VILLAMANTA
DISABILITY RIGHTS LEGAL SERVICE

Easy Read Submissions to the

Community Affairs Legislation Committee on the

National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Bill 2025

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About this document

Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service wrote this submission.

We help people with disability understand and protect their rights

This is an Easy Read version of our submission.

The submission is about proposed changes to the NDIS law.

The proposed law is called the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Bill 2025.

We will refer to this proposed law as **the Bill**.

What is this submission about?

We support some of the proposed changes in the Bill.

But we believe more changes are needed.

We are especially concerned about:

- leaving the NDIS
- payment claims for supports
- changes to participant plans.

This is important because some people with disability are vulnerable.

A change in supports can have a serious impact on:

- safety
- health
- wellbeing
- finances
- independence.

Issue 1: Leaving the NDIS

The Bill changes the rules for participants who want to leave the NDIS.

The Bill increases the cooling-off period to 90 days.

A cooling-off period is a time when a person can change their mind.

Villamanta supports this change.

Why might someone want to leave the NDIS?

A person may want to leave the NDIS because they are:

- frustrated with the NDIA
- unhappy with their plan
- unhappy with providers
- experiencing poor mental health
- affected by negative media stories.

A person may still need supports even if they want to leave.

Without support services, some people could be at risk of harm.

People need information

The Bill says the NDIA must write to participants when they ask to leave the Scheme.

The letter must explain:

- what happens if they leave
- how they can cancel their request.

We say this is not enough.

Some people may:

- not read the letter
- not receive the letter
- have difficulty understanding the letter
- not know they can change their mind.

The NDIA should ask questions

Before a person leaves the NDIS, Villamanta says the NDIA should ask why they want to leave.

The problem may have another solution.

The NDIA could:

- reduce contact with the participant
- extend their current plan
- allow a nominee to manage communication
- discuss other options before withdrawal.

The NDIA should check understanding

We say the NDIA should make sure the participant:

- received the letter
- understands the information
- knows about the cooling-off period
- knows they can seek advice.

People should be told about independent disability advocacy services.

Advocates can help people understand their options.

Advocates are independent from the NDIA.

Issue 2: Payment claims

Participants or providers submit payment claims when they want the NDIA to pay for supports.

The Bill says a claim may not be paid if requested information is not provided.

Some participants may not be able to provide the information.

For example:

- they may have difficulty understanding requests
- they may not have access to the documents
- the information may not exist
- the information may be impossible to obtain.

The NDIA needs flexibility

Villamanta says the NDIA should have **discretion**.

Discretion means being able to make a sensible decision based on the circumstances.

A claim may be legitimate even if a participant cannot provide every document requested.

The NDIA should be able to approve the claim when there is enough evidence that it should be paid.

Risks if claims are not paid

Participants could face serious problems if claims are not paid.

For example:

- support services may stop
- providers may refuse future services
- unpaid bills may grow
- debt collection may begin.

Many participants receive the Disability Support Pension.

Most people cannot afford to pay large support invoices themselves.

Villamanta says participants should be able to challenge decisions about payment claims.

This is called **a review**.

A review allows a person to explain why a claim should be approved.

Issue 3: Plan Variation

A plan variation is a change to an NDIS plan.

We note that special review processes apply when there is a proposal to significantly increase funding.

We believe there should also be senior-level review when there is a proposal to significantly reduce funding.

This is important because large reduction in supports can have a major impact on a person's life.

Funding reductions can affect:

- care arrangements
- daily living activities
- health and wellbeing
- safety.

What Villamanta Wants

We want stronger protections for participants.

The NDIA should:

- understand why a person wants to leave the NDIS
- make sure participants understand their choices
- tell people about advocacy services
- have flexibility when assessing payment claims
- allow decisions to be reviewed
- carefully review major funding reductions.

Final message

We support efforts to improve integrity and safeguarding in the NDIS.

However, more protections are needed to make sure participants do not lose important supports because of misunderstanding, administrative problems, or rigid rules.

People with disability should be supported to make informed choices and have access to fair decisions and effective safeguards.