



# Peppercorn Home & Garden Maintenance Program Client Handbook

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April 2019



## Acknowledgement of Country

Peppercorn Services Inc. acknowledges the Darug people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our organisation operates. We pay our respect to elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the spiritual, physical, emotional, mental and economic connections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the land and seas. We acknowledge that the dispossession of country and the disruption to family relationships have resulted in a breakdown of social networks.

Peppercorn is committed to working in ways that support and empower Aboriginal people and their families and communities. We are responsible for ensuring that our services are culturally competent, safe and sensitive.

### Peppercorn Services Inc.

ABN: 34 611 224 255

Peppercorn Place  
320 George Street  
WINDSOR NSW 2756

Tel: 02 4587 0222  
Email: [frontdesk@peppercorn.org.au](mailto:frontdesk@peppercorn.org.au)  
Web: [www.peppercorn.org.au](http://www.peppercorn.org.au)

**Peppercorn Lawn & Garden Service – Phone: 02 4577 9975**

Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays

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## Welcome to Peppercorn's Community Care programs

Welcome to this year's **Client Handbook for Peppercorn's Community Care Programs**. This Handbook is designed to help you understand how to use our service and answer some frequently asked questions. If you have further questions, please call on of our friendly team who will be happy to assist you.

**The Home & Garden Maintenance Service** is part of Peppercorn's Community Care programs. These programs can help you maintain your independence and quality of life. Our program ensures that your home has safer access, and environmental health and safety hazards are minimised. Our service supports residents firstly in the Hawkesbury local government area, and then in Penrith and the Blue Mountains LGAs.

Peppercorn's Community Care programs have three other services available for residents of the Hawkesbury LGA:

- **Community transport** provides a door to door transport service connecting Hawkesbury residents to get where they need to go across the Hawkesbury;
- **Community meals** provides an opportunity for Hawkesbury seniors to join with friends at a local community centre, club or restaurant; and
- **Community social support** where Hawkesbury seniors can participate in social outings to local attractions and shows.

Eligible clients can access these services without discrimination.

Peppercorn Community Care programs are supported by funding from the Australian Government under the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP), and from the NSW Government under the Transport for NSW Community Transport Program (CTP) and the Health-Related Transport Program (HRT).

The material contained in this handbook does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Commonwealth or NSW Governments, or of Hawkesbury City Council.

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**Our Vision at Peppercorn Services:  
A connected, healthy and inclusive Hawkesbury**

## Who is eligible for Peppercorn's programs?

Peppercorn's Community Care programs are available to:

- People over 65 who have been assessed by My Aged Care as needing assistance with daily living; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people aged over 50 who have been assessed by My Aged Care as needing assistance with daily living.

## What services can I get?

Peppercorn's Home & Garden Maintenance Service can connect you with a local contractor who will provide you with lawn mowing services and minor yard maintenance such as pruning to ensure your paths are clear and accessible.

The Government requires us to focus on repairs or maintenance of the home and garden to improve safety, accessibility and independence within the home environment for the client, and to minimise environmental health and safety hazards.

Once your home has been made safe, you will be able to arrange regular visits with the contractor who performs your service. These regular maintenance services should maintain the accessibility and safety of your home and support your independence, health and wellbeing. These basic services are primarily for function and safety rather than for making your lawns and gardens beautiful.

The Regional Assessment Service team (RAS) may also refer you to us for minor home maintenance such as:

- Minor repair of internal flooring and external access pathways to address slip and trip hazards;
- Gutter cleaning (if your home is single storey) and pressure cleans of paths to remove mould;
- Installation of deadlocks, window screen and security doors to improve personal safety.

These minor home maintenance services are only available if the RAS team has made a referral for you through My Aged Care, and only if our funding allocations allow.

## How do I access the program?

If you are over 65 years old (or over 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) you need to register with My Aged Care first by calling 1800 200 422.

My Aged Care is a Commonwealth Government agency which will determine your eligibility for services and make the referral. Please ask for Peppercorn Lawn Mowing Services. My

Aged Care may also refer you to a Regional Assessment Services (RAS) team who will visit you to work out what you need at your home.

## What will you ask me before I get these services?

Before we start providing services to you there are a few steps we must follow. We will

- Ask for your consent to record your private information, and share it with the Government;
- Ask for the personal details that the Government requires to process your registration and establish your access to subsidised services (see *What information we collect about you* in this Handbook);
- Read out to you and confirm that you understand your rights under the *Aged Care Act*;
- Ask for your address details, the size of your yard or garden, confirm the services you need or want, and how frequently you need them. My Aged care will have given us some basic information and we will confirm this with you;
- Ask you what we should do if you are not at home when we call. It is important that we have an emergency contact for you.

## What happens once you have my details?

Peppercorn will send you information describing the services you have agreed to, the names and contact details for contractors who can provide the services, a batch of vouchers that you can use to reduce the cost of your services, and instructions on how to use the vouchers.

## How much does lawn & garden maintenance cost?

The contractor will let you know how much your garden maintenance will cost. This will depend on the size of your garden, and whether you want other services like lawn edging, pruning, and rubbish and weed removal. If your garden is overgrown, the first service may take more time and so may cost more, and then the ongoing maintenance will be less.

Each Peppercorn voucher is worth \$25. You can use one voucher for each visit, reducing the overall cost of your lawn & garden maintenance.

You will also need to pay for any materials used for home repairs and maintenance.

## What happens if I'm not at home?

It is important that you let the contractor know if you are not going to be home. Arrangements can be made with your contractor to mow your lawns when you are not at home, and then payment and the voucher can be collected at another time as required.

Our contractors will knock on your door or ring your doorbell to see if you will answer. They may look through windows and call out to you. If you do not answer, they will call us so that we can contact your emergency contact or the police to come and check that you are okay.

## Reassessing your needs

Sometimes your needs will change. We will check with you to ensure that we are providing the right service for you.

Sometimes clients find that they no longer need our services. Family or friends may step in and take care of them. Let us know so we can close your record with us and free up services for others who may need support. And sometimes clients need other services beyond the capacity of Peppercorn's home & garden maintenance program.

## Exiting the service

Sometimes your care needs may be beyond Peppercorn's capacity. We will work with you to transition you to another appropriate service. We will contact you to discuss your needs and the best way for you to get the supports you require.

You may also be exited from the service if

- You tell us you no longer need our service (for whatever reason);
- You move out of the area;
- You start receiving services under the Commonwealth Home Care Package program;
- You enter a residential aged care facility;
- The contractor identifies a work health and safety issue that makes your home unsafe for them to work, and we are unable to remove or mitigate the hazard;
- You repeatedly abuse or harass the contractors;
- You breach your responsibilities described in this Handbook.

You can choose to have a carer or an advocate present during any discussion about your care needs. If you do not agree with the outcome, you have the right to appeal any decision.

## Refusal of services

Unfortunately, there may be times when we will suspend services or refuse to provide services to you. This will only happen if:

- You steal property or money from any Peppercorn worker or contractor;
- You wilfully damage property belonging to the contractor;
- You verbally or physically harass any contractor providing services to you - this includes using bad language and swearing at them;
- You verbally or physically harass any Peppercorn worker including volunteers - this includes using bad language and swearing at them;
- You are physically violent toward a contractor or any Peppercorn worker or any other client;
- You repeatedly cancel appointments without notice or refuse to pay for services.

## Your rights as a client

All Peppercorn Community Care clients have the right to:

- Be informed about available services;
- Be assessed for services without discrimination;
- Choose which services you want to receive;
- Have your complaints dealt with fairly and promptly;
- Have someone such as a carer, family member, friend, or specialist advisor speak on your behalf as an advocate.

Peppercorn Community Care programs operate under the Commonwealth Home Support Standards, and other recognised quality standards. These Standards ensure that:

- You will be treated and accepted as an individual, and have your individual preferences respected;
- You will be treated with dignity, and your privacy will be respected;
- You can expect to receive care that respects you, your family and your home;
- You can expect to receive care without being obliged to feel grateful to those providing the care;
- You will have full and effective use of all human, legal and consumer rights, including the right to freedom of speech regarding your care;
- You will have the right of access to advocates and other avenues of redress;
- You will be treated without exploitation, abuse, discrimination, harassment or neglect;
- You have the right to be treated fairly when you use our service;
- You can take part in the community and feel included when you use our service;
- You are supported to make choices about what you want to do. You can work toward your goals;
- You can tell people what you think about the services you receive;
- You can access the services that are appropriate to your needs;
- You are provided with information to assist you to make service choices and the right to be consulted and respected;
- You can expect our services to be planned, delivered, evaluated and managed well.

## Your responsibilities as a client

All Peppercorn Community Care clients have a responsibility to:

- Respect the rights of other clients, Peppercorn workers and Peppercorn's contractors, including the right to work in a safe environment;
- Treat Peppercorn workers and contractors without exploitation, abuse, discrimination or harassment;
- Give Peppercorn enough information to plan and deliver your services;
- Give adequate notice if a service is not required;

- Tell Peppercorn if there are any changes to your health which could affect how we provide you with a service;
- Tell Peppercorn about any problems with the care and services you receive;
- Pay any client fees or contributions within the agreed terms;

## The Charter of Aged Care Rights

From 1 July 2019, the new *Charter of Aged Care Rights* provides the same rights to all consumers, regardless of the type of Commonwealth subsidised care and services they receive. **This simplified Charter declares that you have the right to:**

- 1 safe and high-quality care and services;
- 2 be treated with dignity and respect;
- 3 have your identity, culture and diversity valued and supported;
- 4 live without abuse and neglect;
- 5 be informed about your care and services in a way you understand;
- 6 access all information about yourself, including information about your rights, care and services;
- 7 have control over, and make choices about, your care, personal and social life, including where choices involve personal risk;
- 8 have control over, and to make decisions about, the personal aspects of your daily life, financial affairs and possessions;
- 9 your independence;
- 10 be listened to and understood;
- 11 have a person of your choice, including an aged care advocate, support you or speak on your behalf;
- 12 complain free from reprisal, and to have your complaints dealt with fairly and promptly;
- 13 personal privacy and to have your personal information protected;
- 14 exercise your rights without it adversely affecting the way you are treated.

## Signing the new Charter

As a provider of aged care services, Peppercorn has a responsibility to help you understand the new Charter. Over the next 12 months or so (up until 30 June 2020) we will send you a copy of the *Charter of Aged Care Rights* and ask that you sign a copy of this Charter. We request your signature as a way of acknowledging that you have received the Charter and had assistance to understand it. Existing clients may be phoned to obtain their acknowledgement of the Charter.

You do not have to sign the Charter. You can commence and/or continue to receive care and services, even if you choose not to sign the Charter.

You can also download the Charter for free direct from the Department of Health at: <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/publications-and-articles/guides-advice-and-policies/charter-of-care-recipients-rights-and-responsibilities-home-care>

You can also find the Charter in other languages at this site.

## Maintaining your privacy and confidentiality

Your privacy and confidentiality will always be respected. And we must collect some basic information about you to provide the services you need.

When you register with Peppercorn, we will ask you for your permission to collect this information. If you do not give us permission to collect this information and to share it with our funders via the Commonwealth Government Data Exchange, we will not be able to provide you with a service.

We may also ask you for permission to use photos of you or the work done for you to promote Peppercorn's services. You do not have to give permission for this. Your refusal will not affect your services.

### What information do we collect about you?

We keep your name and contact details on your client record. Other details such as information on your health are recorded and reviewed regularly. The information the Government would like to know includes:

- Your gender;
- Your postcode, suburb or town, and the State you live in;
- Your age and birth date;
- Whether you are a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- If you have somebody who regularly helps you (a carer);
- Whether you receive a pension;
- What support and how much support you receive from services;
- What language is spoken at home; and
- Country of birth
- Emergency contact details

### Why do we collect your information?

The information we collect helps us keep up-to-date details about your needs, so we can provide the best possible services to you. We also use the information to better manage and plan the services we provide.

### Who else sees your information?

All your personal information is kept strictly confidential and is only accessed by authorised staff. When we register you as a Peppercorn client, we will ask for your permission to use personal information in our statistical reports to Government. At no time are you individually identified in these reports.

### Can you access your information?

Yes, you have the right to request access to your information and ask for it to be corrected if necessary.

A full copy of our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* is always available from the Peppercorn office.

## How do I make a complaint?

All complaints will be dealt with in a fair and confidential manner. Often problems can be resolved through explanation or discussion. Any service you receive will not be affected in any way by your complaint.

Contact the Peppercorn office and explain your complaint. This can be done by telephone, in writing or in person.

If you are not satisfied, you should write to the Executive Officer of Peppercorn Services at 320 George Street, Windsor NSW 2256. The Executive officer will then investigate your complaint and get back to you within 45 days.

If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, you can refer the complaint to:

NSW Ombudsman  
Level 24, 580 George Street, Sydney 2000  
Phone: 1800 451 524

Or write to:

Aged Care Complaints Scheme  
Australian Department of Social Services  
GPO Box 9848 Sydney  
Phone: 1800 550 552

Or you can lodge a complaint using the online complaints form at  
<https://www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au/internet/accc/publishing.nsf/Content/online-complaints-forms/>

## Can someone speak on my behalf?

You have the right to use an advocate (family member, friend or advocacy service) to speak on your behalf. Advocacy services are supported by both Federal and State Governments.

**The Aged Rights Advocacy Service (TARS)**  
Phone: (02) 9281 3600 or 1800 424 079 (free call)  
Email: [tars@tars.com.au](mailto:tars@tars.com.au)  
Website: [www.tars.com.au](http://www.tars.com.au)

A full copy of our *Compliments and Complaints Policy* is available from the Peppercorn office.

## How do I pass on a compliment?

We value your opinion. When we are doing well, we love to hear from you! If you want to give us a compliment, tell our team, or even write to the Executive Officer. If you have concerns with any changes we make to the service, please tell us. We share your feedback during team meetings as we learn how to provide the best service we can for you.

## Peppercorn Lawn & Garden Service – Phone: 02 4577 9975

Monday, Tuesday & Friday



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WINDSOR NSW 2756

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