



Policy on Non Response by Participant to a scheduled home visit

1. Background

ATLAS is a non-profit organisation established for the purpose of supporting people with disabilities and their families living in the Mid West.

The services offered by ATLAS include individual support to access leisure and sporting activities equitably, various inclusive activities and events, and community education.

ATLAS is a non-profit, community organisation which is governed by a management committee elected annually by the members.

2. Purpose and Scope

Recreation service supports are by their very nature, are intended to be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of each participant. Services are provided in various environments, locations and contexts. ATLAS will ensure there is a planned and documented response for when a participant does not respond to a scheduled visit to a participant's home.

When a participant does not respond to a scheduled visit, the Leisure Buddy / ATLAS staff member should implement the participant's agreed response plan. This policy applies to all of the organisation's programs and activities. The policy has been framed around the National Disability Services Standards (2014) 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.4, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 3.1, 4.5, 5.1,

3. Policy Statement

Ensuring a participant's safety

In recognition of the vulnerability of participants receiving ATLAS services, procedures need to be established to ensure a participant's safety is not neglected. While a participant's autonomy is to be respected at all times there can be many reasons why a scheduled visit is missed.

These include:

- The participant may have inadvertently forgotten to inform ATLAS that he/she would not be at home; and/or
- The participant may have fallen, been injured or taken ill and still be in the home.

4. Responsibilities

To ensure a timely and appropriate response to a situation where a participant might be at risk it is important to establish the level of responsibility of ATLAS, and the Participant/Parent/Guardian

Title	ACTION
Participant/Parent/Guardian	Ensure that emergency contacts know they have been nominated as a contact and that emergency contact details are current
Participant/Parent/Guardian	Agrees to notify the service provider if the participant is not going to be home for the prearranged visit.
ATLAS	Have a clear understanding of responsibilities for the various steps outlined in the individually agreed process (i.e. in the participant's plan, service agreement or other appropriate documentation).
ATLAS	Regularly update the non-response plan when reviewing the individuals plan or as required when circumstances change for the participant.

5. When a participant does not want a planned response

If the Participant/Parent/Guardian requests, the option of no planned response should be documented and respected. It is important to note that even where a participant has requested that they do not want a planned response, if a Leisure Buddy has concerns or there is an indication that there may be something wrong, they should raise their concerns with ATLAS.

6. Definitions

Scheduled visit or service – a situation where a home-visit to provide a service has been prearranged. This could include services such as recreation based support at home or transport to an appointment or other activity.

Leisure Buddy / ATLAS staff member –paid employee of ATLAS who is visiting the Participant to provide a service that has been agreed with the Participant.

Participant's agreed response plan – a documented process in place for when a participant who may receive services to their home does not respond to a scheduled visit. This response will be documented in the participants individualised plan, service agreement or other appropriate service documentation, with a copy made available to the participant.

No Planned response - If the Participant/Parent/Guardian requests, the option of no planned response should be documented and respected

7. Procedures

The following procedures are to be implemented to ensure that the organisation meets its policy objective of ensuring a participant's safety is not neglected when there is a non-response to a scheduled visit.

The organisation will:

- 6.1 Involve the individual and key family members, where appropriate, in the development of a non response plan for the individual for when a participant does not respond to a scheduled visit. In the event that a participant's does not want any response, this will be documented.
- 6.2 Fully document the non-response plan and provide a copy to the individual and family and other agencies as requested.
- 6.3 Commit the organisation to delivering services in accordance with the agreed individual the non-response plan, and provide information on the plan and the process to all relevant staff.
- 6.4 The individual's emergency contact details will be reviewed as part of the regular individualised Plan review, or sooner if the individual's or family's circumstances, needs or preferences change or a request is made to undertake a review.
- 6.5 Spare key to participant's home
The RIO will discuss with the participant's the option of a spare key to the participant's home being accessible and when it may be used. A spare key may be left in a locked box outside the participant's home, with a neighbour or with a family member/friend.
The RIO will record on the participant's file where the participant's has spare keys to their home. This information must be kept secure to prevent unauthorised people discovering the key or combination to a locked box. It is therefore inappropriate for these details to be on paper/electronic rosters.
If there is a key to the participant's home left in a locked box this will only be used to access a participant's home if:
 - the participant's is physically unable to open the door;
 - the participants has a hearing impairment and we know this is preventing her/him from hearing the staff at the door and the staff member is concerned for their safety; or
 - the participant has locked her/himself out

Where a participant agrees to have a spare key accessible, the RIO must ensure the *participants specifies the circumstances under which the key may be used* as per the following section in the Emergency/ non response by participant plan "AUTHORITY TO ENTER YOUR PREMISES"

6.6 Participant's with a history of not responding

If the participant has dementia, a history of falls, mental health problems, and/or a history of missing or not responding to scheduled visits the RIO will ensure that this is detailed in the participants' record. If staff phone their RIO or other ATLAS representative to say that such a participant's is not responding the RIO or other may recommend the staff revisit the participant later in their shift or will ensure the participant contact person/next of kin or RIO follows up later in the day. ATLAS may also provide the Participant/Parent/Guardian with information on the option of a personal alarm system.

8. When a participant is not responding/contactable

Where a participant has requested that they do not want a planned response and an ATLAS staff member has concerns or there is an indication that there may be something wrong, the ATLAS staff member should raise their concerns with their RIO or other ATLAS manager who will then make a record of these concerns.

If the participant is not there or responding when the ATLAS staff member arrives at a prearranged time and place, an ATLAS staff member will make reasonable efforts to clarify that the participant is safe by:

- a) ATLAS staff member will phone their RIO who will phone the participant. They can look in the windows (if safe to do so from ground level) and check the house for “signs of life” or disturbance. If the participant appears to be unconscious or injured or if there are signs of forced entry the ATLAS staff member will phone their RIO or other ATLAS manager who will phone the Police and participant’s next of kin.
- b) as detailed above there are restrictions on when a spare key can be used to access a participant’s home. ATLAS staff members need to speak to the RIO to gain permission before using a participant’s spare house key. The RIO may identify with the ATLAS staff member the most appropriate person to accompany them when entering a participant’s home. This may be the RIO, a nominated neighbour, an emergency worker such as ambulance personnel, or a police officer.
- c) if there is no sign of the participant the ATLAS staff member will phone RIO or other ATLAS manager who will then phone the participant and if still no response the RIO or other ATLAS manager will phone the participant’s next of kin/first contact and ask if they know the whereabouts of the participant. If they can be contacted the next of kin are to then take on the responsibility for following through on investigation and action.
- d) if there are no next of kin or the next of kin are unable to assist the RIO or other ATLAS manager will notify the Police
- e) RIO or other ATLAS manager is to determine how long the staff/volunteer should wait for the client or client’s next of kin.
- f) If an ATLAS staff member is involved in “client not responding” incident s/he is to inform the regular RIO or other ATLAS manager at the earliest possible time that same day or on at start of the next day.

9. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a two yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

Policy number:		Date adopted: June 2016	
Authorised by: J Rolston			
Date last reviewed:	Reviewed by: Chris Kerr Operations Manager	Date of next review: July 2018	