

Gig Buddies Volunteer Policy

1. Volunteer Policy

Purpose

This policy provides guidelines regarding ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project's position on volunteers, staff and participants. It defines the role of the volunteer and outlines the responsibilities for the management of volunteers. A written policy gives formal recognition to the importance of volunteers and ensures that the mutual responsibilities are known and met when volunteers undertake their role.

Definition: Volunteers are people who undertake work on behalf of others outside the family, in their own free time, unpaid and because they have chosen to do so.

Volunteers undertake supplementary and additional tasks to paid staff, but do not replace paid staff. Volunteers bring added value to the Gig Buddies initiative and are essential to ensuring that the project fulfils its purpose.

Responsibilities

All volunteers and Gig Buddies staff are required to adhere to this policy and fully co-operate with the administrative systems. Gig Buddies project facilitators will ensure that:

- a) Volunteers are involved in the most appropriate activity.
- b) Volunteers are welcomed and made aware of their role.
- c) Volunteer's skills are successfully utilised by appropriate selection, training and support.
- d) Training, supervision and ongoing support is provided by Gig Buddies staff.
- e) Volunteers will be given appropriate emergency contact numbers and relevant procedures to follow in case of an emergency. Individual emergency procedures will be agreed upon on an individual basis at induction and reviewed through supervision by the Gig Buddies team.
- f) Volunteers acquire two personal references and a NDIS Worker Screening Check for safe working with people with disabilities.
- g) When volunteer and/or participant disclose health issues, the Gig Buddies team discuss any implications or support needs of the volunteer and/or participant.
- h) A "pairing meeting" is conducted in order to discuss the buddy friendship, complete a risk assessment and buddy agreement.
- i) Staff respect the confidentiality of information and elicit the volunteer's express permission before sharing information.
- j) Volunteers respect the confidentiality of information about their gig buddy and elicit the gig buddy and/or family's express permission before sharing information.

- k) The volunteer's personal and/or business interests do not conflict with their volunteer role within the Gig Buddies project.
- l) Volunteers of Gig Buddies do not provide paid support to Gig Buddies participants, approach participants for paid support, or refer other volunteers for paid support.
- m) Suitable tasks with sufficient challenges are provided to sustain interests of each volunteer.
- n) Volunteers are covered by public liability insurance when out with their buddy.
- o) Volunteers and staff are aware of, and adhere to, health and safety procedures in compliance with the organisation's policies.
- p) Volunteers do not offer or accept money.
- q) Volunteers uphold their duty of care, act responsibly and be "fit for duty", i.e. not volunteering while affected by drugs or alcohol.

A general rule of thumb is that volunteers enjoy the same rights as paid staff whilst adhering to the general expectations of paid staff.

Policies below are abridged policies edited for the Gig Buddies volunteer role and based upon ACL Disability Services' staff policies and procedures.

2. Human Rights Policy

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that both Human Rights principles and Quality Management principles are embraced, promoted and delivered to participants and their networks, and ensure that the organisation strives for best practice. Both Human Rights principles and Quality Management principles are what the National Standards for Disability Services are based upon.

2.2. The Human Rights Principles are:

- Freedom from abuse, neglect or harm;
- Respect for the inherent dignity, independence of persons and individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices;
- Non-discrimination;
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility;
- Equality between men and women; and
- Active partnerships between services and people with disability, and where appropriate, their families, friends, carers and/or advocates.

2.3. The Quality Management Principles are (where possible):

- Focus on outcomes for people who use services and supports;
- Provide leadership;
- Involve individuals and staff;
- Use a process approach;
- Take a systems approach;
- Encourage continuous improvement;
- Make evidence-informed decisions; and
- Engage in collaborative partnerships.

3. Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy

3.1. Purpose

This policy affirms Assisted Community Living Limited's (ACLL) and Gig Buddies' belief in responsible social and ethical behaviour from all volunteers. This policy clarifies the standards of behaviour that ACL expects of all volunteers.

3.2. Code of Ethics

ACL's business is conducted according to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, respect and fairness when dealing with all our volunteers, participants and visitors. We require that all our volunteers meet these high standards.

Assisted Community Living Limited takes seriously its obligations to comply with all federal, state and local government laws and regulations, as well as common law obligations, and again requires all volunteers to do the same.

3.3. Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct policy applies to all volunteers and provides the framework of principles for conducting business, dealing with other volunteers, participants and stakeholders. The Code of Conduct does not replace legislation and if any part of it is in conflict, then legislation takes precedence. This policy is based on the following agreement:

I commit to:

- Carry out my volunteering activities to the best of my ability and perform duties with skill, honesty, care and diligence
- Act and maintain a high standard of integrity and professionalism
- Help the Gig Buddies project fulfil its objectives
- Be an ambassador for the Gig Buddies project and promote the rights of people with learning disabilities
- Be considerate and respectful of the environment and others, and to treat staff, participants and other volunteers with fairness, courtesy, consideration, dignity and respect
- Uphold confidentiality regarding information about the Gig Buddies project and its service users
- Avoid apparent conflict of personal and/or business interests and promptly disclose any conflict to Gig Buddies staff

- Not offer or accept money except when buying or reimbursing for tickets
- Uphold duty of care, act responsibly and be “fit for duty”, i.e. not volunteering while affected by drugs or alcohol
- Attend relevant training, supervision and support sessions
- Meet time commitments and work to standards agreed and give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible
- Abide by policies, procedures and lawful directions that relate to your volunteer role with Gig Buddies and ACL Disability Services
- Seek the support of designated hub coordinator or project officer if support is required with role or are uncomfortable in any situation

The Gig Buddies project facilitators value the role of all volunteers and as such, expects volunteers to adhere to these policies. This is out of respect to all volunteers and service users.

Any volunteer, who in good faith, raises a complaint or discloses an alleged breach of the Code, whilst following correct reporting procedures, will not be disadvantaged or prejudiced. All reports will be dealt with in a timely and confidential manner

The Code of Conduct establishes the standards of behaviour that should be met by all volunteers. Where these standards are not met, appropriate action will be taken. In cases where the breach involves serious misconduct, this may result in instant dismissal from the project. In cases where a breach of the policy involves a breach of any law, then the relevant government authorities or the police will be notified.

3.4. Examples of Misconduct

Examples of misconduct include:

- Engaging in harassing or bullying behaviour towards other volunteers, participants or staff
- Discriminating based on irrelevant characteristics, such as sex, race, disability, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual preference, gender, family status or family responsibility
- Perpetrating, permitting or failing to report violations of any federal, state or local government law or regulation
- Failing to declare a conflict of interest between your role as a volunteer and your involvement in an outside activity
- Refusing to comply with lawful and reasonable directions
- Volunteering while affected by drugs or alcohol
- Using of phone, email or the internet to send sexually explicit, suggestive or otherwise harassing material
- Leaking confidential information to anyone, including the media
- Dealing dishonestly with staff, participants or stakeholders
- Breaching copyright or other intellectual property rights
- Wilfully disregarding health and safety requirements

4. Conflict of Interest Policy

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maintain professional and ethical boundaries and avoid conflicts of interest that have the potential to negatively impact or influence services.

4.2 Conflict of Interest Policy

- Volunteers for the Gig Buddies project must not seek or receive any personal or financial benefit as a result of their volunteering work.
- Volunteers of Gig Buddies are not permitted to provide paid support to Gig Buddies participants, approach Gig Buddies participants for paid support, or refer other volunteers for paid support.
- If a participant, or their family, independently approaches their paired volunteer to request additional paid support shifts, this may be considered at management's discretion and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Upon request, Gig Buddies staff may provide a reference for volunteers based on their performance and conduct during their time volunteering with the organisation.

5. Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk Policy

5.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a guideline to assist key stakeholders in the decision-making steps to balance dignity of risk and duty of care in the delivery of high-quality volunteer services.

ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project recognises that through the operation of services, the organisation has a duty of care to all participants, volunteers and staff members. ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project will respect the participant's dignity of risk as long as it does not adversely impact upon the organisation's duty of care obligations. The organisation will ensure they fulfil their duty of care to participants, volunteers and staff members in all aspects of the Service's operation by ensuring that appropriate working standards and care standards are met.

5.2 Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk Policy

All people by law have a duty of care to take reasonable care so as to avoid injury to another person or damage to property as a result of their action or failure to act. There is a duty not to be careless or negligent. Volunteers, staff and their employers owe a duty of care to their service users. If there is a reasonable risk that other people may also be harmed by the actions of the service user, then the volunteer may have a duty of care to them also.

A breach of a person's duty of care may occur if there is a failure by them to meet the required standard of care. The 'required standard' is what the community would regard as reasonable conduct in all the circumstances. In other words, a Gig Buddies volunteer would be expected to show the skills or proficiency of a competent worker in the situation.

5.3 Principles of Duty of Care

If it were reasonably foreseeable that a participant would cause harm to another person or property and reasonable action was not taken to avoid or minimise the risk, and harm resulted, a breach of duty of care would have occurred

Challenging Behaviour – Gig Buddies volunteers have a legal duty to take action to address challenging behaviours that are harmful to the people themselves or to others by reporting behaviours to Gig Buddies staff. However, a person's duty of care does not require them to do anything unlawful. The relevant offences here are wrongful imprisonment or assault.

Dignity of Risk - is the belief that each person with a disability is entitled to experience and learn from life situations even if these, on occasions, may be a threat to their well-being. Each person with a disability experiencing a risk, of which they have been informed, is to receive support in the situation.

Duty of Care is the obligation to take reasonable care to avoid injury to a person whom it can be reasonably foreseen might be injured by an act, or omission. It is the basis for civil (court) action.

Negligence is not providing the standard of care required by a volunteer's position, resulting in injury to the person with a disability in a volunteer's care. This can result in a civil action against the volunteer and/or ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project.

6. Abuse, Assault and Neglect Response Policy

6.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Abuse, Assault and Neglect Policy is to set the context for providing an environment free of abuse and neglect and provide a set of principles for minimising the risk of abuse, assault and neglect.

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that a person with disability has the right to liberty, security and freedom from abuse and neglect, and where these rights have been violated, to have equal recognition by law and access to justice.

The Policy is consistent with the objects and principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, and is based on the principles of legal and human rights found in the National Standards for Disability Services.

The Policy includes principles recognising the needs of particular groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and women and children with disability.

The Policy aims to deliver culturally sensitive information about how to safeguard people from abuse and neglect, and that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from CALD communities.

FACS – Abuse and Neglect Policy

6.2 Policy

ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project will uphold the right of its participants to live with freedom from abuse, whether physical, sexual, psychological, financial, domestic violence, systematic or neglect.

All Gig Buddies volunteers will report all perceived, notified or witnessed incidents of sexual assault, physical assault, abuse or neglect to a project coordinator or the CEO. It is the responsibility of the CEO to report these incidents on to the appropriate external service as appropriate. E.g. Police, NSW Ombudsman etc.

Volunteers will take all appropriate actions to remove the participant from harm, immediately assist the client with first aid if required and take all other necessary actions in the situation.

ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project will seek to train all volunteers to develop an understanding of the nature and prevention of sexual assault, sexual harassment, physical assault and abuse. All ACL Disability Services and Gig Buddies staff are required to report any instance of assault, abuse and neglect and may be subject to disciplinary action for failure to report or to cover up any incidents of assault, abuse or neglect.