

# Capricorn Citizen Advocacy

## VISION, MISSION, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

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|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Version:</b>            | <b>3.0</b>       | <b>Signed off by Executive:</b> | 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 |
| <b>Responsible person:</b> | <b>President</b> | <b>Scheduled Review Date:</b>   | 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2027 |

### Vision

*"A community where all people are equally valued."*

### Mission

The mission of Capricorn Citizen Advocacy is to promote, protect and defend the personal wellbeing and interests of vulnerable people with disabilities who have unmet needs and limited means to have those needs addressed. This is in order to enhance and maintain their identity and role as human beings, growing and developing persons, and citizens.

We will do this by establishing and supporting a range of individualised, unpaid personal relationships between such persons (Protégés) and valued, competent citizens (Citizen Advocates) who are prepared to facilitate appropriate support for, and to undertake committed and sustained relationships with the person, based upon the representation of their best interests.

### Principles

The operation of a Citizen Advocacy program is based on the following principles:

#### 1. Advocate Independence

Advocates must be free to develop a primary loyalty to the person with whom they are matched and be able to act as independently as possible.

A Citizen Advocacy office should support Citizen Advocates in their unpaid, independent advocacy relationship with an individual person.

#### 2. Program Independence

A Citizen Advocacy office must itself be independent and free from conflict in how it is administered and funded. This means that the office must be administratively and physically separated from agencies which operate direct service programs involving (potential) Protégés.

#### 3. Clarity of Staff Functions

In order to develop the full range of its potential, a Citizen Advocacy office needs staff who understand the nature and possibilities of Citizen Advocacy and who communicate this understanding by:

1. Supporting, not supplanting Protégé/Advocate relationships and
2. Directing their energies towards building and maintaining the office as a whole

#### **4. Balanced Orientation to Needs of People Requiring Advocates**

People with disabilities have a wide variety of needs for representation and relationships which can be met by Citizen Advocates.

A Citizen Advocacy office must develop a plan for recruiting and supporting a wide range of relationships.

#### **5. Positive Interpretations of People With Disabilities**

A Citizen Advocacy office should be a model in the interpretation of people with disabilities.

The office should seek the most highly positive, valued conferring and yet valid possible associations which support developmental growth potential, citizenship roles and individual human personhood of people at risk of social devaluation.

### **Non-discriminatory Advocacy**

Capricorn Citizen Advocacy will promote to Citizen Advocates, a sensitivity towards the Protégé's social and cultural values, beliefs and practices.

### **Shared Vision and Principles**

Capricorn Citizen Advocacy shares the vision and principles upheld by the Combined Advocacy Groups of Queensland (CAGQ) in its 1997 position paper: 'Advocacy in Queensland'.

### **Values**

- We believe that all people possess needs and aspirations to:
  - ▶ have their fundamental needs met
  - ▶ have freely given relationships
  - ▶ give and receive love
  - ▶ seek the fullest possible development of their human potential
  - ▶ participate in learning and recreation
  - ▶ engage in meaningful occupations
  - ▶ receive formal and informal support to achieve their human rights; and
  - ▶ be fully included in community in a dignified manner that seeks to meet their individual needs in the least restrictive way.
- **We recognise** that some people with disabilities have a heightened vulnerability, arising from the nature of their impairments, community attitudes towards disability and the nature of systems.

- **We recognise** that some people with disabilities are vulnerable to loss of relationships, loss of identity, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, segregation, congregation, and abuse.
- **We recognise** that strong, effective, independent advocacy can safeguard people from direct harm and loss, enhance a person’s capacities, opportunities and roles, and reform our societal structures to minimise people's vulnerability and live a valued life.
- **We value** the power of relationships in keeping vulnerable people safe from harm: including multiple forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, lack of nurturing, expectations and opportunity.
- **We value** the power of relationships to help vulnerable people to proactively focus on activities that are likely to lead to valued social roles and a better life.
- **We value** the role of strong, independent advocacy to address issues of concern so that vulnerable people with disability are supported to have a good life.
- **We value** the intrinsic worth that all human beings possess, regardless of any attributes, from conception to death.
- **We value** the need of people to be in community with others and their environment, so that individual growth, development, security and creativity is fostered.

**Ratification**

**This policy was adopted by Capricorn Citizen Advocacy’s Management Committee at its meeting held on 27 / 03 / 2024.**



**SIGNED:** .....  
**President**

**27 / 03 / 2024**  
**(Date)**



**SIGNED:** .....  
**Secretary**

**27 / 03 / 2024**  
**(Date)**