



Greater  
Dandenong  
Volunteer  
Resource  
Service

Management  
Resource Kit

# VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT RESOURCE KIT

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## **Purpose of Volunteer Management Information Kit**

The purpose of this information kit is to be a resource to those that need to manage and coordinate volunteers.

It is designed to help direct you to the best sources of information, templates and relevant legislation.

Greater Dandenong Volunteer Resource Centre recommend prior to engaging volunteers at an organisation that this document and relevant links are read and understood. This is to ensure the best possible experience and support for mutual benefit to the volunteer and services rendered.

## **About Us**

South East Volunteers in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong established the Greater Dandenong Volunteer Resource Service in 2015. The service provides a personalised service through either face to face interviews or over the phone, to assist organisations in finding the right volunteers. The service will screen and train volunteers for placement within local community organisations, creating a strong community sector as well as deliver training to managers who work with volunteers so that they receive strong support.

The opportunities through voluntary work are many and varied. Not-for-profit organisations include volunteers in roles related to arts, culture, education, environment, health, emergency services, sport and international development. Volunteers might be involved in research, retail sales, home maintenance or food preparation. Volunteers can be any age or nationality and are invited to discover the number of opportunities available to them.

### **Vision**

Connected community through volunteering and services.

### **Mission**

We partner with the community in the pursuit, provision and growth of volunteering opportunities and social support. We provide a sense of social interaction and safety for vulnerable members of the community. Our services belong to local residents and enhance lifestyles.

## Volunteer Resource Centre

A volunteer resource centre (VRCs) is a not for profit, independently managed, community based organisation which subscribes to a code of ethics, standards of practice and the Australian Council for Volunteering "Principles of Volunteering".

- The core business of a volunteer resource centre is to:
- Resource and support people to make informed choices about volunteer work:
- Maintain relevant, up to date information on volunteer services:
- Refer, as opposed to recommend, volunteers to a wide range of not for profit organisations and projects across all sectors of the community:
- Raise the profile of volunteering in organisations, governments and the community by promoting the principles of volunteering:
- Work with other volunteer resource centres across Australia to maintain common standards of practice:
- Maintain sufficient resources to provide the required services to volunteers and the community: and,
- To work with other CSOs to promote best practice standards for volunteer involvement and management.

## Code of Ethics for VRCs

Volunteer resource centres which are accredited members of Volunteering Australia agree to a code of ethics such that:

- Volunteers are given sufficient information and support in order to make informed choices about volunteering
- The principles of volunteering are actively promoted and adhered to:
- Volunteers are referred to not for profit organisations and projects only:
- Volunteers are not referred directly to individuals:
- A volunteer is not knowingly referred to a job that directly replaces a paid position:
- Volunteers are not referred to an organisation involved in an industrial dispute:
- Confidentiality is maintained.

## Volunteer Policy – GDVRS

Greater Dandenong Volunteer Resource Service (GDVRS) promotes the principle that volunteering is always a matter of free choice and that volunteering is not a substitute for paid work. GDVRS provides volunteer support to non profit organisations in the community through the referral of individuals wishing to offer their services as volunteers.

We promote to potential volunteers that the Volunteer Community Service Organisations (CSO) will:

1. Empower volunteers to meet their own needs.
2. Offer volunteers work opportunities appropriate to their skills, experience and aspirations (where possible).

3. Provide volunteers with clear duty statements and arrange orientation to their work, and will encourage participating agencies to provide appropriate duty statements and orientation for volunteer positions at their CSO.
4. Offer training and support for volunteers to help them achieve personal and work goals. Training may be arranged with other agencies to which volunteers are referred.
5. Where possible, offer reimbursement or other compensation to cover out of pocket expenses. This may need to be negotiated with other agencies to which volunteers are referred.
6. Implement procedures to safeguard volunteer's safety and well being and consult with other agencies regarding these issues.
7. Recognise volunteers as valuable members of the team and provide them with opportunities to participate in relevant CSO decisions.
8. Provide mechanisms to acknowledge the contributions made by volunteers.

## **The Universal Declaration on Volunteering**

This Declaration supports the right of every woman, man and child to associate freely and to volunteer regardless of their cultural and ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, and physical, social or economic condition. All people in the world should have the right to freely offer their time, talent, and energy to others and to their communities through individual and collective action, without expectation of financial reward.

[Universal Declaration on Volunteering](#)

## **Volunteering Policy and Practice**

### **Definition and Principles of Volunteering 1996**

This Volunteering Victoria fact sheet explains the Volunteering Australia Definition and Principles of Volunteering, which are broadly accepted by the volunteering sector. In 2014, a national project to review the definition commenced.

[Definition and Principles of Volunteering](#)

### **National Standards for Involving Volunteers 2015**

Volunteering Australia has developed the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (National Standards) through a consultation process with volunteer-involving organisations and volunteers, and aim to promote a model of best practice in the management of volunteers. It is suggested that agencies use the guidelines as best practice when defining and documenting policy and procedures for volunteer involvement.

[National Standards FREE download](#)

## **Volunteering Facts**

[Facts and statistics about volunteering in Victoria](#)

[Principles of Volunteering Explained](#)

## Volunteering Statistics

### Volunteering statistics ABS Voluntary Work 2006

This ABS report has mostly been superseded by the 2010 version (below) but it contains the most recent data about the number of hours of volunteer work done in Australia and reasons for volunteering.

### [Volunteering statistics ABS Voluntary Work 2006](#)

### ABS Voluntary Work 2010

This ABS report is the main source of detailed statistics on voluntary work in Australia based on the 2010 General Social Survey. It includes rates of participation in voluntary work, characteristics of people who volunteer, information on the nature of the voluntary work undertaken, and reimbursement.

### [ABS Voluntary Work 2010](#)

### ABS Quick Stats 2011

Quick Stats provides general statistical information about specific geographical areas, based on the 2011 Census. It includes data about the number of people who did 'unpaid work' (through an organisation). You can search for data by various statistical area levels (e.g. by suburb or region). The next Census will be conducted in August 2016.

### [ABS Quick Stats 2011](#)

### ABS Volunteers in Sport 2010

This report provides detailed statistical information about volunteers in sport and recreation in Australia, based on the 2010 General Social Survey.

### [ABS Volunteers in Sport 2010](#)

### The Economic, Social and Cultural Value of Volunteering (WA) 2015

This brand new research was launched during [National Volunteer Week](#) and is an up to date picture of volunteering in WA today.

### [Volunteering WA Research Report 2015](#)

## Volunteer Rights:

### Volunteers have the right:

- to work in a healthy and safe environment (refer various Occupational Health and Safety Act[s]);
- to be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation;
- to be adequately covered by insurance;
- to be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working;
- to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses;

- to be given a copy of the organisations volunteer policy and any other policy that affects your work;
- not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker;
- not to do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes;
- to have a job description and agreed working hours;
- to have access to a grievance procedure;
- to be provided with orientation to the organisation;
- to have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988; and

to be provided with sufficient training to do your job.

## **Volunteer Responsibilities:**

### **Volunteers need to:**

- be reliable
- respect confidentiality
- carry out the specified tasks defined in the job description
- be accountable
- be committed to the organisation
- undertake training as requested
- ask for support when you need it
- give notice before you leave the organisation
- value and support other team members
- carry out the work you have agreed to do responsibly and ethically
- notify the organisation as soon as possible of absences
- adhere to the organisation's policies and procedures

## **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Legal Considerations**

There are some key legislation that applies to Volunteers and CSOs alike and it is important that your organisation is aware of them and has their own policies in place to ensure that you adhere to this legislation.

#### **Privacy & Confidentiality**

CSOs must adhere to the requirements of legislative bodies and guidelines, including any/all amendments to the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles included in the Privacy Act.

[The Federal Privacy Act 1988](#)

[The Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000](#)

[The Victorian Health Records Act](#)

## Occupational Health & Safety

Volunteers are covered by the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2004. The employer has a duty to ensure that no activity of his/her business puts the health or safety of people other than employees at risk. Every organisation has a legal responsibility to ensure that all staff and volunteers work in a safe and healthy environment in accordance with the OH&S Act 2004 (Vic).

### [OH&S Act 2004](#)

## Equal Employment Opportunity & Anti Discrimination

Discrimination is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law. The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 sets out 18 personal characteristics that make discrimination in employment against the law.

### [Volunteers and Equal Opportunity](#)

## Sexual Harassment

Under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, volunteers and unpaid workers are protected from sexual harassment in the same way as paid staff. The law may also protect volunteers from discrimination in certain circumstances.

### [Volunteer and equal opportunity fact sheets and FAQs](#)

## Bullying

A CSO and its staff have a responsibility to ensure volunteers are not exposed to bullying and must not engage in this behaviour. Each organisation needs to have a policy in place to address these issues if they come up.

### [Bullying in the Workplace](#)

## **Insurance**

### **Insurance and Liability**

Appropriate and comprehensive insurance cover is vital for any organisation involving volunteers. It is the way in which an organisation protects its own interests and those of its paid and volunteer staff and clients and customers. There are a number of forms of insurance, some of which may be essential to your organisation or circumstances. It is incumbent on the organisation to minimise risk through proper health and safety practices, documented procedures, training and management practices.

***Your organisation must have Public Liability & Volunteer Insurance before Volunteer Resource Centres can refer volunteers.***

### [Insurance and Liability Fact Sheet](#)

## **Recruitment processes**

### **Should we ask a volunteer to take on this job?**

Deciding whether a job is volunteer or paid is always a difficult decision for organisations. The issues are quite complex, especially when the service is new, undergoing change or losing



funding. Below are a few questions you might ask yourself when determining whether the role should be filled by paid or volunteer staff.

- Is the volunteer sought solely in order to save money on a salary?
- Has the role ever been carried out by paid workers within the organisation?
- Is the role carried out by paid workers in other organisations?
- Is the role covered by an industrial award?
- Has the organisation considered its legal obligations of duty of care?
- Is the organisation able to cover volunteer staff by adequate insurance?
- Is the suggested role or task(s) unpopular with paid staff?
- Can the role be performed in less than sixteen hours per week?
- Do we have the resources and time to recruit, select, train and support volunteer staff?
- Would the placement of a volunteer in this role add value to the organisation?
- Would a volunteer offer a different relationship to the organisation's customers than a person who is paid?
- Does the suggested volunteer role have intrinsic value and can it offer something to a Volunteer.

## **Recruitment**

Agencies should assess and screen potential volunteers to ensure that they are competent and appropriate for the volunteer activity. Agencies should consider:

### **Coordination**

Appoint a volunteer coordinator to your organisation; someone who is responsible for recruiting, inducting, managing and recognising your volunteers and who is a point of contact for volunteers.

### **Planning**

Develop a volunteer management plan. This plan should address the following:

- Number of volunteers required and the roles they are required for.
- Identification of skills already in the organisation (i.e. conduct a skills audit of existing members and volunteers).
- Recruitment strategies.
- Roles and responsibilities of volunteers.
- Roles and responsibilities of the organisation.
- Training that can be offered to volunteers.
- Ongoing day-to-day support that can be provided. Recognition strategies.

### **Position descriptions**

Develop position descriptions outlining volunteers duties. Position descriptions enable potential volunteers to understand what is expected of them before taking on the position.

### **Induction**

Provide new volunteers with an orientation, including:

- A welcome to the organisation.
- Details of their position.
- Information on the day-to-day operations of the organisation. Support that will be provided to them.
- Introductions to key people in the organisation.
- Relevant policies and procedures to workplace.

### Training

- Identify the training requirements of your volunteers.
- Keep up-to-date with the training available for various positions in the organisation.
- Include an allocation for volunteer training in the organisation

### Support

- Provide volunteers with a central point of contact i.e. volunteer coordinator.
- Ensure open channels of communication are available to volunteers. Provide them with the opportunity to ask questions, discuss problems, raise issues and put forward complaints.
- Make sure volunteers are not out of pocket; where possible cover their expenses.
- Ensure the roles and responsibilities of the volunteers and the organisation are clearly defined and communicated.
- Keep volunteers regularly informed about what is happening in the organisation. Ensure that recognition of volunteers is ongoing.

## Risk management

- Agencies should develop and implement appropriate risk management policies and procedures for the management of volunteers. Agencies should identify and assess the risk associated with the volunteer activity to be undertaken and take the necessary steps to eliminate or minimise any risk prior to commencement of the activity.
- Volunteering Australia has developed a helpful risk tool called [Running the Risk](#) to assist organisations involving volunteers to identify the range of risks that may affect them and their volunteers.

### [Sample Risk Management policy](#)

## Screening Process

Screening is one of the most important steps your organisation can take to ensure a safe, enjoyable environment to help manage risk.

- Create comprehensive position descriptions for volunteer roles (*see Position Descriptions*)
- Use application forms including requests for character references.
- Check character references by telephone. Have questions prepared to ask the referees. Be prepared to have open and frank conversations with referees.
- Determine in advance what the screening process might reveal that would make an applicant unsuitable for a volunteer role.

## [Screening and the Volunteer Recruitment Process](#)

### **Position descriptions**

Volunteers without position descriptions are more likely to feel unsupported in their work. A good position description clarifies the responsibilities and support arrangements for a volunteer. It helps volunteers understand clearly their role and what is expected from them.

For more information, refer to Volunteering Australia's' [Toolkit for Designing Volunteer Roles](#) and Position Descriptions on their Website. It is a valuable resource for scoping out what you need for your organisation and for your volunteers.

### **Training**

Responsible organisation ensures their staffs are properly trained. When developing a volunteer program, an organisation must take into consideration the time and costs associated with training volunteers.

For information on developing a training program for your volunteers please refer to the Guide to [Training Volunteers](#)

### **External Sources of Training**

There are some excellent sources of FREE training for your volunteers (and for Volunteer Managers). Just a few are:

#### **Volunteer Resource Centre's**

Your nearest Volunteer Resource Centre will have a variety of workshops for your volunteers and for you. They usually run for about 2 hours, but there are workshops that can be ½ to 1 full day.

#### **Local Council**

Depending on the council, many of them run Skills Development Workshops. Check out the council closest to your organisation for available programs

#### **HACC Training**

Home And Community Care of Victoria have contracted Chisholm Institute to run a variety of workshops and all day training courses, free of charge, for staff, managers and volunteers who work in a HACC funded program. They run these courses in a variety of regional areas around Victoria. For the dates and venues available, go to their website -

<https://hacc.chisholm.edu.au/Training>

#### **Volunteering Victoria**

Volunteering Victoria is our peak body and is a great source of information and training in the state. There is a charge for training conducted by Volunteering Victoria, but they do keep it to a minimum. [www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au](http://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au)

### **The Checks**

Background checking, including criminal records checks, is routinely used to screen many potential volunteers for suitability in volunteer roles. This is particularly the case where people

volunteer with ‘vulnerable’ groups such as children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, or in roles that have financial or driving responsibilities.

Background checks may include:

- Police Checks
- Working with Children Checks
- International Police Checks

For additional information on please refer to the [Managers Guide to Background Checks](#)

## Volunteering on a Visa

There are a number of Visas granted to people from overseas that allow them to engage in volunteering. You can obtain more info from the Department of Immigration & Border Protection website - [www.immi.gov.au/visas](http://www.immi.gov.au/visas)

Volunteering Australia Information Sheet for additional information on [Visa for Volunteers from Overseas](#)

## Volunteering for Centrelink

In order to receive certain benefits, some people are able to volunteer at listed organisations to meet their Activity Allowance for Centrelink.

[Read the FAQ's on Centerlink Volunteer Obligations](#)

## Volunteers under 18

Many agencies receive requests from under 18's to volunteer, typically for work experience. It is up to the agency whether they wish to engage our youth, however it is an excellent way to involve younger generations in social services and give back to the community and it is highly encouraged.

- Working with Children Checks are not required for those under 18 working with other children.
- Best practice is to receive parents consent and/or signed agreement with school/university

[Read more about Youth Volunteering](#)

## Recognition of Volunteers

One important way of encouraging your volunteers to remain with your organisation is to give them adequate recognition. Recognition to be effective should be consistent and ongoing. Volunteers can quickly lose motivation if they feel that their work is not valued.

Some ways that volunteer organisations may give recognition to their volunteers are:

- Adequately orientate volunteers.
- Volunteer coordinators are readily accessible to volunteers.
- Encourage volunteer participation in team planning.
- Encourage volunteer participation in planning that effect their work.
- Give additional responsibility.

- Provide training
- Enable volunteers to 'grow' on the job.
- Include volunteers in special events.
- Include volunteers in coffee breaks.
- Recommend volunteers to prospective employers.
- Maintain Occupational Health and Safety standards.
- Take the time to explain and listen to volunteer's ideas and concerns.
- Recognise and accommodate personal needs and problems.
- Celebrate achievements and efforts.
- Keep volunteers informed via newsletters.
- Provide letters of reference.
- Send birthday and Christmas cards.
- Allocate notice board space to applaud volunteer achievement
- Organise awards with certificates or plaques or medals.
- Honour volunteers on International Volunteers Day, December 5th,
- Celebrate National Volunteer Week.

The Volunteering Australia Website has a great document with some very economical ways to recognise your volunteers - [101 Ways to Recognise Volunteers](#).

## **National Volunteer Week & International Volunteer Day**

### **National Volunteer Week**

The need for a national volunteer week, to celebrate volunteering was determined in 1988 by the fledgling Australian Association for Volunteering. The inaugural National Volunteer Week, as it was so designated, took place in December 1989 and was the first collaborative effort to promote volunteering nationally.

The dates and themes for National Volunteer Week are determined by the national peak body for volunteering, Volunteering Australia [VA]. The annual theme is to be used for both National Volunteer Week and International Volunteer Day.

National Volunteer Week is in May. It runs from the Monday after Mothers Day through to the following Sunday and has been designated as a week for promotion and recruitment and recognising the achievements of volunteers.

### **International Volunteer Day**

December 5th was declared as International Volunteer Day by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985. The first International Volunteer Day was celebrated in 1986 by dozens of countries. Activities ranged from clean-up campaigns, round table conferences, competitions and exhibitions.

In Australia, International Volunteer Day has been designated as a day for the recognition of volunteer involvement, a day on which organisations can thank their volunteer staff.

## State Peak Bodies

Each State/ Territory is represented by a peak body providing membership and services specific to your location. Any State/ Territory specific queries and all training inquiries are to be directed towards your State/ Territory peak body.

[List of State/Territory peak bodies](#)

## Victorian Volunteer Resource Centres

Volunteer Resource Centres/Services are located throughout Victoria for a full list of [Victorian VRC/S](#)

## References & Resources

### Sources of information in this document:

Volunteering Australia (VA)

Volunteering Victoria (VV)

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

### Resources

Volunteering Australia

[www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)

Volunteering Victoria

[www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au](http://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au)

United Nations Online Volunteering

[www.onlinevolunteering.org](http://www.onlinevolunteering.org)

Go Volunteer

[www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)

Victoria Volunteer Portal

[www.volunteer.vic.gov.au](http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au)

CrimCheck

[www.crimcheck.org.au](http://www.crimcheck.org.au)

## Some other useful links

Link to Victorian Councils  
[www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au)

Department of Social Services  
[www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)

Department of Health  
[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Grants Victoria  
[www.vic.gov.au/grants.html](http://www.vic.gov.au/grants.html)

Australian Charities & Not-for-Profits Commission  
[www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

Probono  
[www.probonoaustralia.com.au](http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au)

Justice Connect  
[www.justiceconnect.org.au](http://www.justiceconnect.org.au)

Worksafe Victoria  
[www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

Fairwork Commission  
[www.fwc.gov.au](http://www.fwc.gov.au)

Community Service Job Search  
[www.probonoaustralia.com.au](http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au)

VMIA  
[www.vmia.vic.gov.au](http://www.vmia.vic.gov.au)

AON  
[www.aon.com.au/australia/not-for-profit-insurance/files/volunteers-vital-pack-brochure.pdf](http://www.aon.com.au/australia/not-for-profit-insurance/files/volunteers-vital-pack-brochure.pdf)