



## Volunteer Guide



**OFF THE STREETS**  
**VETERANS**  
**AUSTRALIA**

Volunteering is all about making a difference in your community.

Without our volunteers our work to assist veterans, ex-service personnel and their families would not happen.

In this guide you will find helpful information regarding volunteering with us.



IT ONLY TAKES ONE PERSON TO MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE TO SOMEONE ELSE'S LIEFE

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Thank you for your interest in volunteering with VOTSA. Our volunteers are important to us. We value their contributions, skills and life experiences.

Volunteering can be a rewarding and meaningful experience. Every volunteer brings a unique combination of skills, life experiences and characteristics which enhances and furthers our work.

By volunteering with VOTSA you help make a difference to Veterans, ex service personnel and their families who need our support.

This guide will provide you with information about how you can get involved and make a difference.

We look forward to your contributions and hope your time with us is an enjoyable and satisfying part of your life.

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## 1 Who We Are?

Veterans Off The Streets Australia - VOTSA Ltd (VOTSA) is a registered not for profit charity. It was created by veterans, ex-service personnel and civilians who saw a need to assist other veterans, ex-service personnel and their families to escape homelessness and provide support services.

## 2 Why Volunteer?

Many of our volunteers do so to give something back to our veterans and ex-service personnel. They understand the great sacrifice and service these people have made to our nation and its freedom. Many of our volunteers are veterans and ex-service personnel.

Our volunteers share their skills, experience and expertise to assist VOTSA to undertake its work. They are valued and welcome as part of our team. They also gain new skills and engage in activities providing them with a community interest which in-turn provides them with a sense of achievement.

Whether a veteran, ex-service person or from a civilian background, all volunteers share the common thread of camaraderie in their work for VOTSA.

## 3 What is Volunteering?

Volunteering is an activity which takes place through not for profit community organisations which:

- benefits the community and the volunteer
- is of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- occurs in the not-for-profit sector
- addresses human, environmental and/or social needs
- respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- promotes and respects human rights and equality respects the rights

## 4 Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a volunteer you have the right:

- to work in a healthy and safe environment
- to be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- to be adequately covered by insurance
- to be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working
- to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses
- to be given a copy of the organisation's volunteer policy and any other policy that affects your work
- not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker

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- not to do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes
  - to have a job description and agreed working hours
  - to have access to a grievance procedure
  - to be provided with orientation to the organisation
  - to have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988; and
  - to be provided with sufficient training to do your job

All volunteers are expected to:

- Respect confidentiality and privacy
- Be punctual and reliable
- Carry out the duties listed in your volunteer position description
- Be accountable
- Give notice if your availability changes or you are leaving the organisation
- Report any injuries or hazards that you notice in the workplace
- Adhere to the organisation's policies and procedures
- Deal with complaints in the appropriate manner
- Undertake training as requested
- Ask for support when needed
- Support other team members
- Keep contact details up to date
- Ensure any Police or other checks are kept current

Principles of Volunteering:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer
- Volunteer work is unpaid
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances
- 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
- 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

## **5 Who can volunteer?**

VOTSA accepts volunteers from 18 years of age onwards. Volunteers are matched to roles based on their skills, knowledge and interests.

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## 6 What volunteering opportunities are available at VOTSA?

You can volunteer to work in many areas such as administration, client support, community advocacy, events and fundraising. We generally advertise our positions on our website [www.votsa.org.au](http://www.votsa.org.au), however there is no need to wait for positions to be advertised, if you would like to register with us please use our online form [here](#).

## 7 What is the typical volunteer time commitment at VOTSA?

We have volunteers who assist us once a year at events such as community sleep outs where they volunteer over a few days. Others volunteer on a more regular basis for example weekly, fortnightly or monthly for ongoing, longer term commitments.

There are times when we need a commitment from our volunteers, such as when undertaking support services for clients or some administrative tasks which are time critical. In the main though, we work as flexibly as we can with our volunteers.

## 8 How We Select Our Volunteers

VOTSA requires volunteers from all walks of life, skill sets and qualities. Skills and expertise such as those obtained in work and life, abilities, qualifications and qualities are all regarded in the recruitment of our volunteers.

Our volunteers are selected on suitability appropriate to the volunteer position they are interested in. We match your skills and qualifications to the right volunteer opportunity with us.

Even when we are not actively recruiting, we encourage people to register with us and we will keep your interest on file for the future.

## 9 Engaging Volunteers

VOTSA undertakes a recruitment and screening process to select volunteers to positions. Our process is designed to protect our clients, our volunteers and our organisation.

### Application Form

All volunteers are required to complete an Application Form in the first instance. The application form provides you with an opportunity to provide us with some initial information about yourself.

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## Background Checks

Background checks reflects the responsibility of each role. Appropriate checks are required before a volunteer is appointed or commencing activities.

A National Police Check is required for all volunteers in VOTSA before being appointed or commencing activities. Working with children or vulnerable person's checks may also be required depending upon the role of the volunteer and State and Territory requirements.

Volunteers will be required to maintain the currency of the checks and to provide current check documentation to us.

## References and Curriculum Vitae

Generally volunteers will be required to provide two referee checks. The types of checks will depend upon the role and the qualifications for role. Volunteers will be advised of the types of referee checks after completing and submitting their Application Form.

Specialist Roles requiring recognised qualifications will also require proof of qualifications and a Curriculum Vitae.

## 10 Like to Know More?

If you would like to know more about volunteering with VOTSA, please contact us by email at [volunteerservices@votsa.org.au](mailto:volunteerservices@votsa.org.au) or phone 1800 VOTSA OZ and select option 3.

