your support person or someone else you trust.

If you want to talk to someone who doesn't work with you or in private, you can send an email [complaints@lwb.org.au](mailto:complaints@lwb.org.au) or ring this number 1800 721 226. You can also make a complaint on our website: [www.lwb.org.au/contact-us/complaints-or-feedback](http://www.lwb.org.au/contact-us/complaints-or-feedback).

You can provide feedback or submit a complaint to Life Without Barriers about:

- A service – are these delivered in line with what you want?
- A member of staff
- How you were treated
- Something else – are we doing well? Where can we do better?

If you want to make a complaint to someone who doesn't work for Life Without Barriers, you can contact these organisations:

NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission - [Making a complaint | NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission \(ndiscommission.gov.au\)](#)

Human Rights Commission - [Complaints | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) - [Write a complaint letter | ACCC](#)





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Human rights are never a given. They are easily eroded. It's a constant fight to uphold them.

You can also contact your local state Ombudsman, Police or Member of Parliament. You can ask someone to help you do this if you need help.

**What can I do if I want to give feedback about 'My Rights' and this booklet?**

If you have any feedback about the 'My Rights' or this booklet, you can send an email to [myrights@lwb.org.au](mailto:myrights@lwb.org.au) or ask your support person or someone you trust to pass on your feedback to the Centre for Practice Excellence at Life Without Barriers by calling the Disability Staff Support Centre (DSSC) on 1800 316 660.





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