



VOLUNTEERING IN THE SANDGATE BRIGHTON CATHOLIC PARISH



**Based upon Archdiocesan Volunteering Policy
Archdiocesan Services – Human Resources**

SECTION 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. THE VOLUNTEER'S MISSION

Many organisations including Catholic institutions spend considerable time and effort developing their own, particular mission statement. These are often displayed publicly in their workplaces.

As a Volunteer, the truth is that you do not have to be unduly worried if you cannot find such a mission statement. The Church does NOT have a mission.

The truth is "**The Mission is the Church**"

Jesus came into our world. He was and Is the Mission. A most appropriate way to summarise Jesus' Mission is:

"Love one another the way I love you" (John 15:12)

Such an awareness of and commitment to, 'Mission' is a primary reason for belonging to, and engaging in the activities of the Church.

If one serves in some capacity in the Church, you are not JUST Volunteers: You have been called to walk with Jesus and carry on HIS MISSION in this place.

Peter began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you" and Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up "anything" for my sake and the sake of the Gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present life ...and eternal life in the age to come." (Mark 10:29)

1.2. OUR CATHOLIC VALUES

In whatever capacity we serve, we aim to behave at all times in a way that upholds the Values found in Catholic Social Teachings.

These teachings emphasise:

- Respect for Human Dignity
- Respect for Human Life
- The Principle of Association
- The Principle of Participation
- Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
- The Principle for Social Justice
- The Principle of Solidarity
- The Principle of Stewardship
- The Principle of Subsidiarity
- Human Equality
- The Principle of Common Good

1.3. VOLUNTEER DEFINITION

Who is a Volunteer?

A Volunteer can be defined as:

- A person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking.
- A person who performs a service willingly and without pay.¹
- A person who is acting on a voluntary basis (irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses).²

Who is Not a Volunteer?

The Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) recognises formal work experience arrangements that are a mandatory part of an education and training course. As such, a work experience participant, including vocational placements and internships are not classified as Volunteers.

For further information see The Fair Work Australia Fact Sheet at

<http://www.fairwork.gov.au/resources/fact-sheets/employer-obligations/Pages/internships-vocational-placements-and-unpaid-work.aspx>

What is Volunteer work?

Volunteer work is work done not for profit. It contributes to a greater cause that is for the good of your fellow man and society in general.³ The principles of volunteering include:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the Volunteer;
- Volunteer work is unpaid;
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice;
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community;
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs;
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not for profit sector only;
- Volunteers should not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers;
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others; and
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

¹ www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/volunteer

² Qld Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s390 (2)

³ www.volunteeringaustralia.org

What motivates a person to do Volunteer work?

A Volunteer has many motivations, including:

- To be and feel useful
- For the satisfaction to do good and to do it well
- For fun and to break routine
- To learn, in the biggest sense of the word
- To give back to the society and humanity for which we have been given
- To meet people with similar interests
- For the knowledge that you served the community
- To be able to help and share some knowledge or a talent

1.4. VOLUNTEER POLICY

- Throughout the Archdiocese it is recognised that Volunteers play a very important role and their efforts contribute highly to the life of the Archdiocese.
- The involvement of Volunteers within the Archdiocese will be encouraged and supported whenever possible.
- All Volunteers offering their services to a Parish or Agency will have their offers dealt with promptly and be given a warm welcome and treated well, thus reflecting the value we give to Volunteers. Furthermore it is recognised that where Volunteers are treated well, they will respond with long-term loyalty and commitment.
- Volunteers will be given positive recognition and encouragement and every effort made to motivate them, both for their own self-worth and as an example leading to others wishing to Volunteer with the Archdiocese.
- The role of Volunteers will be clearly defined. In every situation where a Volunteer is to be involved, an agreed statement of tasks should be drawn up (if appropriate) and Volunteers should be thoroughly prepared for the tasks that they will be undertaking.
- Volunteering will never be seen as a substitution for paid employment. The work of Volunteers will be that of a supportive, complementary nature alongside paid staff.
- Training will be given to all Volunteers, including induction and on the job training and will be reviewed and updated regularly.
- There will be ongoing reviews with Volunteers and formal assessments conducted.

1.5. FOUR KEYS TO BEING AN EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEER⁴

- Voluntary. The action of volunteering is the result of free choice. It is a personal option to not receive compensation for the work undertaken. Personal motivations provide the greatest satisfaction.
- Solidarity. Volunteer action only functions when it is in agreement with others; where the interest is collective. Volunteering is a way to give an answer to the needs, problems, and social interests we see every day. Volunteer action is a promise of solidarity to create a better life for all.
- Action. Volunteering is not only a moral value. It entails action. Doing something. If we sit as a good person and citizen but we do not make a move, we will be left empty. The one thing that creates change in this world is action.
- Organisation. The goal of each Volunteer is to improve reality, transform the world, and be effective. A Volunteer requires organised action, uniting forces to make a difference. For that reason, Volunteer work should be organised, systematic, and collective.

⁴ Information taken from Volunteering Australia (www.volunteeringaustralia.org)

1.6. VOLUNTEER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Volunteers representing a Parish or Agency should ensure that they:

- Always behave in a professional, positive manner to all they come in contact with, especially clients and or parishioners. Volunteers should exhibit a client focus and make every attempt to meet the needs of others.
- Volunteers should avail themselves of any training provided and inform themselves of appropriate programmes and policies in connection with their volunteering role.
- Volunteers should be prepared to take directions, follow instructions, listen to corrections and make necessary changes in the conduct of their particular duties.
- Volunteers should never operate beyond the limits of their competence and qualifications. They should show a willingness to seek guidance and advice from others. They should not engage in tasks or activities for which they have inadequate experience or qualifications, especially in the areas of Pastoral Care, Counselling, or Spiritual Direction. Volunteers should recognise the appropriate time to make referrals to those with proper qualification and experience.

Standards of Behaviour

A Volunteer must ensure they:

- Commit to mission and values, demonstrating honesty, integrity and Christianity in all that they do.
- Maintain dress standards that are in line with parish and community standards, and are consistent with the Volunteer's role and function.
- A Volunteer must not disclose confidential information at any time, unless that disclosure is required under law or with the express permission of the Parish Priest and/or responsible Supervisor.
- Demonstrate responsible stewardship of resources and avoid unnecessary waste or extravagance.
- Avoid conflict of interest. Where a personal interest exists, openly disclose this interest to the Parish Priest and/or responsible Supervisor.
- Be proactive in ensuring personal safety and the safety of all others in the environment by taking the necessary steps to identify and remove if necessary, things of danger.
- Abide by all relevant State and Federal Legislation.

Interactions with People

In relation to other people, a Volunteer must ensure they:

- Treat each other fairly, with courtesy and respect, valuing each person as an equal, regardless of their position within the Parish/Agency or their life situation.

- Recognise, accept and value individual differences and the contributions of each individual
- Be sensitive to and respect the unique needs and beliefs of a culturally diverse workplace, client group and/or Parish community.

Teamwork

When working in a team, a Volunteer must:

- Be able to take directions or give directions.
- Work in cooperation with other team members and be open to, and respectful of, the ideas and contributions of others.
- Commit to resolving personal or work related concerns in a timely, constructive and compassionate manner.

Compassion

As part of their role, a Volunteer needs to:

- Be sensitive, caring, accepting and responsive to those in need of our assistance.
- Guard against creating a situation where others become over-dependent on a particular volunteer. Where possible, seek to empower individuals to achieve maximum autonomy and self-determination. Let people do what they are able to do for themselves.

Child and Client Safety

When engaging with children and clients, a Volunteer must:

- Be committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and clients.
- Support an individual's rights and act without hesitation to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times.
- Support also the rights and wellbeing of fellow staff and Volunteers.
- Actively participate in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all.
- Report concerns and/or incidents of malpractice to the relevant authority in the Parish/Agency.
- Hold the relevant suitability card as required by legislation (see section 1.8 for more information)

Employee Commitment

It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to be familiar with and comply with this Code of Conduct and appropriate Parish/Agency policies and procedures.

1.7. A VOLUNTEER'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Unlike paid staff, Volunteers are not covered by awards or workplace agreements. Volunteers however do have rights, some which are enshrined in legislation and others which stem from our Catholic values.

A Volunteer has the right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment; (refer Work Health and Safety Act 2011);
- Be reimbursed as appropriate, for out of pocket expenses incurred in your voluntary work;
- Be covered by insurance, and fully indemnified for any actions whilst acting lawfully and correctly in your particular duties.
- **Say No.** Volunteers have the right to know which tasks they will be expected to do and to "Say No" if they wish not to do them. Volunteers have the right to determine how much time they wish to contribute.
- Be valued and treated as a co-worker and not just as free help;
- Be provided with orientation; formation opportunities; guidance and direction; and
- Have suggestions and contributions acknowledged.
- Reviews/Evaluations. Contact should be made after the first episode of volunteering, within 3 months of initial placement. A review process including feedback should be conducted then continued annually.
- Identification Badge. An Identification Badge (preferably containing a photograph) should be supplied to each Volunteer. These badges should be worn at all times whilst working as a Volunteer.

A Volunteer also has a responsibility to the Parish/Agency to:

- Understand the purpose and philosophy of the activity before committing to it;
- Examine motives and be sure that they match the Volunteer position;
- Understand the rules and guidelines that apply;
- Be willing to train for the job and take part in ongoing formation;
- Accept support and supervision;
- Participate in planning and feedback activities;
- Be loyal to the Parish/Agency;
- Work as a team member in a reliable manner;
- Keep information confidential;
- Be dependable;
- To speak and share feelings with others.

Requirements for Volunteers

All Volunteers are required to:

- Attend an induction and any other mandatory training

Volunteers may be required to:

- If a Volunteer is in a position involving the handling of money, confidential records or working with vulnerable persons (including the elderly or people with a disability); it is highly recommended that a criminal history police check be obtained (Paid for by the Parish/Agency).
- Apply for a disability services positive exemption notice card (yellow card).
- Apply for a Volunteer Positive Notice Blue Card for child related employment.
- Undergo First Aid & CPR training

Make a private vehicle declaration (if using own vehicle in the course of volunteering). This declaration should include:

- Private vehicle declaration
- Current Vehicle registration
- Current Vehicle Insurance (Comprehensive)
- Current driver's licence

1.8. WORKING WITH CHILDREN

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 requires the development and implementation of a annual risk management strategy that takes into account screening requirements for Volunteers and paid staff including those who:

- Have begun employment pending outcome of a Positive Notice Blue Card for child related employment (Blue Card).
- Hold a Blue Card
- Are not required to hold a Blue Card
- Are having a Blue Card reassessed.

The working with children check or better known as the Blue Card, is a national check of a person's criminal history in order to assess their suitability to work with children and young people. Disciplinary information held by certain professional organisations or information from police investigations into allegations of serious child related sexual offences will also be considered.

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 prescribes child related regulated employment categories in which the working with children check is mandatory. Where a person submits an application and it is approved, a positive notice (letter) and a Blue Card will be issued. If an application is refused a negative notice is issued, prohibiting the person from working in regulated employment categories as defined by the Act.

The work and activities undertaken with children and young people either in a paid or voluntary capacity is governed by this legislative requirement. Therefore, staff and Volunteers working with children and young people must apply for and obtain a Blue Card. It is the responsibility of the staff member and/or Volunteers to ensure that their Blue Card is maintained and current. As part of the Parish/Agency risk management strategy, a Blue Card Register is kept and maintained by the Parish/Agency.

Exemptions

There are some exemptions under the Act. These include;

- Children under 18 years of age who are Volunteers (except students required to work in regulated employment as part of their studies)
- Parents volunteering their services at the school that their child/children attends so long as the child is under 18 years of age.
- Parents volunteering their services or conducting activities through a church, club or association where their child/children is involved in the same or similar activity.
- Registered teachers or police officers providing services outside of their professional duties should instead apply for an exemption card through the Commission.

Commencing Volunteering

Consistent with legislative obligation a Volunteer must hold a Blue Card before they can begin working with children and young people, regardless of how often they come into contact with them.

Current Holders of Blue Cards

Where a person wishing to Volunteer already holds a valid paid employee or Volunteer Blue Card, obtained through another organisation, the Parish/Agency should complete an 'Authorisation to confirm a valid blue card/application' form. This ensures the Parish/Agency is notified of any changes to the Volunteer's Blue Card.

All forms can be located on the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian website www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

1.9. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Obligations of Volunteers

S28 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, places obligations on Volunteers at a workplace to undertake the following:

- Take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety; and
- Take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and
- Comply with any reasonable instruction that is given by the person conducting the business or undertaking relating to health or safety at the workplace; and
- Co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the person conducting the business or undertaking relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers.

Note: Under Section 7 of the Act a "Worker" includes both employees and Volunteers.

Essentially, 'reasonable care' is what a reasonable person would do in the circumstances considering things like:

- The Volunteer's knowledge
- The Volunteer's role
- The Volunteer's skills and the resources available to them
- The Volunteer's qualifications
- The information that has been provided to the Volunteer
- The consequences to health and safety of a failure to act in the circumstances.

Other ways of making sure reasonable care is taken include:

- Carrying out activities within the role assigned
- Not carrying out activities without the relevant skills
- Do not do anything that would seem to be unsafe.⁵

Health and Hygiene

Hand washing is one of the most important aspects of infection control. Some duties are undertaken by Volunteers where infection control must be practised, these include:

- Food preparation and handling
- Cleaning of food preparation areas and food storage areas

⁵ Safe Work Australia - The Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers

- Manual handling of people
- Toilet hygiene
- General duties involving people

Correct hand washing is a duty of Volunteers at every workplace. Soap bars and cotton hand towels are not considered adequate infection control when hand washing. Soap bars and cotton hand towels are unsatisfactory as they can hold bacteria that can be transmitted to others. Recommended methods for hand washing include:

- Use of liquid soap from a container fitted with the appropriate dispenser;
- Wet hands and apply an adequate amount of the liquid soap, clean the hands with the liquid soap for 10 seconds before rinsing the hands clean with running water for 20 seconds;
- Use paper hand towel, to dry hands;
- Dispose of the used paper towel in a paper waste bin.

Fire Safety

Volunteers working regularly in/near the Parish/Agency complex need to be familiar with associated fire safety procedures.

A plan of action to be taken in the event of a fire must be maintained by a Parish/Agency. The plan must include the location of the assembly area, fire extinguishers and blankets.

When a fire alarm sounds or a fire is detected in a building:

- All persons are to immediately evacuate the building by the nearest approved FIRE EXIT and go to the nominated Assembly Area. Refer to the local Evacuation Floor Plan.
- Telephone or tell another person to immediately telephone the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service on 000.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers should only be used when it is safe to do so without risk to the individual.

- Remove the fire extinguisher from the wall cradle
- Place the fire extinguisher on the floor and remove/pull the safety pin
- Hold the hose facing the fire
- Give a short test burst of the fire extinguisher to ensure that it is working correctly
- Approach the fire and operate the fire extinguisher using the sweeping action at the base of the flames.
- Stay between the doorway and the fire to allow quick egress in the instance that the fire suddenly erupts or cannot be extinguished with the fire extinguisher

- Do not get too close to the fire
- Continue using the extinguisher until the fire is extinguished.
- The fire service will attend in response to the initial call and inspect the fire scene before the all clear can be given that the fire is completely extinguished.

After a fire extinguisher has been used it is not to be put back in wall cradle. It is to be labelled as “used/empty” and it is to be refilled by a certified fire fighting service/company as soon as possible.

Workplace Incident, Illness and Injury Reporting

In the event a person sustains an injury, illness or if a dangerous event occurs, the incident must be reported to the Parish/Agency.

Under Section 38 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, an employer may have an obligation to report a serious workplace injury, illness or dangerous event to the work health and safety regulator. For more information on workplace injuries or Notifiable Incidents please refer to the Archdiocesan Work Health and Safety Manual.

Hazard Reporting

Hazards are those things or circumstances that will cause or will be likely to cause, serious bodily injury or injury to a person or to create a dangerous situation.

A Volunteer at the workplace can determine what is a hazard and that Volunteer must then initiate action to eliminate or control that hazard by reporting the matter to a person in authority at the workplace. Depending on what the hazard is, it may not be able to be eliminated and in such a case action must be taken to implement control measures that minimise the risk and if necessary, restrict access to the area where the hazard is located.

If a hazard is detected, report the matter to the Parish/Agency. You must advise them of the seriousness of the hazard and the need for immediate attention.

Complete a Hazard Report Form and submit this form to the person who will be responsible for initiating or taking action to eliminate or control that hazard.

Ensure hazards are reported once identified. Failure to report and ensure action is taken creates neglect and could lead to a serious bodily injury or illness.

Please refer to Archdiocesan Work Health and Safety Manual for further information and forms.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking is no longer permitted in many areas, including buildings owned or leased by the Archdiocese.

Volunteers working in the Archdiocese should arrive for duties free of alcohol. It is a criminal offence in Queensland to consume or have in your possession illegal drugs. Any Volunteer suspected of being under the influence of any form of these substances whilst performing Volunteer duties will be suspended immediately and an investigation will be undertaken.

If a Volunteer is required by their doctor to take medication which may affect their ability to perform their role, they must notify the Parish/Agency as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

Harassment & Sexual Harassment

The Archdiocese of Brisbane recognises that everyone has the right to work in an environment free of harassment and discrimination. However, if Volunteers do experience harassment, they can be assured of support in resolving the situation.

A number of Harassment Contact Officers are available to provide information and support to both staff and Volunteers. Contact details for these Officers can be found in the Archdiocesan Directory.

Volunteer workers can assist by considering their own behaviour. Be aware, that actions that one person may not consider to be offensive may be offensive to others. All workplace relationships must be based on respect for individuals and the highest professional standards.

Complaints and Grievances

Any Volunteer is entitled to raise a complaint or grievance concerning any aspect of their role. If a grievance is raised it is expected that the parties will work cooperatively and respectfully, as soon as possible after it arises, to resolve the issue. A step-by-step resolution process would include:

1. In the first instance the matter should be discussed directly with the person whom the complaint or grievance is about.
2. If the issue is not resolved or a Volunteer feels uncomfortable in undertaking step 1, the matter should be raised with their supervisor.
3. If a Volunteer is dissatisfied with the response, a review may be requested by the next level of management (E.g. Service Manager, Parish Priest, etc.).
4. Should further resolution be needed, advice can be sought from Archdiocesan Human Resources.

Criminal Charges and Convictions

A Volunteer charged with having committed a crime or misdemeanour (an indictable offence), or is found guilty (convicted by any court) of an offence, shall immediately report the fact and circumstances in writing to the Manager/Parish Priest. All correspondence will be kept secure and strictly confidential.

Insurance Coverage

All Volunteers have a right to be covered by insurance, and fully indemnified for any actions whilst acting lawfully and correctly in their particular duties. In this regard the Archdiocese arranges and services the *Personal Accident Voluntary Workers Policy* providing coverage for Volunteers under either the Archdiocesan Parish or Centacare policy with Catholic Church Insurances (CCI). A fact sheet detailing the major components of this policy is available on the Archdiocesan Intranet (AI) webpage for the Volunteers Handbook.

For further enquiries related to Volunteers insurance or if an incident occurs, contact Catholic Church Insurances on 1300 655 001 or go to <http://www.ccinsurances.com.au>