

# North West Indigenous Community Social Services Limited

## Volunteer Induction, Management and Support Handbook

### CONTENTS

1. Volunteer Induction Process.....	2
2. Principles of Volunteering .....	2
3. Volunteer Rights .....	2
4. NWQICSS Expectations.....	3
5. Code of Ethical Behaviour.....	3
6. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults .....	4
7. Working in our Programs and Services .....	5
8. Confidentiality and Privacy .....	7
9. Work Health and Safety.....	7
10. Specific Responsibilities of Workers .....	8
11. Grievance/Complaint Management.....	9
12. Recognition and Support .....	9

---

## **1. VOLUNTEER INDUCTION PROCESS**

As a volunteer with North West Queensland Indigenous Community Social Services Limited (NWQICSS), you will be guided through a structured induction process. The purpose of this process is to ensure you are familiar with the organisation's policies, procedures, and expectations, so your time volunteering with us is safe, rewarding, and meaningful.

Induction will include:

- An introduction to your role and responsibilities;
- A copy of the NWQICSS Volunteer Handbook;
- An opportunity to ask questions and discuss the information provided;
- Completion and signing of the Safeguarding Declaration Form (if your role involves working with children and/or vulnerable adult);
- Signing the Volunteer's Agreement.

If your role has specific requirements (such as training in first aid, cultural competency, or safeguarding), this will be discussed with you before you begin volunteering.

You will be supported throughout your induction, including time to go through the handbook with Human Resources or coordinator/Manager. We encourage you to ask questions, seek clarification, and raise any concerns. This will help you understand your rights, responsibilities, and the values that guide our work at NWQICSS.

We value your feedback and welcome suggestions on how we can continue to improve the induction process. We look forward to welcoming you as part of the NWQICSS volunteer team, and thank you for your commitment to supporting our community.

## **2. PRINCIPLES OF VOLUNTEERING**

Listed below are our principles of volunteering modelled on the National Volunteer Standards which NWQICSS supports:

- Volunteer involvement should be a considered and planned part of the growth of the organisation;
- Effective volunteer involvement requires leadership and a culture and structure that supports and values the role of volunteers;
- Volunteers have rights, which include the right to work in a safe and supportive environment with appropriate infrastructure and effective management practices;
- Volunteers have responsibilities, which include acting responsibly and being accountable for their actions to the people they provide support to, in the organisation;
- Respecting the values, practices and expectations of others and of the organisation.

## **3. VOLUNTEERS RIGHTS**

The organisation believes that volunteers have the following rights:

- To be provided with a role description, either in writing or verbally, so the volunteer understands their role, their duties and obligations;

- 
- To work in a healthy and safe environment – in accordance with Work Health and Safety Legislation;
  - To be covered by the relevant insurance
  - To be given access to all relevant policies and procedures that affect your role;
  - To have access to a complaints process;
  - To be provided with an induction to your role;
  - To have confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Privacy Policy of the organisation;
  - To be provided with sufficient training to carry out your role, if and as required.

#### **4. NWQICSS EXPECTATIONS**

The organisation has the following expectations:

- For volunteers to support the values and practices of the organisation;
- For volunteers to fulfil their role to the best of their ability;
- For volunteers to follow any reasonable direction of their Supervisor;
- For volunteers to represent the organisation and specific programs positively;
- For volunteers to engage in open and respectful communication in all interactions;
- For volunteers to promote our commitment to safeguarding within the organisation, especially to children and vulnerable adults; and
- For volunteers to respect privacy and confidentiality of information relating to people they may come in contact with.

If the organisation recognises any deficiencies or contraventions of the above in relation to volunteer conduct, we will discuss the volunteer's performance with them, as required. Where required, we will implement additional direction, training or support.

Consistent or repeated non-compliance with the above expectations, where additional direction, training or support has been implemented, or severe once-off misconduct, may result in the cessation of the volunteering relationship at the organisation's discretion.

We also note that we will investigate any complaint or issue in relation to volunteer conduct as required and at the organisation's complete discretion. We will advise the volunteer of any investigation.

If you become unable to fulfil the duties of your volunteer role, whether due to physical or mental incapacity or impairment, we may seek to end the volunteering relationship. We may, but are not obliged to, consult with you regarding an alternative volunteer role.

#### **5. CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct sets a clear expectation that all NWQICSS personnel—including volunteers—uphold the same high standards of ethical behaviour, especially when working with children, families, Elders, and vulnerable community members.

This Code reflects NWQICSS's commitment to cultural integrity, community empowerment, and personal accountability in all areas of service.

The principles and standards demonstrated in practice by all volunteers are to:

1. Be committed to justice and equity;
  - Treat all people fairly and without bias.

- 
- Challenge discrimination and support equal access to services and opportunities.
2. Uphold the dignity of all people and their right to respect;
    - Respect each person's identity, experience and choices.
    - Acknowledge and honour cultural, spiritual and personal diversity.
  3. Be committed to safe and supportive relationships;
    - Interact with care, professionalism and empathy.
    - Prioritise safety, especially for children and vulnerable adults.
  4. Respond with integrity to those who are disadvantaged, marginalized or experiencing hardship;
    - Engage without judgment or prejudice.
    - Listen with compassion and advocate where appropriate.
  5. Strive for excellence in your volunteer role;
    - Approach your tasks with commitment, pride and attention to quality.
    - Seek guidance, training and feedback to grow in your role.

## **6. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **6.1 Statement of Commitment**

*The North West Queensland Indigenous Community Social Services will do everything within its power to provide a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults to minimise the possibility of any harm. NWQICSS commits to a zero tolerance approach to any form of abuse and reflects this commitment in its procedures.*

*We give priority of place to the welfare and well-being of children and vulnerable people. The voices of our most vulnerable should be heard and listened to so we see reality through their eyes.*

*North West Queensland Indigenous Community Social Services believes that children and vulnerable people are a gift with an intrinsic right to dignity of life, respect and security from physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological harm.*

North West Indigenous Community Social Services has established a policy to help protect children and vulnerable adults in our organisation. This policy applies to all NWQICSS personnel within the organisation including paid staff and volunteers.

---

## 6.2 Volunteer Recruitment, Screening and Training

All volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults, prior to appointment must be appointed as per the safeguarding recruitment procedures. This includes completing a *Safeguarding Declaration Form* which is an important safeguarding measure for suitability to the role. Once signed, Staff Services will file the document confidentially.

If you are working directly with, or making decisions for children and young people (all under 18 years) as part of your role, you must have a Positive Notice Blue Card (Blue Card) or Exemption Card. If you have a Blue Card from a previous organisation or sporting club, your Blue Card must be linked to NWQICSS.

Trainee students will require a Blue Card, even if they are under 18 years, if they are doing a practical placement in child-regulated work, as part of their studies with an education provider.

Volunteers and trainee students must **not** commence work until they hold a valid Positive Notice Blue Card or Exemption Card.

Police Officers and registered teachers do not apply for a Blue Card and should instead apply for an Exemption Card if they are providing child-related services to a program which is outside of their professional paid duties.

If you are working with vulnerable adults (over 18 years) you will require a National Police Check.

Upon commencement of your role you are required to read through the safeguarding policy and procedures on Employment Hero. Printed copies will be available to you if you are unable to access the internet.

Training in safeguarding policy and procedures through on-line training and/or face-to-face training from Staff Services will be required if you are working with children or vulnerable adults in your volunteering role.

The training on the policy and procedures for volunteers will specifically focus on:

- Our commitment in safeguarding;
- Our Code of Ethical Behaviour;
- Understanding and handling disclosures or suspicions of harm. This includes your reporting obligations

## 7. WORKING IN OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### *Forms*

As a volunteer you will be required to complete and sign the Volunteer's Agreement. This will be in addition to those already mentioned, such as the Blue Card application, National Police

---

check form, Safeguarding Declaration form and training receipt notices, depending on your volunteering role.

There may be other forms required to be completed when required such as, incident report forms and reimbursement claim forms. Your coordinator/Manager will assist you where these forms need to be completed.

**Note:** All your personal and private information (e.g. home address, contact numbers etc) which you provide is stored securely and can only be accessed by the relative authority.

#### *Dress Code*

Volunteers may not be required to wear uniforms. If this is the case, we do require you to wear comfortable non-slip, closed in footwear and casual neat clothing suitable to your role. Some clothing, e.g. t-shirts may be offensive to other people. Please consider this when selecting appropriate clothing. If your role requires you to use personal protective equipment (PPE) or specific attire, this will be discussed with you prior to commencing in your role. Your clothing should always protect you from the sun if working outside (i.e. long sleeved shirt with collar); apply and reapply sunscreen and wear a wide brimmed hat.

#### *Smoking*

Smoking is not permitted whilst undertaking your volunteer work or on NWQICSS grounds, unless outdoor areas have been identified as a 'designated smoking area'.

#### *Photography*

You are not permitted to take photos (such as the people you are working with, children or young people) without approval or agreement from your Manager. You are also expressly not permitted to publish any photographic or video media related to your volunteer work on social media without the approval or agreement from your Manager. If you are unsure then please contact your Manager first before taking any photographs.

#### *Training*

All required training pursuant to formation, policies and procedures is compulsory unless otherwise exempted by Human Resources.

#### *Insurance – To be checked with Marsh*

The organisation's insurance policy includes Personal Accident coverage for appointed volunteers. We note that coverage is limited by our insurer for volunteers over the age of 80 years old. Your supervisor will consult you on a case-by-case basis regarding insurance coverage if you are over the age of 80 years and seeking to volunteer with us, or continuing to volunteer with us. An individual risk assessment must be completed for any person volunteering over the age of 80.

#### *Health Issues/Medication*

Never purchase, give medication or administer medication to another person, in your role as a volunteer. If you are concerned about a person's welfare or treatment, immediately speak with your Manager. In an emergency call 000 and take advice from the operator.



---

### *Infection Control*

It is important to be aware of your own health and how that may impact on other people, especially if they are children or elderly. If you have an infection or virus (for example; the flu) it is important to contact your Manager, before undertaking your role if there is a risk you will spread the infection. You should check and maintain your own vaccinations status for common childhood illnesses and tetanus.

### *Allergies*

You must advise your Manager of any allergies you have.

### *Personal Disclosures*

You should exercise caution in giving out your personal details to anyone other than your Manager. This includes your home address, contact number or email address. This is to protect your own privacy and safety.

### *Giving and Receiving Gifts*

We discourage all volunteers from giving or receiving gifts to or from anyone. This may include money or personal items. This is to protect you from any allegations or perceived wrong doing. If you are unsure or worried you might offend a person, please speak to your Manager.

## **8. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

### *Confidentiality*

While you are working as a volunteer you may receive or overhear confidential information regarding people we support, other staff or volunteers. Information received must be kept confidential. Any breach of your responsibility to maintain confidentiality is taken seriously. Confidentiality requirements also apply to the use of social media and email.

If you have an issue or concern, please discuss with your Manager.

### *Privacy*

Privacy laws protect personal information about volunteers (including photographs or video footage). The information which is shared with you about people you may be assisting as part of your role, will only be the information required for you to carry out your volunteer role. Information provided to you must be treated as private and confidential. If you are provided with any information which causes you to be concerned for the safety or wellbeing of a person, you should discuss with your Manager or the Safeguarding Officer. If you receive any information which may amount to a criminal offence, you should directly report the information to police.

## **9. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY**

NWQICSS is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of workers and the people in their care (i.e. employees, contractors or subcontractors, employees of labour hire company, apprentices or trainee work experience students and volunteers), visitors and the public in workplaces.

---

The organisation accepts that it must adopt high standards of WHS management and will aim, as far as practicable, to achieve the following objectives:

- Ensure all are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safety and holding each other accountable for providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace;
- Comply with all legislative and procedural requirements as outlined to you in NWQICSS policies and procedures;
- Adopt a pro-active risk management approach to workplace health and safety as an integral part of the overall operations;
- Consult with and involve you in decisions impacting on your health and safety;
- Consider the health and safety impacts of our decisions, including purchasing, equipment design and organisational change;
- Provide and maintain safe systems for work including premises, plant, structures, substances, equipment and systems that are safe and without risks to health;
- Provide relevant information, instruction, training and supervision as may be necessary to enable you and visitors to work in a manner which will minimise risk or injury or ill health;
- Ensure that the health and the conditions of the organisation's workplaces are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury.

## **10. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS**

### *Duty of Care*

Duty of Care is the duty to do what a reasonable person would do in any given situation and to take precautions against the risk of harm to others.

### *Responsibilities*

It is everyone's responsibility to make his or her workplace safe and happy. As a volunteer you have the same responsibilities as a paid employee. That is to;

- Help provide a safe and healthy working environment;
- Take action to identify and control hazards in the workplace;
- Wear personal protective equipment if required;
- Help provide training, information and instruction to operate safe working systems.

Volunteers also have a responsibility to:

- Work safely, following safe work procedures;
- Work within limits of your role description;
- Not harm others or place them at risk of harm;
- Report any hazards, near misses, mishaps or injuries.

As a volunteer you must work in your range of comfort and ability; and in line with your role description. If you have an existing injury or condition that could impact on your role, you need to inform your Manager as you may be placing yourself and others at risk of harm.

### *Hazards*

A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause injury or illness or property damage.



---

Hazards can be, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical – slippery floors, broken equipment;
- Chemical – cleaning products;
- Workplace design – poor lighting;
- Biological – exposure to germs, fungal spores;
- Psychological – bullying and harassment.

Reporting a hazard can prevent someone from being injured. It is important that if you notice or are made aware of any hazard, you notify your Manager immediately.

#### *Accidents/incidents*

All accidents and incidents that occur whilst you are undertaking your role must be immediately reported to your Manager. Your Manager must be immediately advised so you or others can be assisted with any immediate first aid or medical support/hospital care for more serious injuries or illnesses. The NWQICSS WHS Officer must be advised as soon as possible.

## **11. GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT**

When you commence your volunteer role, we encourage you to talk with your Manager about day-to-day requirements and procedures.

A grievance is a real or perceived cause for complaint. A grievance can be about bullying, discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) or any other related decision or behaviour which that person sees as unfair, upsetting or unjust.

If you are not sure how to handle the problem, or want to talk confidentially, you can seek advice from your Manager or Safeguarding Officer.

Your grievance/complaint will be discussed with you in accordance with our complaint handling processes.

## **12. RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT**

NWQICSS recognises the valuable work of volunteers.

Your Manager will continue to discuss with you during the time you volunteer any issues you may have and how you are managing the tasks within your role.

Please be aware that feedback is always welcomed and you are encouraged to discuss any concerns you may have with your Manager.

**We hope your time as a volunteer with North West Queensland Indigenous Community Services is positive and meaningful, and we thank you for your contribution to walking alongside our communities, respecting culture, and supporting the wellbeing of our children, families, and Elders.**