



Work Health and Safety

Everyone has a right to be safe at work, including volunteers. Volunteers play a vital role in communities across Australia and make significant contributions by carrying out unpaid work for a variety of organisations every day.

You are a volunteer if you are working for an organisation without payment or reward. A volunteer may be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses.

Not all organisations owe work health and safety (WHS) duties to volunteers. But those that do must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the physical and mental health and safety of its workers, including volunteers.

WHS laws and volunteer organisations

The WHS laws place a primary duty on organisations to protect volunteers. The organisation you volunteer for may ensure your health and safety by doing things like:

- confirm that any equipment you use is suitable for the work and does not put your health and safety at risk
- provide you with personal protective equipment (if necessary), and
- provide you with instructions, information and training about how to carry out your volunteer work safely.

This means that volunteers are provided the highest level of protection where ever they volunteer.

What you need to do

As a volunteer, you need to take reasonable care of your own health and safety. You must do this by:

- following the instructions given to you by the organisation you volunteer for, and
- complying with the policies and procedures of the organisation you volunteer for.

You must also take care to ensure your actions don't affect the health and safety of other people, for example, other volunteers, a client you are assisting or the general public.

More information

A complete volunteer resource kit designed to help volunteers understand how WHS laws apply is available from www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

For more information contact:

- The organisation you volunteer for,
- [Volunteering Australia](#)

Your state or territory WHS Regulator:

- [WorkSafe ACT](#)
- [WorkCover NSW](#)
- [NT WorkSafe](#)
- [Work Health and Safety QLD](#)
- [SafeWork SA](#)
- [Work Safety TAS](#)
- [WorkSafe VIC](#)
- [WorkSafe WA](#)
- [Comcare](#)

Safe Work Australia

Safe Work Australia is the organisation responsible for the development of the new WHS laws.

For more information on Safe Work Australia:

web: www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

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