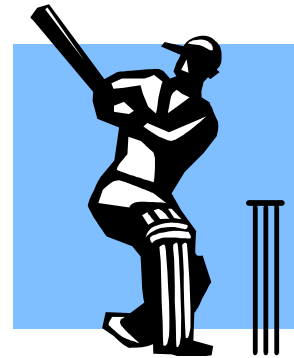
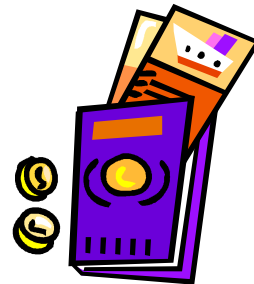


Volunteer Friends Program



Volunteer Handbook



Community Accessibility Inc.
www.communityaccessability.com.au

Volunteer Friends Program

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VOLUNTEER FRIENDS PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

August 2011

OUR VISION

*Excellence in the delivery of
accessible support services within the community.*

OUR MISSION

*Community Accessibility works in partnership with clients, carers
and other professionals providing high quality and flexible services.
Through leadership and a dedicated team of staff and volunteers,
we promote social wellbeing and independence.*

OUR VALUES

Confidentiality

We respect your right to privacy and information will only be shared with your consent

Integrity

We provide an open, equitable and trustworthy service

Safety

Your safety and wellbeing is our key priority

Teamwork

Working together to deliver a professional and high quality service

Professionalism

We will endeavor to meet the needs of our clients in an efficient and effective manner

Respect

We value, encourage and embrace our differences and diverse needs

Loyalty

We remain true to the interest of the individual and the organisation

Empathy

We understand and respond to the needs of all

Communication

We are open and honest in all our communications

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WELCOME TO THE VOLUNTEER FRIENDS PROGRAM

Thank you for joining the Volunteer Friends Program at Community Accessibility Inc. We rely on volunteers to help as support participants in their chosen activity. Your donation of time is greatly appreciated.

COMMUNITY ACCESSABILITY INC

Community Accessibility Inc came into being in April 1998 and brought together two programs that had been operating under the auspice of the Volunteer Resource Bureau. These programs grew as people who had been residents of Mayday Hills in Beechworth were relocated to the community as part of the Government's Policy of De-Institutionalisation in the 1990's.

In operation now for 13 years as Community Accessibility the organisation has two distinct programs; the Volunteer Friends Program and the Community Transport Program. They have grown continuously with programs based in Wangaratta, Mount Beauty, Shepparton, Seymour and a head office in Wodonga.

Community Accessibility is a not for profit community run organisation that has a Committee of Management (COM) formed with volunteers. The COM meets monthly and is responsible for the governance of the organisation. The organisation has a staff of 16 made up of 5 fulltime, 8 part-time and 3 casual staff. The volunteers number around 120. Volunteers are utilized as drivers in the Community Transport Program and a variety of roles in the Volunteer Friends Program, including participant friends for social activities and holidays, coaches for sporting activities and activity support roles.

VOLUNTEER FRIENDS PROGRAM

The Volunteer Friends Program (VFP) has a small staff consisting of 3 part-timers whose role is to coordinate activities and volunteers including holidays for people with a disability. VFP is funded as a respite program from the Department of Human Services.

The cost to a Volunteer Friend in supporting activities and holidays is minimal and in most cases may involve a meal or meals as required.

Participant activities include, Bowling, Dancing, Indoor Cricket, Pool, Movie Meal Deals, Coffee Club, Ovens and Murray Jets (football) and Fishing. Weekends include AFL weekends and Melbourne Shopping Trips. Holidays in 2011 included Tamworth Music Festival, P&O Cruise around Tasmania, Canberra, Dubbo, Gold Coast, Grampians, Geelong and Shoal Haven Heads. In 2011 the program has about 135 active participants. The program provides around 350 support hours per week.

The program has a base in Wangaratta and Wodonga. Participants come from the Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Wangaratta, Wodonga and Albury area, are over 18 years of age, have an intellectual disability, an acquired brain injury, a physical or sensory disability and live with family or independently with support.

Participants have a number of barriers restricting them from having quality holidays. These are mainly cost and support needs. The VFP and volunteers enable participants the freedom to take part in activities they may otherwise be unable to attend.

Every day, opportunities arise for most of us to make friends. This is not always the case if you are a person with a disability. Entering any new friendship is an exciting experience – having volunteer friends is no different.

There are often a few barriers to be broken down and new things to learn but the rewards can be great. Being a volunteer friend gives you the opportunity to share your experiences with other people.

BEING A VOLUNTEER

As a volunteer with the Volunteer Friends Program, you will help adults with a disability to access trips and activities in the community.

Volunteers assist the participants to have a good time and develop friendships in a safe environment. You may also need to assist with money management, meals or transfers if required. You will not be required to provide personal care.

WHAT DOES THE VFP OFFER?

The program offers:

- A variety of leisure/social activities.
- The choice of different activities.
- Friendship.
- Independence and self-esteem.
- Expression of Individuality.
- Community participation/integration.

This is achieved through:

1. **GROUP ACTIVITIES:** Participants of the VFP can join regular group activities such as ten pin bowling, indoor cricket and football at Wodonga and pub/pool nights, ten pin bowling and country music/dance club at Wangaratta.
2. **OUTINGS:** Day outings are planned to local festivals and events as well as social activities such as movies, meals and the theatre.
3. **HOLIDAYS:** Holidays cater for groups of up to 8 participants. Past destinations have included the Gold Coast, Great Ocean Road, Tamworth and Dubbo

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

The Volunteer Friends Program could not exist without the support of community volunteers to run our activities, holidays and outings. Where possible, volunteers will support participants of the same gender.

Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older and undergo a Police Check as well as providing a Working with Children Check. Requests to join the Volunteer Friends Program as a volunteer can be made directly by phone or visiting the staff at the office. It is preferable to make an appointment to complete the induction, registration forms, police check etc.

People who register with the Volunteer Friends Program as a volunteer will have their names and addresses added to the Volunteer Friends Program mailing list and will be sent a regular newsletter.

OFFERING TO VOLUNTEER

Upcoming events are advertised in the newsletter. Volunteers are encouraged to contact staff to register their interest and availability for activities, outings and holidays.

After the booking date, VFP staff will look at the list of names and allocate places to participants and volunteers. Amongst other things, factors that will be taken into consideration include who has been on a holiday with us recently, the 'best fit' for participants who will be going along and, if applicable, a balance of gender to best suit accommodation. People who are not allocated a place will be placed on an emergency list

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is sent out to keep you informed about VFP activities, holidays, outings and other items of interest. The newsletter can be posted to you, picked up from the VFP office, emailed or accessed via our website:

www.communityaccessability.com.au

TRANSPORT

Trips away from the local area in which your service operates, such as holidays, football trips and weekend breaks will leave from the VFP office in that location (Wodonga or Wangaratta) unless otherwise stated.

For activities that occur locally participants and volunteers meet at the start time and venue stated in the newsletter. Transport is not provided for these local activities.

MEDICATION

Participants who are able to manage their own medication are encouraged to do so, provided it can be stored securely.

VFP staff and volunteers do not administer medicine or dress wounds.

DEFIINITION & PRINCIPLES OF VOLUNTEERING

Definition of formal volunteering

Formal volunteering is an activity which takes place through not for profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion;
- for no financial payment; and
- in designated volunteer positions only.

Principles of Volunteering

- 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;
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work;
- Volunteers do 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. (2009 Volunteering Australia)

VOLUNTEER KEY ACTIVITY STATEMENT

Community Accessibility Inc is committed to protecting the health, safety and well-being of all volunteers. To achieve this, the organisation strives to ensure that volunteers are not required or permitted to undertake work for which they are not suited and to take appropriate measures to allow work to be done in a manner which will not put any person at risk.

Key activities for the VFP Volunteer.

- ✓ Always to maintain a positive, welcoming attitude to participants, carers and co-workers and providing the service in a pleasant manner, respecting client's dignity, culture and rights,
- ✓ Always support the Coordinator in the delivery of VFP designated activities or holidays,
- ✓ Always work in a team environment and at times independently,
- ✓ Always pass on relevant information about clients to Coordinators, bearing in mind confidentiality and the Privacy Act,
- ✓ Always facilitate participant choice,
- ✓ Always promote independence and participation,
- ✓ Always promote client integration in a community setting,
- ✓ Always observe client and service confidentiality,
- ✓ Frequently, assist clients in/out of passenger vehicles,
- ✓ Frequently, assisting people with mobility aids,
- ✓ Frequently, Work in locations geographically separated from management,
- ✓ Occasionally, asked to use a wheelchair hydraulic lift and assisting clients to/from these lifts, assembling folded wheelchairs and tying down wheelchairs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Policy Statement - CA Inc. staff and volunteers will, in the course of performing their normal duties for VFP, have access to confidential information. Depending on the nature of the role of volunteers this may be more or less frequent, but it is important that all volunteers understand their obligations in relation to confidential information.

All staff and volunteers are under a legal duty to preserve the confidentiality of information which belongs to CA Inc and participants attending activities and holidays and the program in general. You will be asked to adhere to confidentiality in your application to become a volunteer for VFP.

If you are unsure about how you should handle Confidential Information you must seek clarification from your coordinator or a manager.

CA Inc. views a breach of confidentiality extremely seriously. Volunteers who breach confidentiality may have their volunteer duties at VFP terminated.

All written information collected about you by the VFP is stored in locked filing cabinets and available for you to see on request. All data stored in VFP computers about you is password protected.

SUGGESTIONS, COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS

Community Accessibility VFP welcomes suggestions, compliments and complaints. There is an area in the office foyer where these can be posted, or make them directly to VFP staff or to a Community Accessibility Manager.

If you have any issues regarding an activity, holiday, participant or volunteer please speak to a VFP staff member. If you have any issues with VFP staff, please speak to a Manager at Community Accessibility.

EXITING THE PROGRAM

If for any reason you choose to discontinue volunteering with the program, please contact a VFP staff member who will talk to you about your reasons for leaving, for our records.

DISABILITY INFORMATION

This information is aimed at taking away some of the mystery that surrounds people with disabilities. It is not intended to give volunteers a comprehensive understanding of people with disabilities.

The term “physical disabilities” in refers to people born with, or who have acquired, a disability during their lifetime. This includes people with acquired brain injury.

It is important to recognise the individuality of each person with a physical disability and, as in the rest of the community, they come in all shapes and sizes. It is also important to concentrate on the person’s ability and not get hooked into becoming an expert on their disability.

Information on specific disabilities can be obtained from specialist organisations. It is not necessary to become an expert in disability to provide support.

Stairs and kerbs handicap people with disabilities who use wheelchairs. Inaccessible public transport, accommodation, toilets, and cost is also a handicap to travellers. Community attitudes are another barrier for people with disabilities

The introduction of new laws have encouraged many owners to make public buildings accessible but there is a long way to go. Careful planning can avoid the disappointment of arriving at a theatre, sporting venue, or other place only to find that the building does not have a ramp or suitable access.

The main points to remember when working with people with physical disabilities are:

- Every person is an individual
- Concentrate on ability not disability

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

No two people are the same. We all look different and have different levels of understanding. This is what makes us individuals. This can also be said for people with an intellectual disability.

People with an intellectual disability are like everyone else – they feel emotions of happiness, sadness, anger and frustration and they express themselves in a variety of ways.

A person with an intellectual disability may not be able to do what you may generally expect. If a person is having difficulty, offer the minimal assistance required so that they can achieve the desired outcome.

Like the rest of the community, some people with an intellectual disability may have difficulty in doing some things for themselves. Some have jobs, drive cars and live by themselves or with other people. Others may require more support and have people employed to assist them to live in a house or help them to learn skills so that they can. Some people with an intellectual disability also have other disabilities, visual impairment or physical disability. They may or may not need support from others to help them participate in life activities.

Those who work with people with an intellectual disability try to help them live as independently as possible. This means different things for different people. Staff who support people living in the community are encouraging and supporting people with an intellectual disability to look after themselves as much as possible.

COMMUNICATING

If you meet somebody in your community who has little or no verbal communication:

- Introduce yourself;
- Make sure that you talk to the person at eye level;
- Take the time to understand what is being said. If you are unsure, ask again. Either use the same words or reword what you have just said;
- Allow the person to complete what they are saying or answer for themselves;
- If you don't have the time to speak to the person, make time when you can have a conversation;
- If you still cannot understand the person, tell them and ask someone for help;
- Just be yourself and remember that the person is more like you than unlike you.

CA Inc. CODE OF CONDUCT

<p>The CA Inc Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behavior which must be demonstrated by all paid and volunteer staff involved in the provision of services for Ca Inc.</p>
<p>Confidentiality-Community Accessibility is committed to the confidentiality of clients. No information of a personal nature is to be passed to anyone outside the service without the permission of the person concerned (preferably in writing). However, in order to ensure proper assistance is given, personal information about clients may need to be discussed with other members of the service. This is not a breach of confidentiality.</p>
<p>Criminal Offences or investigations-Any volunteer, staff member or program manager may be stood down while awaiting an outcome of a criminal proceeding or investigation against him or her.</p>
<p>Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking.-Paid and volunteer staff must not arrive for work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. While on duty alcohol and illegal drugs must not be consumed by paid or volunteer staff. Drivers are to have a zero alcohol reading when using CA Inc vehicles..</p> <p>Paid and volunteer staff taking prescribed drugs which may affect their performance or driving ability must inform the management. This is to ensure workplace and consumer safety.</p> <p>Smoking is not permitted in Ca Inc vehicles, buildings, consumers' homes or when re-fuelling vehicles and places that are considered unsafe.</p>
<p>Attendance-Paid and volunteer staff are expected to be punctual and regular in their work and when picking up consumers. When a paid or volunteer staff member is unavoidably absent from work due to sickness or any other reason, he/she should notify the management promptly (preferably before their normal starting time) and indicate their likely date of return to work.</p>
<p>Compliance with lawful directions-Paid and volunteer staff shall comply with any lawful instruction given to them by any person who has the authority to do so.</p>
<p>Conflict of interest-Paid and volunteer staff is obliged to notify their manager of any gift, reward or benefit they are offered by consumers or a carer.</p>
<p>Customer Service -Paid staff/volunteers are expected to deliver a high level of service to consumers at all times. Paid and volunteer staff must maintain ethical and professional boundaries with consumers at all times and behave in a professional manner in all dealings with consumers, their families and staff other employees.</p>
<p>Dress and Appearance-Paid and volunteer staff are to ensure that their appearance is neat, clean and appropriate for their role. A high standard of personal hygiene is expected at all times. Where a uniform or safety apparel is provided, it must be worn in accordance with Ca Inc requirements.</p>
<p>Economical and efficient use of resources-CA Inc resources including vehicles are to be used effectively and economically and not to be used for private activities unless approved by management.</p>
<p>Occupational Health and Safety-CA Inc is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for everyone involved with CA Inc activities. For this reason everyone has a responsibility to ;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observe safe working practices.2. Accept responsibility for the protection of their own health and safety and that of their consumers.3. Cooperate and participate with management in achieving a safe and healthy workplace.
<p>Personal Conduct-Personal conduct is to be consistent with the Code of Conduct, in accordance with requirements of the law and other CA Inc. policies and procedures. Paid and volunteer staff is expected to commit to CA Inc. vision and values. Paid and volunteer staff are required to undertake their duties in a professional, responsible, conscientious and ethical manner and to act in the best interests of Ca Inc. They are expected to act honestly in all of their duties. When dealing with consumers and other employees, paid and volunteer staff are expected to be courteous, respectful and patient.</p>
<p>Telephone use- Ca Inc. telephones and mobile phones are for the purpose of service delivery. Paid and volunteer staff supplied with a mobile phone must adhere to mobile phone use guidelines. Paid staff are to limit the use of mobile and other electronic devices whilst on duty.</p>