



A Place to Belong since 1977

Volunteer Handbook



WELCOME FROM PAUL

Welcome to the Open House volunteering team and thank you for committing to volunteer with us. At Open House our volunteers play an integral role in the running of our organisation. As a not-for-profit, we are reliant on their commitment and dedication to give over their time and talents to our mission of providing programs and support for the disadvantaged people in our community.

Open House believes that volunteers and staff contribute equally to the development of our organisation and the growth of our participants. We appreciate and support our volunteers and recognise them as valuable team members.

So whatever your motivation for volunteering is, whether it be to contribute to the community, learn new skills, work preparedness or building social connections (to name a few), we are extremely happy to have you on board.



It is our wish that whilst volunteering with us, you are engaged in a meaningful role that contributes to your personal goals, growth and objectives whilst also gaining a sense of empowerment by contributing to the growth of Open House and our community.

So, thank you once again for joining the Open House volunteering team. I look forward to meeting you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Paul'.

Paul Burgess
Chief Executive Officer



ABOUT OPEN HOUSE

OUR HISTORY

Open House is a Christian based charitable organisation founded in 1971. The organisation began as a way of providing support for local disengaged youth and over the years, has developed to provide friendship, care and support to disadvantaged and marginalised people of all ages.

Open House has developed through the hard work, love, kindness, inspiration, and generosity of many hundreds of caring people, including its staff, volunteers and supporters. Through its programs, Open House encourages people to grow through the struggles and circumstances of their lives and provides a place for them to belong.



OUR VISION

To Tackle social isolation head-on through creative programs and activities for all ages giving people a place to belong.



OUR MISSION

- To give long-term friendship and support to children, young people and adults in our community, particularly those who are disadvantaged or socially isolated.
 - To provide a place with a relaxed environment where people are welcomed, encouraged to feel they belong and are cared for and supported.
 - To give opportunities to people to express themselves and encouragement if they wish, to make positive changes to their lives.
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OUR VALUES

- We respect each person, their social, racial, and religious beliefs, and treat them with dignity.
 - We value, share with and support people unconditionally.
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VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN HOUSE

Why Volunteer with us?

Volunteers play a crucial role in achieving Open House's mission of providing long-term friendship and support to the disadvantaged in our community. We are extremely grateful for the time and commitment our volunteers dedicate to our mission and see them as part of the Open House family.

Volunteers are encouraged to contribute their ideas and to use and enhance their personal and professional skills to help grow Open House and its participants. We strive to provide each volunteer with the necessary training, supervision and recognition to ensure their time with us is a positive one. Many of our volunteers have been with us long term, with some having volunteered for over twenty years. Below are some quotes from our volunteers:

"Volunteering at Open House keeps me connected to my community and I enjoy giving back, being a contribution. I've also made some wonderful friends."

"Being a volunteer at Open House is helping, sharing, advising and of course having a little fun along the way."

"I volunteer to be a link in the chain of support. Community meals supports the links of connection and belonging for volunteers."

"I feel blessed and proud to be part of the Open House family."

"I love being part of Open House as it is always a friendly and a really welcoming place and every time, I come in I get positive energy and leave happier than when entered. Thank you, Open House it is a pleasure being a part of this community support and helping each other."

"I volunteer in Wednesday Club. I enjoy helping participants with craft projects and sharing a laugh with everyone!"

"Working with young people, who are genuinely interested in what we are teaching them, is very rewarding for me and it makes me feel younger at the same time!"

Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteering opportunities come up in the following programs/areas at Open House:

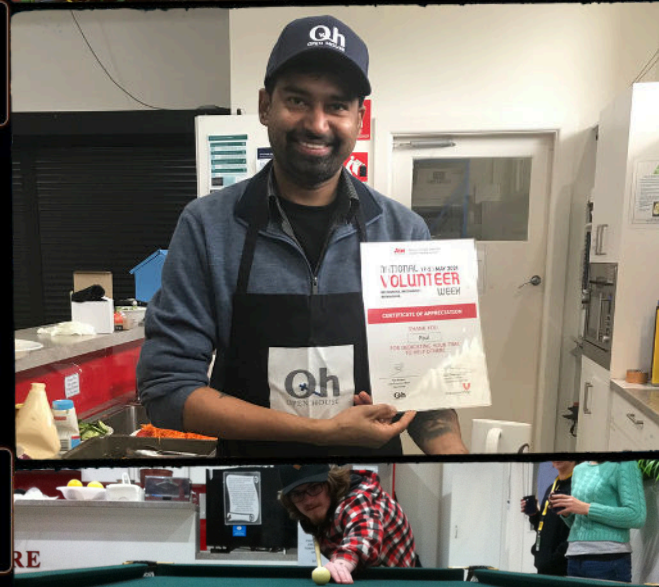
- Youth Workshop Mentoring Program
- Home Visitation Program
- Backyard Sports
- Bicycle Repairs & Maintenance
- Community Meal
- Garden Club
- Bible Fellowship
- Clubwork
- Site Maintenance
- Bus Drivers and Bus Assistants
- Social Enterprise Cafe

If you have skills and experience you think could benefit our work, please get in touch and let us know your area of interest.



A Volunteer's Commitment

We ask that volunteers commit to volunteering with us for a minimum of one year as energy and resources go into recruiting and onboarding volunteers. If for some reason your circumstances change and you are unable to honour your commitment, we will understand, but we do ask you to please consider carefully whether you will be able to commit before commencing with us.



Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

- Open House provides a safe and healthy work environment for volunteers to carry out their duties.
- A comprehensive induction and orientation will be given at commencement.
- All volunteers are covered by insurance whilst they are performing work for Open House.
- Volunteers will have access to the relevant policies and procedures that govern the operations of Open House.
- Volunteers will have a set roster and agreed working hours.
- To have your confidential and personal information dealt with per the principles of the Privacy Act 1988.
- Volunteers will be given the appropriate training and ongoing support to perform their roles.

Expectations of Volunteers

- Respect confidentiality and privacy
- Be punctual, accountable and reliable
- Carry out the duties listed in your volunteer position description
- Give notice if your availability changes or you are leaving the organisation
- Report any injuries or hazards that you notice
- Adhere to Open House's policies and procedures
- Deal with complaints appropriately
- Undertake training if requested
- Request support when needed
- Work as a team player
- Do not smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs whilst volunteering

Volunteer Requirements

Before commencing, volunteers must have the following:

- **Working With Children Check:** Volunteers must have a current WWCC. If a volunteer already has a WWCC they will need to add Open House to its list of organisations. This can be done via the Working With Children website.
- **Police Check:** Volunteers must have a current Police Check (done in the last twelve months). If not, Open House will do one on their behalf.
- **Volunteer Agreement:** Volunteers must sign the Volunteer Agreement.
- **Codes of Conduct:** Volunteers are to sign all applicable Codes of Conduct.
- **Reference Checks:** Volunteers are to provide the names and contact numbers of two professional referees. These referees must be work-related and not family members or friends.



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Open House policies, procedures, governing documents and legislation related to volunteers is available on request from the Volunteer Coordinator. The core policies and procedures are summarised below however all volunteers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the original documents.



Volunteer Recruitment

Open House endeavours to recruit the most suitable volunteers for all available positions based on interest, knowledge, and skills or attributes relevant to the role, and consistent with Equal Opportunity, Affirmative action and the ethos of Open House.



Volunteer Training

Volunteers will be provided with training and ongoing support as required to ensure they can perform their roles safely and to the best of their abilities.



Workplace Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying

Open House is committed to proactively providing a safe working environment that provides equal opportunity and is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying for all employees, volunteers and participants



Occupational Health & Safety

Open House is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy physical and mental environment for the well-being of all persons. It is noted that an effective Health and Safety Policy is the dual responsibility of the employer and employee. If you are involved in an accident or incident whilst volunteering you should inform your supervisor immediately or in the absence of the Volunteer Coordinator or CEO.



Confidentiality

Open House is committed to protecting the privacy of any personal information which the organisation collects, holds, and administers; the organisation assumes an obligation to keep in confidence all that pertains to the volunteer and his/her affairs. This obligation is shared by every person whether employed or volunteering. You are therefore obliged to refrain from discussing any information pertaining to participant/s with any person in or out of Open House, except in the course of your duties or role.



Child Safe

Open House has zero-tolerance for child abuse and will take all allegations of reportable conduct and safety concerns very seriously, ensuring such conduct is dealt with in accordance with organisational policies, procedures and the law



Grievances & Complaints

If a volunteer has a grievance, they should discuss it with their manager. We hope that most concerns will be resolved this way. If the volunteer feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, they should put their grievance in writing to the manager. Within 15 working days the manager will respond in writing, inviting the volunteer to attend a meeting to further discuss the grievance.



Vaccinations

Some of our participants are highly vulnerable individuals and we must do our best to look after our friends and each other, this means that we encourage all volunteers to be vaccinated against influenza.



Social Media

The use of Social Media in the course of duties at Open House is covered by our Social Media Policy. Staff and Volunteers may, from time to time and where appropriate, post on behalf of Open House using the organisation's online social media platforms. This must be done with the express knowledge and authorisation of the Relationships Manager.



OTHER MATTERS



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

On becoming aware of a danger/potential risk – advise an Open House staff member. All people are to follow staff directions and meet at the emergency assembly point. The emergency assembly point is located on the gravel car park at the north-west corner of the property and will be pointed out to you in your induction.

INSURANCE

All Volunteers are protected against personal injury or accident whilst on authorised duty.

VEHICLE USE

Volunteers who are authorised to drive our fleet vehicles are covered by insurance whilst driving for official volunteering purposes. Please be aware that using your own vehicle whilst carrying out volunteering duties renders you exempt from our insurance coverage. It is the responsibility of the authorised volunteer to comply with all traffic rules whilst driving a fleet vehicle. Any parking and infringement fines are the sole responsibility of the driver.

ENDING THE VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP

Although we would like volunteers to commit to a program for at least twelve months, a volunteer is free to leave whenever they like. We only ask that reasonable notice be given.

In rare cases, a volunteer may be asked to leave if, after numerous warnings, they are failing to meet Open House's expectations and policies/procedures. In our intent to respect and value our volunteers, Open House offers every volunteer an exit interview, allowing staff to thank them and discuss their contribution.



A FINAL NOTE

Once again thank you for committing to volunteer with Open House Christian Involvement Centres. If you have any questions or wish to discuss something further at any point in your time here as a volunteer, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator on the contacts below. We hope your time with us is fun, rewarding and mutually beneficial. We look forward to getting to know you.

Email: office@ohcic.org.au

Ph: 03 9459 7083
