



# Support Worker Checklist

## Mental Health Support

## Pre Shift:

**Review all client documentation**

You absolutely must make sure you have all the information you need.

**Is there a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) in place?**

Make sure you ask, and if yes, make sure you read and sign the document – this is your guide to everything you need to know.

**Complete a thorough handover**

Make sure you complete your handover with the relevant person: house manager, team leader or support worker.

**Are there Restrictive Practices in place?**

Understand/discuss any Restrictive Practices that are in place. If you are unsure, make sure you ask.

**Is there any Medication that needs to be administered?**

Understand/discuss medication procedures. These should be well documented and the medication accessible.

## Arriving on Shift:

### **Manage the environment**

Take a good look around. Make a note of any objects in the support environment that could cause danger to the support worker or the wider community. Remove these items.

### **Check for a 'Safe Zone'**

If there is a risk of dangerous or aggressive behaviour, you need to have a spot to feel safe.

### **Record crisis contact numbers**

Locate contact numbers for extra support if the Participant were to have a crisis.

### **Check that the staffing ratio is correct**

Make sure the placement is appropriately staffed, and contact the appropriate persons if understaffed.

### **Find the paperwork**

Locate the important client documentation including:

- Daily routine
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Client communication documentation
- Medication documentation
- Client profile
- Any other medical documents that may be of importance (not all Participants have these available as this would depend on their level of care/disability)

## On Shift:

### **Observe changes**

Observe changes in body language, vocal sounds (or increase/lack of vocal sounds) or changes in conversation from the Participant (if applicable) as this might be a trigger for an incident.

**TIP:** Triggers should be documented in the Behaviour Support Plan and noted prior to shift.

### **Know your exit strategy at all times**

In case of violent behaviour, don't get caught without a clear exit path.

### **Continue to manage the environment**

Keep pathways clear and remove all items that could cause harm.

**TIP:** This is especially important after cooking or cleaning. E.g. items like a pot, knife, broom or mop.

### **Wear appropriate clothing**

Closed flat shoes are best so that you can move quickly. Tie up long hair and do not wear any items that could be used to choke like necklaces, lanyards, scarves etc.

### **Be mindful of the Participant's trauma and background**

Don't wear perfume or aftershave, no designer clothing or expensive items.

**TIP:** always have a spare change of clothes.

### **When in doubt, get out and call for help.**

Always go for help the minute something appears amiss – don't wait until it escalates.

## Post Shift:

**Complete your case notes immediately**

Record any incidents (create an incident report if necessary). Complete a thorough handover, and debrief with the manager, team leader or support worker.

**Manage your wellbeing**

Make sure to spend time caring for your mental health, especially after challenging/traumatic shifts. Speak to your manager or colleagues to debrief if need be.

**Seek help, training and guidance**

Build your skills, make sure you have the necessary training to feel confident when delivering care. Ask for guidance when needed.