

Volunteer Management Policy

Sustainable Communities

Purpose

Westside Housing Association Inc. (Westside) values the contribution of volunteers and their involvement in delivering sustainable community development activities. Volunteers' work both for the benefit of their tenant peers within Westside and the wider community.

This policy is intended to ensure that volunteers with Westside have work that is planned, safe, fulfilling, valued and appreciated.

The Volunteer Management Policy (the Policy) outlines Westside's philosophy for involving volunteers and provides direction and structure for managing volunteers.

The Policy aims to clearly define the relationship between Westside and its volunteers. It establishes the expectations, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and Westside.

Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers and paid Westside staff.

Definitions

Reimbursement: a payment to a volunteer for any pre-approved expense incurred whilst working with Westside.

Volunteer: an individual who is registered with Westside and has approval to undertake activities:

1. in a formal volunteer program with Westside
2. of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
3. of the volunteer's own, free will, and without coercion;
4. for no financial reward; and
5. that compliment but do not replace the services provided by paid staff.

The following persons, for this Policy, are not considered volunteers:

1. People on work experience or work placement,
2. Students undertaking volunteering as a part of the education curriculum,
3. Board Members (who are recognised under the *Constitution of Westside Housing Association Incorporated*)

Volunteer Coordinator: a paid staff member(s) who is directly responsible for the day to day management of a volunteer undertaking duties on behalf of Westside.

Vulnerable People: refers to those who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation due to their dependency on others or experiences of disadvantage, and could include people with a physical, intellectual or psychological disability, the frail aged, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugees, and those living in poverty.

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Policy Statement

Westside believes volunteering has many benefits for the organisation, the individuals involved and for the wider community.

Westside acknowledges the importance of volunteers and the valuable contribution they make to the community. Westside wants to provide opportunities for tenants and others to use their experience, knowledge and skills in volunteer programs both for Westside and facilitate their involvement in other organisations where their skills and interests align.

We recognise that the co-operative relationships formed between volunteers, paid staff, tenants, other organisations and members of the community, contributes to developing strong, resilient and sustainable communities.

Volunteering has many positive outcomes for individual well-being and connections to local communities. Volunteers from the tenant and wider community have learned skills and experiences that enhance Westside program and services.

Volunteering is recognised as a pathway to employment, a pathway to retirement and a recognised method of reaching Centrelink Job Search and Volunteer Work requirements.

Through volunteering people from disadvantaged backgrounds and vulnerable situations are able learn, grow and share experiences and information (peer education); ultimately enabling them to achieve better tenancy and personal outcomes.

Volunteerism is a characteristic, skill and desire that exists and can be harnessed within the Westside tenant community.

All volunteer roles and programs will be compliant with the minimum National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (as prescribed by Volunteering Australia).

Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are not covered by awards or workplace agreements. Westside is committed to ensuring that that it meets and exceeds standards of the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.

Volunteer Rights

- To be respected and valued and included as a valued team member
- To work in a healthy and safe environment
- To choose the type of activities they are to be involved in accordance with their skills, interests and Westside's needs
- To receive an orientation and induction to Westside and the volunteer program in which they are working
- To have the necessary training, equipment and resources to do the required duties
- To have their ideas welcomed and acknowledged by the Volunteer Coordinator and other Westside staff
- To raise any grievances or issues in accordance with Westside's Grievance Policy
- To receive reimbursement for agreed out of pocket expenses (including kilometer reimbursement for fuel expenses)
- To have open communication between Volunteer, Volunteer Coordinator and Westside Management

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- Know who they are accountable to and who to turn to with difficulties or problems
- To be protected by the relevant and required insurance
- To be actively involved in the decision making that affects them
- Have all confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 and Westside's Privacy Policy
- Have a clearly written position description
- Be aware of Westside's grievance procedure
- To feel able to say no, if feeling exploited, unsafe or unsure

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers have obligations to Westside and will be required to:

- Fulfil the duties as specified in their position/role description as created by the management of Westside
- Return a satisfactory National Police Clearance and (if required) DCSI Clearance and up to 2 personal or professional referees (as required by the position)
- Understand and adhere to the requirements of Westside's Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and guidelines
- Participate in the appropriate induction and on-going training as provided and available to them for their role
- Operate under the direction and supervision of Westside staff and staff of partner organisations, as required, to achieve the event, program or project objectives
- Maintain confidentiality regarding Westside business, program information, tenant details or any other sensitive, private information they come across during their volunteer duties
- Report any unsafe working conditions/potential hazards to the Westside Volunteer Coordinator (or in lieu, Westside Office Manager, CEO)
- Work in a safe manner and exercise a duty of care in areas of Work Health and Safety
- Value, support and respect other team members (staff and volunteers)
- Report any injury/damage to themselves or a third party within the required timeframe
- Accept feedback and direction from their supervisor and/or the Volunteer Coordinator
- Ask for support when needed
- Give informal, and if possible, timely notice of intention to leave the organisation

Westside's Responsibilities

Westside has responsibility to ensure:

- All volunteers are valued, treated fairly and with respect and shown gratitude and appreciation for their contribution
- All staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and committed to its implementation

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- Appropriate Insurance cover is maintained for people engaged as volunteers
- All relevant National Police Clearance, DSCI checks and other fee for application clearances as required by specific volunteer roles are paid for
- The financial expense of all external training required to perform specific volunteer roles are paid for
- The Volunteer program will be managed to ensure the upmost safety for volunteers, staff, tenants, customers and members of the community
- All volunteer roles, and the volunteer program, are compliant with the minimum National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (as prescribed by and updated Volunteering Australia), and compliant with all relevant legislation
- That roles undertaken by volunteer's compliment, but do not replace, the roles of paid staff
- All volunteer roles are documented including via relevant position descriptions, and records of volunteer involvement are maintained
- Sufficient time, resources and relevant training are provided to enable the Volunteer Coordinator to appropriately carry out their responsibilities
- The Volunteer Program is supported by relevant policies, procedures and project documentation
- that each volunteer has:
 - o An up-to-date position description which clearly sets out the extent and scope of their role
 - o An appropriate induction to the organisation and the area in which they are volunteering, including access to relevant policies and a volunteer manual.
 - o A clear statement of Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities.
 - o A safe workplace with the correct tools and equipment to safely fulfill their role
 - o Appropriate training and development to meet the needs of the role.
 - o The opportunity to participate in meetings, planning and in consultation and decision making appropriate to their role and responsibilities
 - o Ongoing support and supervision

Westside's Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for:

- ensuring that this policy and supporting procedures and processes are implemented and adhered to in practice by other Westside staff and volunteers
- the review of this policy and supporting procedures and processes in line with changing legislation and practices.

Dissemination of the policy

The Volunteer Management Policy be provided to new volunteers are part of their induction and will be available publicly on Westside's website:

www.wha.org.au/communityhub/volunteering

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Policy History

Date approved by Board: 06 November 2017	Date amended: N/A (Version 1.0)
Version 1.0	Next review due: 2 November 2020

Endorsement

Approved by Board at meeting held on 06 November 2017

Chairperson

Date