

BASP Volunteer Policy

BASP's activities are based on welcoming the stranger and seeking justice for those who are seeking asylum.

Volunteers are an essential component of the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP) in meeting its aims of providing practical support to people seeking asylum and of enhancing community education and understanding of the issues faced by those seeking Australia's protection.

Volunteers provide practical assistance in many ways including the provision of food and household needs, teaching English, offering friendship and help with understanding Australian ways and in assisting with employment and legal complexities.

Volunteering also provides an opportunity for members of the community to interact with people seeking asylum, deepening their understanding of the issues involved and benefiting from a mutually positive experience.

Implications

The BASP Co-ordinators have a responsibility to the people who volunteer their services to ensure they are safe and that they are aware of BASP's obligations and responsibilities as well as their own.

Volunteers

- do not receive payment for the services they provide;
- are recognised by those responsible for BASP to act on their behalf to assist in a range of activities assisting people seeking asylum and refugees.

Engaging Volunteers

Volunteers are required to undertake a Working with Children Check. Additional references regarding good character may be required. Consistent with its mission and values, BASP strives to ensure children and vulnerable people, with whom they work, are safe and secure.

Induction and Training

Every volunteer will have an interview regarding the role. They will be given an outline of the work of BASP and introductions to other staff and volunteers, where appropriate. The volunteer will be made familiar with their specific task and any training required. Volunteers will be given information regarding BASP all policies, available on the BASP website. They will be updated with changes to key policies, such as the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding, recorded on a register in the database. These will be discussed at interview, before signing agreement on the Volunteer Role Statement.

BASP Responsibilities

BASP recognises its responsibilities to volunteers and undertakes to:

- Provide volunteers with tasks that are appropriate to the volunteers' skills, abilities and interests.
- Provide volunteers with information and supervision in order to perform their tasks.
- Provide volunteers with a safe workplace.
- Provide volunteers with appropriate insurance cover.
- Reimburse any authorised expenses the volunteer may have incurred other than travel expenses.
- Authorise the volunteer to undertake volunteer duties as mutually agreed at the time of appointment or as they may vary over time.
- Have clear lines of accountability and authority for those in volunteer roles
- Amend or cease the activity if either the volunteer or the person seeking asylum is not comfortable with the arrangement.

Responsibilities of the Volunteer

The volunteer will conduct him/herself in accordance with the organisation's policies and procedures. This includes:

- Respecting the privacy and dignity of people seeking asylum, not breaching confidentiality in public or private
- Undertaking the tasks as agreed with the BASP coordinator.
- Treating people as they would like to be treated themselves
- Understanding and demonstrating respect for cultural differences
- Reporting any concerns, risks or issues or issues which arise in their allocated activity to the relevant co-ordinator
- Advising the co-ordinator if they are unable to attend as agreed.

Complaints Procedure

Volunteers who have a complaint, concern or grievance should raise the issue with the BASP Coordinator. If the issue is not resolved, they are able to contact the other coordinator and after that the Chair of the BASP Board, chair@basp.org.au

Confidentiality

Volunteers are required to respect the confidentiality of the people with whom they work and the matters of the organisation within which they work. The organisation will respect the privacy and confidentiality of information regarding personal information supplied by volunteers.

Occupational Health and Safety

All reasonable steps will be undertaken to provide volunteers with a workplace compliant with OH&S standards. All volunteers are covered with Public Liability Insurance and Volunteer Workers Personal Accident Insurance.

If a volunteer is distressed by any aspect related to the tasks undertaken for BASP, they are expected to raise this for discussion with a coordinator.

If further action is indicated e.g. counselling, trauma support, the coordinator will identify a suitable service to provide this. *

Related Documents

BASP Safeguarding Children, Young people and Adults at Risk; Privacy Policy, OH&S Policy and Procedures

Kildare Ministries 'The Living Justice Charter'; Whistleblower Policy 2021-23

Updated August 2024*