

People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi

Local Group Assistant / Kaia Awhina

Job description and task checklist

People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi is a self-advocacy organisation established to empower and support people with learning / intellectual disability to speak up for themselves. We are a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO), which is run by and for people with learning disability.

People First New Zealand has 41 local groups across the country. The local groups are the foundation of People First NZ. Each group has an Assistant who assists members to facilitate the monthly meetings.

Local Group Assistant / Kaia Awhina role

To assist People First NZ members to:

- organise and assist the monthly self-advocacy meetings
- be fully informed and have access to the information needed to make decisions for themselves
- speak up for themselves
- learn about their human rights
- become involved in their communities.

Local Group Assistant/ Kaia Awhina task checklist

[Taking into account the group's funded resources and the Assistant's contracted hours of work]

People First NZ local group meetings are a safe way to learn about rights and for members to learn to speak up for their rights in their life, to community and nationally.

All meetings are about learning about rights either through discussion, guest speakers or by using resources.

Local Group Assistants are required to use People First digital working tools, such as Office 365 and MS Teams and Zoom, for administration and to support members.

The Assistant assists members with the following core tasks.

Planning

- make an annual plan for the group each year taking into account the national goals set by national committee

Organising

- make venue bookings, prepare agendas, send out meeting notices for local group meetings
- organise and arrange transport and support for elected members to attend People First NZ regional meetings

Within meetings

- invite guest speakers when the group decides to have one
- keep the meetings on topic and time
- take meeting minutes
- keep members informed about the current work of People First New Zealand
- assist members to undertake small surveys or consultation sent by national office
- share jobs within meetings so members feel involved.

Local Group Assistants administration tasks

Finances

- keep up-to-date financial records: bank statements/ GST receipts and invoices/ and expenses receipts
- present or assist the Treasurer to present income/ expenses reports and bank statements at group meetings

Record keeping and reporting

- write meeting minutes or support the group Secretary to do so
- submit and upload signed off meeting minutes and other meeting documentation to the relevant Local Group folder in MS Teams.
- Keep membership lists up to date and send new membership form to Regional Coordinator

The Assistant's responsibilities as a Staff Team Member

- make sure all work is aligned to the national goals
- keep work up to date and aligned with People First policies and procedures
- access People First NZ policies and procedures, and core documents in Teams
- keep in close contact with the People First Regional Coordinator
- keep in contact with members remotely when face-to-face meetings cannot occur because of a situation beyond our control, such as Covid 19 pandemic
- attending staff training / workshop at least once a year.

Depending on the Assistant's contracted hours of work, the Assistant assist members with these extra tasks:

Speaking up and participation

- attending and speaking up about rights at community meetings/events
- giving presentations about People First to people with learning disability, schools, service providers, rotary clubs etc
- participating in local community advisory/ consultation groups
- participating in community expos

Education, information and advice

- develop community networks and links with other organisations
- know their rights under the Health and Disability Commissioner Act, Human Rights Act, UN Disability Convention etc

The following guides all the activities of People First New Zealand.

Philosophy

1. People with learning (intellectual) disability should be respected, have full rights of citizenship in New Zealand and have the opportunity to be fully included in communities.
2. Māori are tāngata whenua and we will support the rights Māori have under the Treaty of Waitangi.

What we do

1. Make sure people with a learning disability can speak out and be heard on issues that are important to them in government, in services and in the community.
2. Represent people with a learning disability who cannot speak for themselves.
3. Promote the rights of people with a learning disability.
4. Make sure people with a learning disability are heard and listened to.

The purpose of People First New Zealand

1. Speaking up for people with a learning disability to:
 - have the same rights as everyone else
 - know their rights
 - get their rights as citizens
 - be treated with respect and dignity
 - have excellent community-based support services, so they can take part in a wide range of valued activities and roles in their work and in their lives.
2. Supporting people with a learning disability to speak up for themselves (self-advocate) on issues important to them.
3. Advocating for people with high support needs who may not be able to speak up for themselves.

For more information about People First NZ

Website: <https://peoplefirst.org.nz>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/peoplefirstnz/>