

MATCH CLOSURE & GRADUATION POLICY - MENTORING



PURPOSE

A Match Graduation or Match Closure provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements for both the mentor and mentee, and to acknowledge this milestone.

This policy will provide guidelines to:

- ensure that mentors and mentees are able to have closure and complete a graduation to acknowledge the achievements of the match
- ensure there are standard procedures to support the volunteer mentors, mentees and parent/guardians (where appropriate) when a match closes or graduates



POLICY STATEMENT


GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sparkways is committed to:

- ensuring regulations and quality measures are in place and upheld while allowing and encouraging all participants to have a voice in their match
- encouraging mentors and mentees to participate in 'closure' or 'graduation' procedures when their match ends
- discussing any issues or concerns with mentors and mentees as they arise, to support the match to continue. However, if the issue cannot be resolved, formally closing the match may be necessary.
- addressing any concerns the mentee may have regarding their match closure/graduation and supporting them through the transition of less contact with their mentor
- celebrating and recognising match successes and graduations at organised activities and events
- providing information or support referrals to other programs as appropriate, should the mentee still require additional supports after match closure/graduation.
- offering to reassign the mentor and/or mentee to another match in the future, based upon past participation, current goals and needs of the program
- advising and encouraging the cessation of contact between mentors and mentees after a match closure/graduation.

SCOPE

- This policy applies to all Sparkways mentoring staff, volunteer mentors, mentees and parent/guardians (where applicable)

 RESPONSIBILITIES	Sparkways Mentoring Staff	Volunteer Mentors	Young People	Parents/Guardian
Ensure the safety of the young person and mentor throughout the match and that Child Safe regulations and Child Safety measures are upheld at all times	X			
Support and encourage matches to continue (refer Match Support & Supervision Policy) however if deemed necessary, arrange to formally close the match early by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arranging a 'closure' meeting with mentor and mentee • In the absence of a meeting, contact all parties by phone to inform them the match is closing • depending on circumstance for closure, discuss whether either participant is suitable for rematching • discuss with the young person and/or parent/guardian whether any additional supports are required from external agencies and make necessary referrals • Issue formal closure letters to mentor, mentee and parent/guardian (where appropriate). 	X			
Celebrate graduating matches by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting mentor, mentee and parent/guardians to a Graduation activity to celebrate and recognise the match successes • Issue formal graduation letters and certificates to mentors and mentees • depending on circumstances, discuss whether either participant is suitable for rematching • discuss whether the young person requires any additional supports from external agencies and make necessary referrals • provide program evaluation forms for completion by all participants 	X			
Advise and encourage cessation of contact between the mentor and mentee after match closure/graduation	X			
Advise Mentoring Staff if they are unable to continue the match for the duration of the 12-month program		X	X	X
Attend the 'Closure' Meeting or Match Graduation activity where possible	X	X	X	X
Complete the program evaluation forms where appropriate		X	X	X
Document and record all copies of correspondence with match participants on the relevant match and file as case notes or document uploads	X			



PROCEDURES

Match Closure

Matches can close early for any number of reasons and Sparkways also reserves the right to close a match prematurely. Reasons for early match closure may include, but are not limited to:

- The well-being and safety of the young person is at risk
- Attempts to resolve issues have been unsuccessful
- The relationship is not being conducted within the agreed guidelines
- The relationship has deteriorated or one person is not fulfilling their obligations under the Match Agreement and this is negatively impacting the other person
- One or both participants do not want to continue the match
- There are changes in life circumstances in one or both of the participants lives that impact the ability to continue the match commitment
- An individual no longer meets the criteria for program participation.

The match may end at the discretion of the mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, and/or Team Leader. It is the discretion of the Team Leader whether an individual may be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation, current goals and needs of the program



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Privacy Act 1988(Cth)
- Information Privacy Act 2000(Vic)
- Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)
- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Victorian Human Services Standard

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

Closure - the ending of a formal match relationship prior to the agreed 12-month duration

Graduation - a celebration of the match relationship reaching their 12-month anniversary and graduating from the formal mentoring program.



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Policy
 - Code of Conduct Policy
 - Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
 - Match Supervision Policy
 - Record Keeping Policy
-



EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Sparkways will:

- seek feedback from people affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
 - monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
 - keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
 - revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
-



AUTHORISATION

This policy was endorsed by Sparkways on 26/05/2023

REVIEW DUE: May 2024
