

Guide to Reasonable and Necessary (R & N) decisions

Home and living: Living alone

Case

Sean is 26 years old and lives with his parents and siblings. Sean lives with autism and has limited verbal communication. He experiences anxiety which can make him very agitated and lead to aggressive behaviour. Sean is finding it difficult to deal with others in the home and is sometimes violent toward them. He is causing property damage, and this has increased in recent times. His behavioural issues and support needs have put a strain on his relationship with his family.

Sean's parents' attempts at giving him short breaks away from the family and plenty of time on his own have not helped. Sean and his parents have discussed with his planner about where and how he would like to live.

Sean's psychologist provides a report that indicates a risk of harm to anyone who lives with Sean as well as risk of property damage. It shows that if Sean has some support each day with certain household tasks, being alone decreases his anxiety and helps him enjoy other things. Sean's behaviour support plan recommends Sean live alone because of the risk to others.

Sean and his parents think it's time Sean tried living independently somewhere nearby.

Would we fund this?

Yes, we could fund Sean to live alone in single-bedroom robust category specialist disability accommodation to:

- make sure there is no harm to himself or others in the home
- help him be more independent
- prevent or minimise property damage from his behaviours of concern.

Why would we fund this?

To decide if an NDIS support is reasonable and necessary for Sean, we think about the information he has given us against the [NDIS funding criteria](#).

For us to fund Sean to live alone, the support must meet the [NDIS funding criteria](#).

It must:

- be related to Sean's disability
- help Sean to pursue his goal to be more independent
- help Sean to improve his social activities
- not generally be something that could be given by Sean's family or friends
- be, or is likely to be effective and beneficial in helping Sean. When Sean's anxiety decreases, he is able to enjoy other things
- be value for money. This means the costs of living alone is reasonable when comparing the benefits it will give Sean versus the cost of alternative supports
- be an NDIS support for Sean.

What else do we think about?

When we decide whether we should fund Sean to live on his own, we think about:

- whether there is evidence that physical or psychological harm will result from living alone or with others
- the total cost of all the NDIS supports Sean needs
- whether he can access other NDIS supports he needs in his new home
- making sure the location of Sean's new home is not too far from his informal supports, so he has social connections outside of his home.

When we create your plan, we must think about supports as a total package of supports. To help us to do this we use [What principles do we follow to create your plan?](#)

Case example

Raoul is 43 years old and lives with moderate intellectual disability and an acquired brain injury. Raoul volunteers at a garden centre watering plants and weeding. He lives with his parents who are his primary carers and are now aged in their 70s.

Raoul has recently had a stroke that is affecting his mobility, and he is having falls. Raoul's occupational therapist undertakes a functional assessment. Raoul is given a report showing he now needs extra help at home with his daily activities and access to 24 hour supports

throughout the day. The report says this could be shared with another person. With the high level of support he needs, it is no longer practical for Raoul to live with his ageing parents.

Raoul's goal is to move out of his parents' home. He wants to live as independently as possible and be part of his community. He thinks he might like to try living alone so he doesn't have to share his home with other people. Raoul tells his planner this is because he wants his parents and friends from the garden centre to visit him and spend time with him by himself.

When we think about whether to fund single living specialist disability accommodation for Raoul, we think about whether the support is reasonable and necessary. We also think about if the support is related to Raoul's disability.

Because Raoul doesn't need 1-to-1 support, we would fund Raoul to live in 2-bedroom specialist disability accommodation with dual occupancy. This means he lives with another participant.

We generally wouldn't fund single living specialist disability accommodation for Raoul to live alone. But we do support participants through a range of individualised living options to choose who they live with and how they are supported. We can support Raoul to look at whether an individualised living option might be right for him.

We consider whether Raoul can live with other people. We think about whether living with other people would cause harm to Raoul or if there is any risk to people he lives with. The report Raoul has given us says he lives happily with his parents. There is no evidence of risk if Raoul lived with other people or any behaviours of concern.

We think about whether it is reasonable and value for money for Raoul to live alone compared to the cost of alternative supports.

We look at whether there is space in the home for Raoul's parents and friends to visit him on his own. This might be a breakout room, lounge or outdoor area.

We look at how an individualised living option would support Raoul to work towards his goal of living as independently as possible and be part of his community.

We also think about if living alone would:

- achieve the same outcomes and benefits for Raoul as living with someone else
- reduce the cost of supports for Raoul in the long term
- reduce the need for other kinds of supports Raoul needs
- give better outcomes for Raoul compared to other people his age.

For more information, refer to:

- [Our Guideline – Reasonable and necessary supports](#)
- [Our Guideline – Specialist Disability Accommodation](#)