

Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc



Volunteer's Handbook



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(Note: We are located in the building of the Dingley Village Neighbourhood Centre)

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Welcome to Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc

Thank you for joining the Make a Difference Dingley Village volunteer team. We hope you enjoy your time.

Volunteering allows people to build new skills, make new friends, explore new situations can challenges, and feel a sense of personal fulfilment. It is through people volunteering their time to support one another, that communities become stronger, better informed, and better places to live.

This handbook is to provide you with the necessary information about the organisation and the way in which we work. It includes a little of our history, and the years of service we have provided to our local community.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please speak to any member of our staff who will be pleased to assist you.



Our Chairperson Sue Anderson receiving a grant cheque from Freemasons

INTRODUCTION

Volunteering with Make a Difference provides you with an opportunity to share your time, talents and abilities in a supported and professional environment.

By joining our volunteer staff, you can learn new skills and expand your circle of friends while making a valuable contribution to the community.

Volunteer work is based on non-commercial settings. It can be through non-profit organisations such as ours.

The volunteer freely chooses volunteer work.

Volunteering offers opportunities for people to become involved in the community, meet other people and make a positive contribution. It is a means of enhancing specific skills and talents, personal development and self esteem.

Emergency Relief agencies such as ours can also be known as Community Advice Bureau's, or Community Information and Support Services, and are for everyone. We are all over Australia and in Victoria alone thousands of people use a local Emergency Relief Agency each week.

There are approximately 137 agencies in the metropolitan region and many more in rural Victoria.

We are a member of the non-government, not for profit, community support sector.

We are part of the Community Information and Support Services movement, which began to evolve in Victoria in the early 1970's. The main aim of the movement being to offer people supportive, non-threatening environments where they could raise issues of concern.



WHAT WE DO

- We reduce the need for more intensive and expensive programs.
- We set up communities with information and resources.
- We increase opportunities for people.
- We provide aid and assistance for the relief of distress, poverty or misfortune of individuals and families in the community.
- We provide free, impartial and confidential support information in referral services to all members of the community.
- We provide emergency relief to families in order to avoid a situation of poverty.
- We provide counselling to people with complex issues.
- We advocate and act on behalf of disadvantaged people with government bodies, utility companies
- We provide mediation to families interested in using this process to resolve problems.
- We provide emergency accommodation for families in crisis.
- We provide parent education programs.

WHO WITH

Make a Difference works with

- Residents
- Volunteers
- Federal/ State/ Local Governments
- Other community agencies.

HOW WE WORK

We provide a friendly, supportive approach, promoting wellness and independence.

We have a Board of Governance elected from the community to manage Make a Difference.

Everyone works as a team to decide policies, programs and processes. This ensures that the organisation is in touch with and in tune with local needs. Volunteers are vital to the running of each centre. Most centres have some paid, part-time staff.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST

Australian Charitable sector employs nearly one million people, has a combined income of \$100 billion. More than 38,000 charities are registered

CURRENT OPERATIONS

➤ **Mission Statement**

To provide direct services, to assist disadvantaged individuals and families, to meet their immediate needs with the view to empower and facilitating their independence.

➤ **Vision**

We will be an agency that supports families and individuals in need.

➤ **The goal of the Business Plan**

The simplicity of the Business Plan should be that achievable goals are set in line with corporation objectives thus allowing the performance to be evaluated against these goals. However, to achieve these goals both the investment in time, effort and finances need to be carefully controlled and monitored in order to realise both the Mission Statement and the Vision.

➤ **Client Base**

General Public, Children, Individuals, Parents and Families.

➤ **Categories of eligibility for assistance**

Be the holder of a current Health Care Card, unemployed, single parents, vulnerable families, financially disadvantaged persons, families or individuals with special needs, disadvantaged children and refugees.

➤ **Service Areas**

City of Kingston and the City of Greater Dandenong

➤ **Objectives**

Provide services in response to community needs and remain pertinent. Deliver accurate information, direct help and advocacy to clients. Conduct programs that develop skills to enable clients to gain greater power and control over their lives.

Interface with other social agencies in order to maximize the support necessary to service our clients with a particular focusing on social justice and welfare issues. Remain a focused, financial and viable organization. Maintain adequate staff level through selection, training and personnel development. Develop human rights good practice within the organisation.

➤ **Operating Standards**

Promote a culture, which values and respects our client base, staff and volunteers. All staff members and volunteers support positive outcomes for children, youth and families. Create a welcoming, safe and accessible environment. Promote the safety, stability and development of children and youth. Strengthen the capability of parents, and families to provide effective care. Create an integrated service response, which supports the safety, stability and development of children and youth. As a caring and devoted agency all of our objectives and daily operating procedures are underpinned by a human rights based approach through which we demonstrate a commitment to maximising the core human rights standard and principle.

➤ **Human Rights and Society's Responsibilities**

We have developed human rights good practice criteria of which there are 9 key statements and 13 separate dependant areas of responsibilities



ROLES OF BOARD AND STAFF.

Chairperson – Our Chairperson is Sue Anderson. Sue has been very familiar with our operation as she started by volunteering in our Food Bank. Sue's major area of responsibility is sponsorship and fundraising.

Social Worker- Marion Harriden is responsible for the overall management of the Make a Difference.

The office is open Monday- Thursday 9am-3pm.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Chairperson	Sue Anderson
Public Officer	Irene McInnes
Treasurer	Margarete Lehmann
Member	Noleen Barczak
	Marlene Nanscawen
	Alma Osbourne
	Margaret Irons
	Maria D'Silva
	Jacqui Nally

STAFF

Social Worker	Marion Harriden OAM
Finance Officer	Leeanne O'Connor
Administration	Judith Klarenbeek

HISTORY OF Make a Difference

In 1982 a public meeting was held, as local residents voiced their concerns about the community.

In 1983 the Dingley Village Community Advice Bureau offered its doors to provide programs and services for anyone in need of assistance.

The Dingley Village Community Advice Bureau has grown in size and stature since that time, never losing sight of its commitment to serve the community.

Our services have included:

- Mediation
- Referral
- Direct aid
- Advocacy
- Parent education
- Emergency housing
- Financial counselling
- Grief counselling

We are a not-for-profit, non-political, non- denominational organisation.

We have 3 part time staff, an elected committee of management and over 50 volunteers.

We see hundreds of families in crisis each month and are concerned that we are facing challenges ahead.



VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

- To give a commitment
- To be reliable
- To provide a good service
- To be co-operative
- To keep up-to-date
- To accept supervision
- To act according to the policies and procedures of the organisation
- Act in a manner which ensures the safety and well-being of yourself and others at all times
- Inform the co-ordinator of health conditions and other limitations which affect the kind of tasks you can do
- Ask for further instruction and support when you need it
- Value the privacy of others and not discuss clients with other people
- Respect peoples personal views and their right to make their own choices
- Be willing to work through any conflict situation that may arise
- Advise the co-ordinator of any changes to your address and phone etc.
- To sign the volunteer register daily.
- To note that the Dingley Village Neighbourhood Centre is a “no smoking” building.
- To attend training as arranged.



VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

Unlike paid staff, volunteers are not covered by award conditions or work place agreements. Volunteers, however, do have rights, some of which are enshrined in legislation and some of which are the moral obligations of an organisation involving volunteers. The following list describes your basic rights.

As a volunteer, you have a right to:

- Engage in satisfying work, which takes into consideration your interests, temperament, capabilities and available time.
- Be interviewed in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- Have a job description and agreed working hours.
- Be provided with a copy of your signed Volunteer Agreement Form.
- Know what work is expected of you and to whom you are accountable.
- Be provided with orientation to the program in which you are working
- Have access to sufficient training for you to do your job and ongoing training opportunities.
- Have choices and the right to say 'no' to tasks that do not suit you or feel you cannot do.
- Be heard and have your views respected.
- Receive support and constructive feedback from your colleagues and supervisors.
- Receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses as appropriate.
- Have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988.
- Work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Be adequately covered by insurance
- Have access to grievances procedures.
- To be recognised as a valued team member.
- To be trained.
- To receive support.
- To have good working conditions.
- To have a clear understanding of what is involved in the job.
- To participate in decision-making.
- To have job satisfaction.
- To be treated with respect by the organisation and co-workers.
- To receive legal protection. **Refer to the Good Samaritan Act**

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

- As a volunteer, I agree to be bound by all policies and procedures of Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc for volunteers as outlined in the information received during orientation and training.
- I agree to assume responsibility for all tasks and duties I undertake in my volunteer role, with commitment to both the client and the Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc.
- I agree to attend volunteer training programs.
- I agree to attend additional relevant training programs as deemed appropriate by the co-ordinator of volunteers.
- I will undertake to carry out my tasks in a professional manner and without prejudice or discrimination towards clients of the agency or co-workers.
- I agree to keep all client and organisational information I might become privy to in the strictest confidence.
- I am aware that the coordinator of the Volunteer Program can initiate changes to my tasks in accordance with safe work practices or changes to service delivery.
- I agree to work without compensation in money.
- I agree to work for a trial period subject to interview as discussed at my interview.

Having been made aware of my rights and responsibilities as a volunteer with the Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc, I agree to be bound by the above.

Signed:

Dated:

On behalf of the Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc

Signed:

Dated:

Orientation/ Induction

When a volunteer has decided to join the team, they will be invited to attend an orientation session at the office.

The volunteer co-ordinator, will introduce them to the physical layout of the building and the areas that we use.

She will also introduce new recruits to fellow volunteers and induct them into the role they have applied for, at the conclusion of the session, volunteers will be given a copy of the handbook, which includes valuable reading!

Volunteers are now placed on the roster, ready for action.



VOLUNTEERS DUTIES

- Distribute food as required.
- Re-bag any bulk items, i.e., rice etc, ensuring that you use the plastic disposable gloves provided.
- Re-stock cupboards from storage room.
- Tidy cupboards in kitchen when necessary.
- Ensure storage room is clean and tidy at all times i.e. tidy shelves.
- When chest freezer is empty please switch off at power source.
- When card boxes are emptied, fold flat and remove to bins outside Neighbourhood Centre.
- Return surplus plastic carry bags back to storage room.
- Please ensure that kitchen is left in a clean/tidy condition on completion of your shift. Other groups use the kitchen.

The M.A.D.D.V appreciates and values the work done by its volunteers. Thank you.



The Good Samaritan Act

In 2002, the Victorian Government passed the “Wrongs and Other Acts” [Public Liability Insurance Reform] Act which introduced into legislation a new Volunteer Protection clause to help protect volunteers from being held personally liable for an incident that may have led to injury.

Under the provisions of the Act, a volunteer will not be held personally liable in any civil proceedings for anything done in relation to community work organised by a community organisation in cases where the volunteer acted in good faith, and within the boundaries of their roles and responsibilities.

Under the definitions of the Act, community work is any work done, or to be done for:

- Religious, educational, charitable or benevolent purpose;
- The purpose of promoting or encouraging literature, science or the arts.
- The purpose of sport, recreation, tourism or amusements;
- The purpose of conserving or protecting the environment;
- The purpose of establishing, carrying on or improving a community, social or cultural centre;
- A political purpose;
- The purpose of promoting the common interests of the community generally or of a particular section of the community; or
- Any purpose specified in the regulations.

Under the provisions of the Act any liability resulting from the actions of a volunteer acting or failing to act in good faith that would normally attach to the volunteer instead attach to the organisation.

It is important to note there are a number of exceptions to protection of volunteers.

Volunteers will not be protected by the Act if they knew, or if it is considered they should reasonably have known, that at the time of the incident:

- They were acting outside the scope of the community work organised by the community organisation; or
- They were acting contrary to instructions given by the organisation in relation to the service they were providing; or
- Their ability to provide the service in a proper manner was, at the relevant time, significantly impaired by drugs or alcohol.

In addition, the legislation will not apply in respect of any claim to recover damages for defamation.

Under the definitions of the Act, a volunteer is defined as an individual who provides a service in relation to community work on a voluntary basis. A person is still considered to be a volunteer even if, in providing a service, he or she receives:

[a] Reimbursements of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in relation to their work;

[b] Remuneration that would have been received regardless of whether or not he or she provided that service.



DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Volunteers have the right to fair and equitable treatment of grievances and complaints in a professional manner. It is our aim to resolve disputes amicably through conciliation and negotiation.

In the first instance, please raise any concerns or complaints with staff. In the event that clarification is required at a later date, it is recommended that either or both, parties document the details associated with the grievance and the outcome of the meeting and place this on your individual file.

If you are not satisfied with the response or you feel it is inappropriate to discuss the issue with this person, you are entitled to request that the complaint be referred to the committee for investigation.



Out of pocket expenses

Organisations need to give considerations to all aspects of this subject and be clear on their position. Volunteer out-of-pocket expenses, is a legitimate expense line in the budget. The cost to the organisation is likely to be minimal compared with the volunteer contribution, and failure to pay expenses can debar potential volunteers, particularly if they are on a low-income level or have financial responsibilities.

However, some organisations may decide they cannot afford to pay any expenses. In such cases, current and potential volunteers will need to be informed of the situation.

On the other hand some volunteers, although entitled to out-of-pocket expenses, may not decide to claim, seeing the activity as their hobby, or wishing to accept the costs as a further contribution to the organisation or cause. In such cases, volunteers should not be made to feel they are obliged to claim expenses.

An organisation will need to assess costs, which qualify as out-of-pocket expenses at the time of budget preparation. They can include:

- **Travel allowance**

This may simply cover the equivalent of public transport to and from work. On the other hand, if a car is needed to pay a home visit, a decision is needed as to whether to pay the same rate as is provided for paid workers [where car insurance and depreciation may have been calculated into the payable rate] or to pay a lower rate, e.g. to cover petrol costs only.

- **Meal allowance**

A meal is often provided for volunteers when it is part of the activity in which the volunteer is involved, eg, a day care centre where its members are provided with a free meal. A meal allowance may be provided when a volunteer is necessary away from home, e.g. a volunteer bus driver taking a group on a day outing.

- **Clothing**

When a uniform is required, e.g. a fire fighter or a hospital volunteer, this is normally provided. Wear and tear on clothes may be an issue in some situations, e.g. emergency workers repairing storm damage, and requiring replacement, or dry cleaning costs.

- **Phone calls from home**

This may be occasional, or as part of the job, e.g. organising rosters of volunteer guides for tours arranged by the botanical gardens. Whatever the situation, the organisation should have determined its policy on expense reimbursement as part of its planning process.

Informing volunteers

The volunteer program manager should inform volunteers of the organisation's policy and procedures at the time of recruitment. This information will include:

- What expenses are covered?
- The rate.
- Records, including claim form, to be completed by the volunteer.

Honorariums:

Honorariums should not be confused with reimbursements of out-of-pocket expenses, and should be treated with caution, as they have the potential to undermine wage structures. Work done by persons receiving an honorarium, no matter how valuable, cannot be said to be volunteering which is performed without monetary reward [which of course does not preclude the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.] Unlike reimbursement of expenses, an honorarium is taxable.



References

The Board of Management of the Make a Difference Dingley Village Inc is pleased to provide a written reference for volunteers.

Reference will include:

- Details regarding organisation.
- Dates of service.
- Duties of volunteers.
- General comments.

Welcome Aboard!

