



Registered Supporters: Frequently Asked Questions

This document provides answers to frequently asked question about the registered supporter role under the *Aged Care Act 2024* (Cth).

Disclaimer

This factsheet has been published in anticipation of the commencement of the *Aged Care Act 2024* (Cth) (the Act). The information in this factsheet is not applicable before the Act commences on 1 November 2025.

The Act and related rules take precedence over this factsheet, which should be read alongside them. The guidance provided in this factsheet about registered supporters does not constitute legal advice.

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will update this factsheet, periodically and/or as required.

This policy is one part of the [registered supporters policy library](#). Please refer to the online version of the policies in the registered supporter policy library located on the department's website to ensure you have the most recent version.

Version history

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The registered supporter role

What is supported decision-making?

In the aged care context, supported decision-making is the process of providing support to help older people make and communicate their own decisions, rather than having decisions made for them. It allows older people to remain in control of their lives.

There are resources available to help you understand supported decision-making:

- [Learning modules](#) on the Aged Care Act, developed by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- [Older Persons Advocacy Network \(OPAN\) Supported Decision-Making Toolkit](#)
- [The La Trobe Support for Decision Making Practice Framework Learning Resource](#)
- [University of Sydney Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre](#)
- [Disability Gateway, Supported Decision-making Hub](#)

What is a registered supporter?

A registered supporter is someone who helps an older person make and communicate their own decisions about their aged care services.

A registered supporter can:

- request and receive information about the older person they support
- help the older person understand information and make their own decisions
- let people like My Aged Care, aged care providers and assessors know what those decisions are.

Having a registered supporter does not stop older people from being able to receive information, make decisions, or communicate directly with others including My Aged Care, aged care providers and assessors.

Who can be a registered supporter?

A registered supporter could be a trusted family member or friend of an older person's choosing. An older person can have more than one registered supporter.

A registered supporter can also be an active, appointed decision maker for an older person. This could be a person or organisation, such as a Public Guardian.

No person or organisation is automatically considered a registered supporter. They must complete the registration process and agree to becoming a registered supporter.

More information on the registration process is available at www.myagedcare.gov.au/registering-supporter.

How could an older person benefit from having a registered supporter?

Registered supporters can help older people who are seeking or receiving aged care services to request and receive information about their aged care, to understand information, and make their own decisions.

This can include communicating with:

- My Aged Care
- aged care providers
- assessors
- the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the System Governor
- the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

The registered supporter role is recognised across the aged care system. This allows registered supporters to more easily communicate and request information about the older people they support. It also helps others, such as aged care providers and assessors, know who an older person has chosen to support them.

What decisions can a registered supporter help with?

Registered supporters can support an older person to make or communicate aged care decisions under the new Act. This includes:

- applying for and completing aged care assessments
- choosing funded aged care providers and services
- requesting and receiving information
- making a complaint about the System Governor or aged care system, and
- seeking a review of decisions.

The registered supporter role **does not** extend to aged care means testing. If an older person wants support with means testing carried out by Services Australia or the Department of Veterans Affairs, the person they want supporting them (including their registered supporter) must be appointed by those agencies separately.

Do all older people need a registered supporter?

Not every older person will want or need someone to support them. There is no need for an older person to register a supporter if they don't want to.

Some older people might feel they are already supported by their carers and other significant people in their lives, without needing any of them to become a registered supporter. These people can continue to play an important role in supporting an older person, regardless of whether they are a registered supporter.

If an older person has an active, appointed decision maker, that person or organisation may apply to become a registered supporter without the consent of the older person. This is because the new Act recognises the appointed decision maker's authority to make decision(s) for the older person.

Registered supporter duties

What are a registered supporter's duties?

Under the new Act, all registered supporters have duties they must uphold. They must:

- act in a way that promotes the will, preferences and personal, cultural and social wellbeing of the older person
- support the older person only as much as needed for them to make their own decisions
- do their best to help the older person maintain their ability to make their own decisions
- declare, and avoid or manage, conflicts of interest

Registered supporters must act honestly, diligently and in good faith.

Registered supporters should ensure they know and understand their duties, including any consequences for non-compliance.

What is a conflict of interest for registered supporters?

A conflict of interest occurs when a supporter's personal, professional, financial or social interests get in the way of their responsibilities to the older person they support. Conflicts may be:

- Real – currently exists
- Potential – could arise in the future
- Perceived – others might believe a conflict exists

It is important for older people and their prospective supporters to consider whether there are any conflicts of interest before applying to register. Conflicts must be declared as they arise – whether as part of registering, or once the supporter is registered.

If someone is personally invested in an older person's health and wellbeing, or an adult child, spouse or partner, relative or possible beneficiary of the older person it does necessary mean they have a conflict of interest. For there to be a conflict, there must be something that could get in the way of that person being able to carry out their duties as a supporter.

What are registered supporters not allowed to do?

Becoming a registered supporter does **not** provide a person with decision-making authority for an older person. The role of a registered supporter is to support the older person to make and communicate **their own** decisions.

Registered supporters must not pressure or force older people to do anything, including making decisions. Older people also cannot be pressured or forced to register a person or organisation as their supporter.

The new Act includes safeguards against abuse by a registered supporter. Registered supporters:

- can only act in line with an older person's will and preferences
- must only support an older person to the extent needed for the older person to make their own decisions

- cannot misuse any information they have received in their capacity as a registered supporter
- must declare, and avoid or manage, any conflicts of interest.

There are consequences for registered supporters who do not follow their duties, including the suspension and cancellation of their registration. It is also an offence for registered and former supporters to act dishonestly and abuse their position.

What if a registered supporter disagrees with an older person's decision, will, or preferences?

The new Act puts the rights of older people at the centre of decision-making. A registered supporter must promote the older person's will, preferences, and personal, cultural and social wellbeing, even if they disagree with the older person's choices.

If a registered supporter does not feel that they can comply with the duties of a registered supporter, they can request to cancel their registration at any time.

A registered supporter must respect the decisions made by the older person they support. Registering as a supporter does not give a supporter the power to make decisions for an older person. They also cannot pressure the older person to make a particular decision.

The registration process and how to make a complaint

Who is the System Governor and what do they do?

Under the new Act, the Secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is also known as the System Governor. The System Governor manages how aged care services are delivered across Australia.

When someone asks to register or become a supporter, the System Governor will consider if:

- the older person and/or the prospective supporter have provided the correct information and documents
- there are any reasons not to register the prospective supporter, including if they may be unable to uphold their duties
- the prospective supporter has been registered as a supporter in the past, and their registration was suspended or cancelled
- the prospective supporter has a conflict of interest, and the steps to avoid or manage that conflict.

What personal information is shared with a registered supporter?

If an older person receives certain information under the Act, it may also be automatically given to their registered supporters.

Some registered supporters will automatically be given certain information about the older person they support. This may include:

- information about eligibility for an aged care needs assessment
- an assessment outcome
- the registration of supporters, including any suspensions or cancellations
- information from aged care providers such as care plan documents, and financial statements or reports
- outcomes from the review of a decision.

Registered supporters will automatically receive this information if:

- the older person has consented to sharing this information with their registered supporter, or
- the registered supporter is also an active, appointed decision maker for the older person.

This information may automatically be given to a registered supporter by the System Governor, aged care providers or anyone else who is required under the Act to give certain information to the older person.

What if an older person needs, but does not have, a person to support them or make decisions for them?

If an older person doesn't have someone who can help them navigate aged care as a registered supporter or otherwise, there are [other ways the older person can access help](#).

Sometimes an older person is no longer able to make decisions and has no one in place with legal authority to make decisions for them. My Aged Care cannot give anyone decision-making powers to act on the older person's behalf. However, if you are concerned for an older person's welfare, there are ways to support them.

You can apply for a [guardianship and/or administration order](#) with the state or territory court, board, panel or tribunal where the older person lives. They can conduct a hearing and decide if the older person requires a legal decision maker. They can also decide who this person will be. Some state and territory processes also include emergency options to appoint a decision-maker quickly if needed.

How can I make a complaint, including about a registered supporter?

Anyone can raise a complaint or concern about a **registered supporter** – there is a complaints pathway on the department's webpage for [registered supporters in aged care](#).

If you would like more support in making a complaint, you can call My Aged Care at 1800 200 422.

There are also other ways to make complaints or get support, depending on what the complaint or concern is about:

- If you want to raise a complaint or concern about an **aged care provider**, including how they engage with registered supporters, contact the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission at 1800 951 822 or www.agedcarequality.gov.au/contact-us/complaints-concerns.

- If you want someone to help you understand your options and your rights, an **independent aged care advocate** could help. You can contact the Older Persons Advocacy Network on 1800 700 600 or opan.org.au/.
- If you want information or advice on elder abuse, call 1800ELDERHelp at 1800 353 374.
- If you need immediate assistance in an emergency or life-threatening situation, call triple zero (000).

How can I ask the System Governor to review a decision?

The Secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is the System Governor. One of the functions of the System Governor is to make decisions about the registration, suspension, and cancellation of supporters under the new Act.

If a decision has been made about a registered supporter relationship, a person will be notified if they are:

- part of that relationship (they are the older person or the registered supporter), or
- a registered supporter who is entitled to information about the older person they support.

They may be able to request a review of the decision. These decisions are called '[reviewable decisions](#)'. The notification will explain if and how someone can seek a review of the decision.

Appointed decision makers

What is an appointed decision maker?

An older person may have someone who has guardianship, enduring power of attorney or similar legal authority for them. In My Aged Care, these people are known as appointed decision makers. They can only make decisions on an older person's behalf in line with their active, legal authority.

A person or organisation may be appointed as a decision maker in different ways, including:

- If an older person wants or needs help making decisions, they can choose to give someone they know and trust, or a specialist organisation, the power to make decisions for them under a Commonwealth, state or territory arrangement.
- If an older person has not formally appointed someone to make decisions on their behalf and they lose the ability to make their own decisions, someone else can be appointed for them under a Commonwealth, state or territory arrangement.

Can an appointed decision maker also be a registered supporter?

An appointed decision maker can apply to become a registered supporter. If someone is an active, appointed decision maker for an older person, the older person does not need to consent to the registration of this person or organisation as their supporter.

If an active, appointed decision maker has been registered as a supporter without an older person's consent, the older person will be notified and given information on how to [request a review](#) of the decision.

If an active, appointed decision maker registers as a supporter, they must comply with their responsibilities as an active, appointed decision maker and a registered supporter. As an appointed decision maker, they must only make decisions in line with their active, legal authority. If a decision is outside of that active, legal authority, they must support the older person to make or communicate their own decisions in line with the role of a registered supporter.

It is important to remember that registering as a supporter does not give someone decision-making authority for an older person, nor does it change the kind of decision-making authority a person or organisation may otherwise have under a Commonwealth, state or territory arrangement.