



A Guide for Volunteering With *Housing for the Aged Action Group*

Before you start:

Ask staff for copies of the following recommended reading or look on our website www.older tenants.org.au

- Housing for the Aged Action Group brochure
- Home at Last brochure
- Booklet: *Finding at Home: Housing options for older people in Victoria*
- *At the Crossroads: Older people at risk of homelessness* Report August 2016

Recommended viewing

- DVD: *Home at Last: Looking for home – Finding Community*

1. Introduction

Thank you for considering volunteering with Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG). Volunteers are a valued and essential part of the organisation and over the years they have ensured HAAG's ongoing success.



Proud volunteers at the Presentation of certificates and morning tea, May 2013. Staff provided home baked treats to thank the volunteers

There are different ways to be involved with HAAG as a volunteer. Some people chose to work for a short period while others have been with us for many years in different roles. We usually ask volunteers to work for 2 hours with us on any occasion. Sometimes people are able to stay a bit longer, but it's important that volunteers look after themselves and keep enough energy on hand for the trip home.



Wyn and Bob, both long term members of Management Committee, 2013

2. What kinds of volunteer roles are there?

Committee of Management

The Committee of Management is a volunteer-run committee that is responsible for the oversight of the organisation. Members are elected on to the Committee every year at the Annual General Meeting. There is an expectation that members of the Committee participate in monthly meetings and read the meeting papers, which are sent out a week before the meeting.

Working groups

HAAG convenes a number of member-based working groups to discuss various issues about housing and older people. The groups are:

- Independent Living Unit working group – meets second Tuesday of the month
- Caravan and Residential Parks and Villages working group – meets third Thursday
- Campaigns and Policy Working group – meets 2nd Thursday of the month
- Communications working group – meets every three months

Mail Outs

Come in for an hour or two and join a few people to put our information in to envelopes. This can be from 500 to 2000. It's quicker and easier when a few pairs of hands get around the table. There's generally a bit of a fun, light refreshments to lubricate the labour. This usually occurs every three months for the newsletter mail out, and before the General meetings and Annual General meetings.



Staffing an Information Stand at a Festival or event

Volunteers can assist in promoting HAAG at various events. These events may include the Seniors Festival, neighbourhood houses or expos. At these events we set up a table with our information and signs, and we try to encourage passers-by to come and get our information. Standing just outside the stall can be a good place to engage with people.

Some volunteers who have been through our service speak with members of the public about their own experience of HAAG. This can reassure someone that the organisation will treat them in a positive way. Many people feel a bit shy when they start this work and as time goes on their confidence grows. After the information stands we hear from our Housing Support Workers that callers tell them they got our number from our volunteers. You never know who the leaflet will assist.

What if someone asks for information I don't know, or gets upset or is difficult?



You will always be working with a staff member. They are there to take any questions or deal with people who may be upset or difficult. You may need to tell a staff member that you want support.

Many people experiencing housing stress can feel very vulnerable and become upset when they speak about their situation. This is a perfectly normal response to a difficult situation. You do not need to fix anything for them. Give

them reassurance and call a staff member.

Office work

Occasionally volunteers will assist staff with office-based tasks. This may include basic administration, filing, sorting out supplies, tidying etc. This is usually on a short-term basis. It is supported by a member of staff.

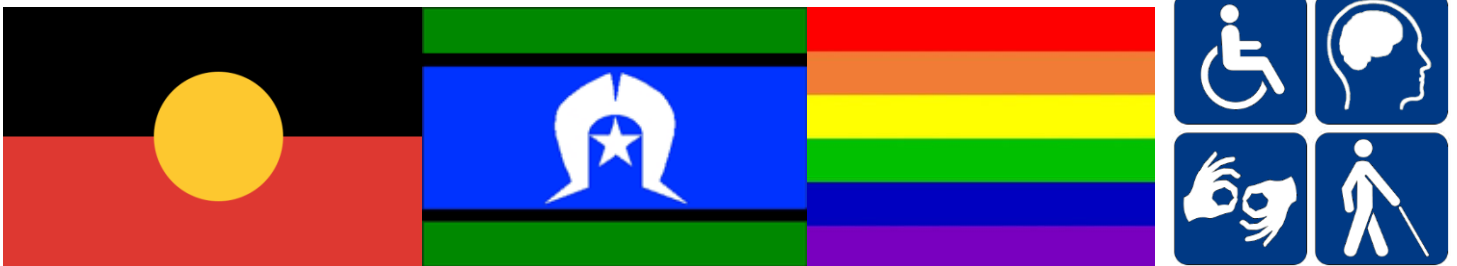
3. Volunteer benefits

People who volunteer with HAAG should not be out of pocket for their travel and meals when working with us. Volunteers are offered a contribution to cover their travel costs. Often we provide light refreshments during the activity, if not volunteers are offered a contribution towards a light meal.

HAAG is not a suitable New Start placement. We do not support “work for the dole” schemes as they neither increases people’s chances of employment nor create jobs. If anything, this practice undermines the pay and conditions of other workers.

As a volunteer, you are covered by all organisational policy and procedure and insurance.

Diversity Statement



Home at last: We do not discriminate regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

4. Complaints

If you have any complaints about your work with HAAG please see the complaints procedure on our website or ask a HAAG staff or Manager for assistance to access it.

5. Application Form

If you would like to volunteer please fill out the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Contact person and number in case you become unwell when working with us

Availability (please tick):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Monday | <input type="radio"/> Friday |
| <input type="radio"/> Tuesday | <input type="radio"/> Saturday |
| <input type="radio"/> Wednesday | <input type="radio"/> Sunday |
| <input type="radio"/> Thursday | |

Activity you would like to volunteer for (please tick):

- ☐ Mail Outs
- ☐ Information Stands

- Other
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