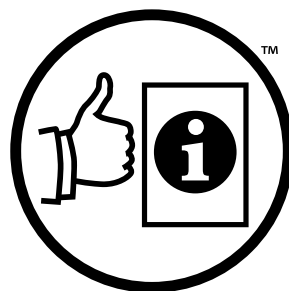


# How we can help you

North East Citizen Advocacy



Easy English

## About this book



This book is from North East Citizen Advocacy or NECA.



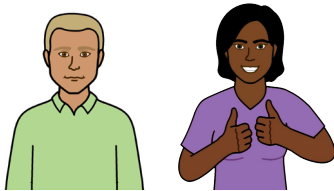
We support people with intellectual disability.



This book is about

- what we do

and



- how we can help you.

## Help with this book



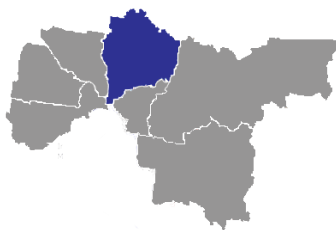
You can get someone to help you

- understand this book



- find more information.

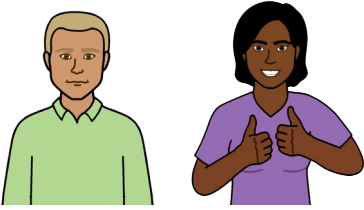
## Who can use our service?



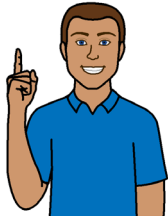
We can help people with intellectual disability who live in

- Banyule
- Darebin
- Whittlesea
- Nillumbik.

## How can we help?



We can help you if you need an **advocate**.

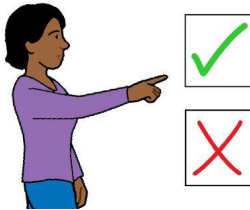


An advocate is a person who can

- help you understand information



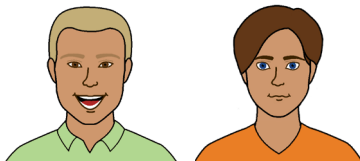
- speak up for you



- help you make your own decisions



- help to keep you safe.



We have 2 types of advocates.

# 1 Citizen advocate

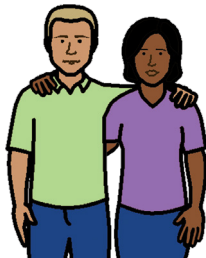


We can find a **citizen advocate** for you.



A citizen advocate is a person from the community who can

- help you in many life situations



- be your advocate for a very long time.



A citizen advocate can

- sort out problems with you

- help you reach your goals



- come to meetings with you



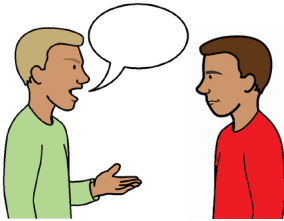
- make sure people listen to you.



A citizen advocate can also help to protect you from **abuse**.



Abuse is when someone hurts you.

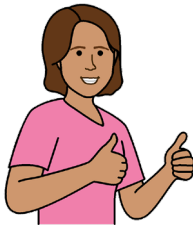


For example, a citizen advocate can talk to people who are **not** fair to you.

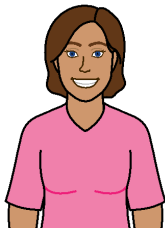


A citizen advocate

- can make sure you get your rights



- will always be on your side



- will **only** be an advocate for you and **not** for other people.



You can decide together with your advocate how often you see each other.

## A citizen advocate is free

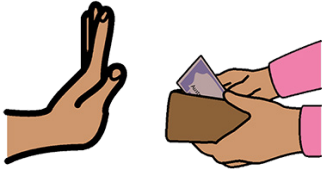


A citizen advocate is a **volunteer** from the community.



Volunteer means someone

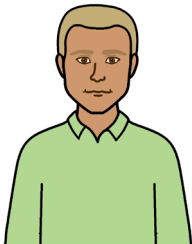
- works to help people



- is **not** paid money.

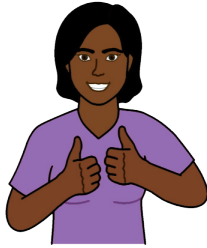


You can ask us to find a citizen advocate for you.



We can only find an advocate for you if you do **not** already have one.

## Can you choose your citizen advocate?

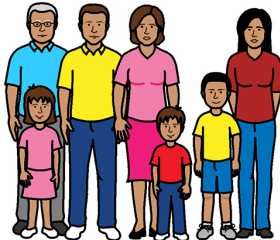


We will try to find an advocate you like.



First we will ask you many questions about

- your life
- the things you like to do
- any problems you need help with.



Sometimes we want to talk to other people in your life to get to know you better.



Tell us if you do **not** want us to talk to other people about you.





When we find an advocate for you we will

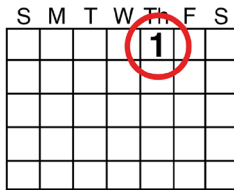
- do lots of checks



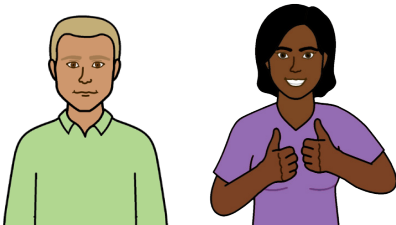
- tell them what you need and want



- make sure they will treat you well.



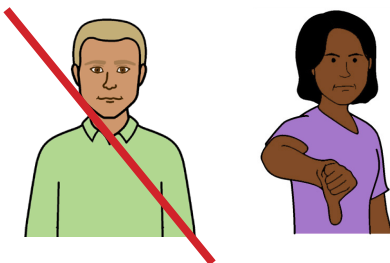
We will find a time when you can meet the advocate.



If you like the person

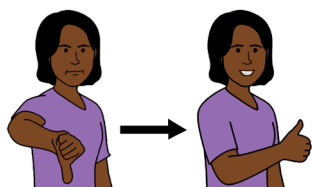
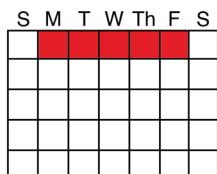
- they will become your advocate.

- we call it a **match**.



If you do **not** like the person, we will try to find someone else.

## 2 Individual advocate



An **individual advocate** will

- help you for a short time only
- help you sort out a problem.

The problem could be that



- a person is **not** fair to you



- you do **not** get good service



- you need help to fill in paperwork



- you need help to understand the NDIS

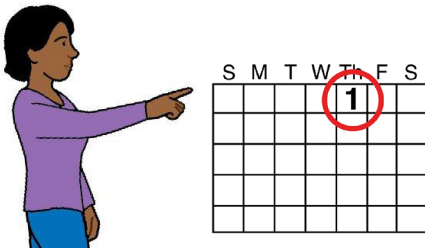


- you need to speak to someone important.



Individual advocates are our staff.

## What will an individual advocate do?



If you need help with a problem the advocate will let you choose a good time to meet.

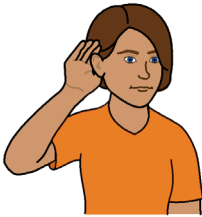


At the meeting your advocate will

- talk to you about the problem

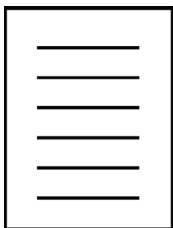


- ask what you want to happen

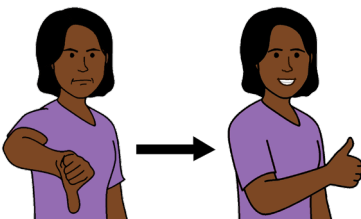


- listen to you

- explain how they can help you

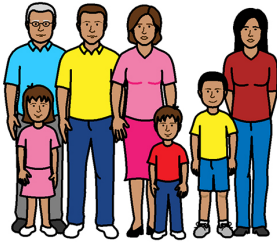


- make an **action plan**.



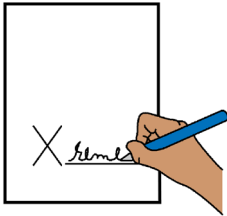
An action plan says what the advocate will do to sort out the problem with you.

You can bring a **support person** to the meeting.



A support person can be

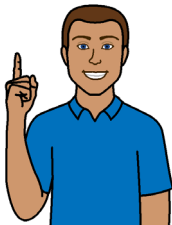
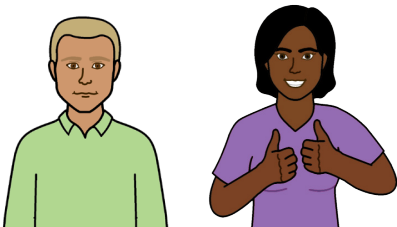
- a family member or friend
- someone else you trust.



The advocate will ask you to sign the action plan.

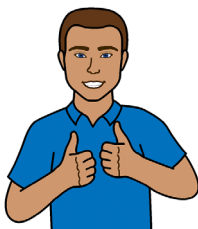
If you sign the action plan, your advocate will

- help you sort out your problem
- do what the plan says.

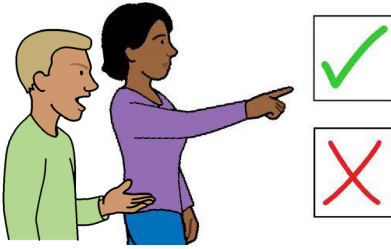


You should only sign the action plan if

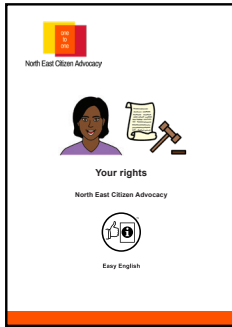
- you understand it
- you think it is good.



## What are your rights?



Your advocate **must** support you to make your own choices.

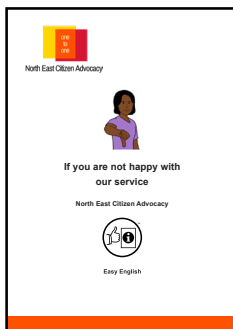


You can read more in our Easy English book **Your rights.**



Contact us if you have any problems with your advocate.

We will help you sort out the problems.



You can read more in our Easy English book **If you are not happy with our service.**

## What your advocate cannot do



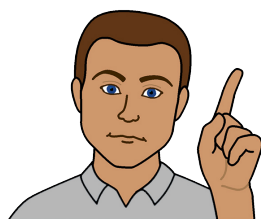
Your advocate is

- **not** a support worker or carer



- **not** a therapist

- **not** a case manager.



Your advocate **cannot** tell you what to do.



Your advocate is **not** an expert for

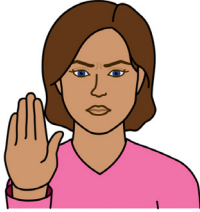
- legal problems

or



- money problems.

## Can you stop having an advocate?



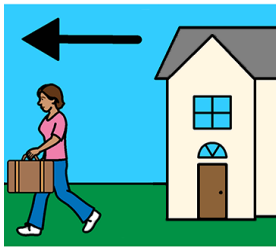
You can choose to stop having an advocate.



Contact us at any time if you want to stop.



Our contact details are at the end of this book.



Your advocate will stop helping you if

- you move away

and



- your new home is too far away for our program.



If you move away we can tell you about other advocates near you.

## What if we cannot find an advocate for you?



If we **cannot** find a good advocate for you we will

- talk to you
- help you find other people to support you.







## How to contact us



### NECA

Contact our office if you have any questions or problems with your advocate.



Call            03 8407 3684

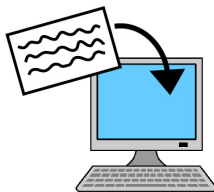
You can also call our program manager on the mobile phone.



Call            0412 099 597



Website       [citizenadvocacy.com.au](http://citizenadvocacy.com.au)



Email           neca@citizenadvocacy.com.au



### If you do not speak English

Use the free Translating and Interpreting Service or TIS.



Call 131 450

Give the TIS officer the phone number you want to call.



### If you need help to speak or listen

The National Relay Service can help you make a phone call.



Call 1800 555 660



Website [accesshub.gov.au/nrs-helpdesk](http://accesshub.gov.au/nrs-helpdesk)

Give the relay officer the phone number you want to call.



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