

Allied Justice

Volunteering Programs Framework

Purpose

The purpose of this framework is to provide an overview of volunteering at Allied Justice and detail how our volunteer programs are appropriately supported in alignment with Volunteering Australia's National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (National Standards).

Scope

The Volunteering Programs Framework applies to BGCLS Board, employees and volunteers.

This framework is not intended to override or form part of the terms of the Victorian Community Legal Centres Multi-Enterprise agreement 2024-2027 or any contract that applies to an employee, but should be considered a lawful and reasonable direction to staff, which they are obliged to follow.

Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer: The CEO is responsible for ensuring the framework aligns with our Strategy and that consultation occurs with the Quality and Governance Committee.

Executive Managers: It is the responsibility of the Executive Managers to ensure associated policy and procedure decisions are made in accordance with the framework.

Line Managers: It is the responsibility of the line managers to provide feedback on relevant policies and procedures within the context of this framework.

Employees: It is the responsibility of employees to understand, comply with, and seek support from their manager if required.

Framework

Framework Authority: The Volunteer Programs Framework is the responsibility of the CEO.

Feedback: Continuous improvement feedback on the framework and any associated policies and procedures can be provided by employees and volunteers to their relevant line manager for raising with the Leadership Team.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this framework:

- *Volunteer* refers to someone who provides their time and expertise willingly and without any financial gain. A volunteer is not an employee of, or contractor to, Allied Justice.

Objectives

Allied Justice has provided community legal services to the community for over 35-years. Our region currently encompasses 11 Local Government Areas from Bacchus Marsh to the South Australian border.

With the expressed purpose of *changing life stories through better access to justice*, our organisational values are:

- Respect - we are respectful without judgement.
- Courage - we have the courage to do what is necessary.
- Empowerment - we empower actions that make an impact.
- Kindness - we extend kindness to all.

These values guide the expectation of how we will interact and work with community members and our clients, our stakeholders and our colleagues, including our volunteers.

The core problems we seek to solve through our strategic plans and activities and community legal service delivery are:

1. The legal needs of the region we serve
2. Family violence
3. Organisational sustainability and growth

Our volunteering programs will seek to positively impact these core problems and our strategic aims.

Intention

The aim of our volunteer programs is to increase our capacity to successfully respond to our core problems and deliver our strategic goals.

The time and expertise that our volunteers contribute will increase our ability to provide needed legal assistance services across our region and increase our organisational knowledge.

In turn we will aim to provide opportunities that support the needs and motivations of our volunteers and any supporting organisations.

Allied Justice welcomes and actively seeks volunteers from varied backgrounds and experiences, recognising that an organisation that reflects the diversity in our community is better able to respond to and serve that community.

Volunteering Opportunities

As a community legal service, we provide legal assistance services to both individuals and the community, our service is currently funded to provide legal services in the following areas of law:

- Family Violence
- Family Law
- Credit, debts, fines or infringements
- Uninsured motor vehicle accidents
- Renting and tenancy
- Victims of Crime
- Climate and Disaster Justice
- Power of Attorney/Guardianship (limited circumstances)
- Personal Safety Intervention Orders (limited circumstances)

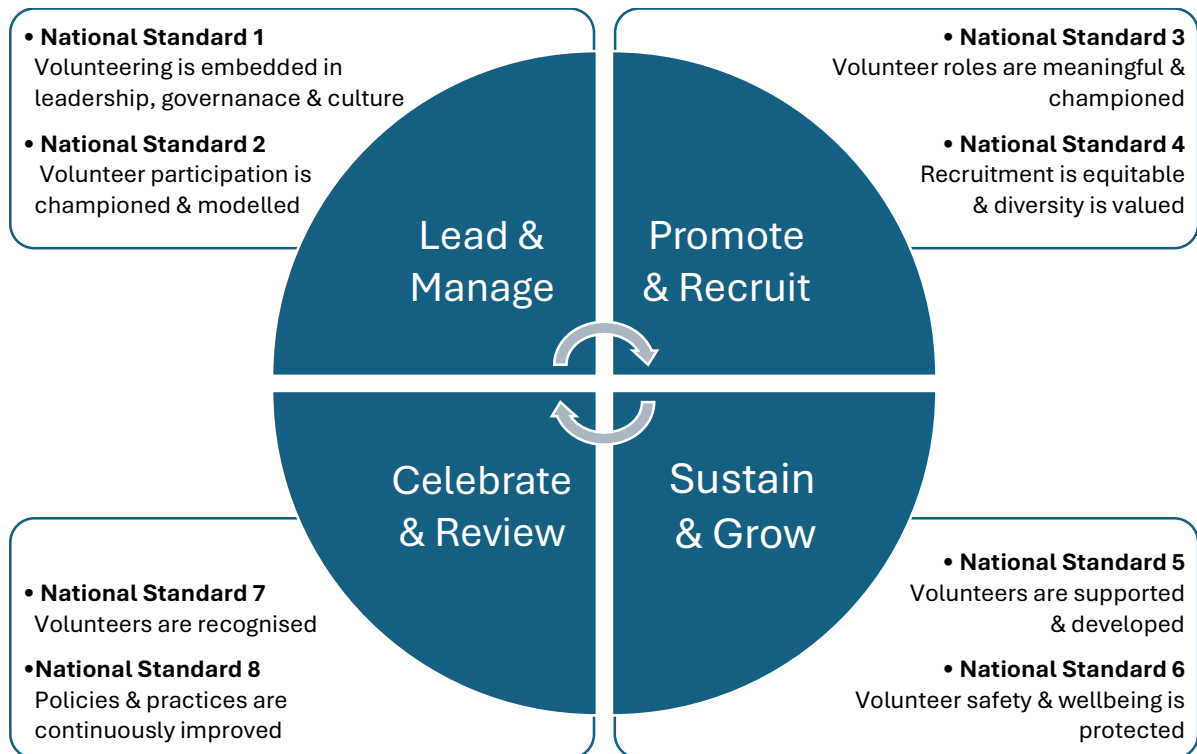
Across our core service lines there are a variety of potential opportunities for volunteering:

- Legal Services for Individuals
 - After-hours volunteer solicitor clinic
 - Duty lawyer services – Family Violence
 - Casework support (research, file preparation, secondary consultations)
 - Pro-bono representation
 - Emergency recovery responding
- Community Legal Education
 - Delivery of CLE
 - Development of CLE content
 - Development of legal information resources
- Law Reform & System Change
 - Research, submission support, test cases
 - Community advocacy
- Integrated Services
 - Clinics
- Professional Development for BGCLS staff
 - Training development and/or delivery

We will always endeavour to create and support volunteering opportunities that align with both our organisational needs as well as the skillset, interests, capacity and motivation of an individual volunteer.

Our volunteering programs aim to align with the National Standards, the diagram below shows how the four key organisational responsibility areas within the framework align.

Organisational Responsibilities within the Volunteering Programs Framework



The following pages articulate what Allied Justice will do to ensure our volunteer programs deliver on these responsibilities in practice.

Responsibility - Lead & Manage	
Standard 1: Volunteering is embedded in leadership, governance and culture Organisational governance and leadership promote volunteering and implement effective systems to support volunteer participation by ensuring:	How we do this
The aims and values of volunteer involvement are promoted across the organisation	Volunteer framework
Accountabilities for engaging, leading and managing volunteer participation are defined and supported.	- Volunteer role descriptions - Employee position descriptions - Employee and volunteer supervision
Governance and risk management arrangements facilitate safe and meaningful volunteer participation.	- Risk Management Guide - Board reporting - Governance and Risk Management Committee oversight
Policies, processes and systems are in place to support positive volunteer involvement and communicated across the organisation.	Allied Justice policy development processes
Volunteer records are maintained, and volunteers and employees understand their obligations including information sharing, record keeping, client professional privilege and privacy.	- Volunteer EOI - Volunteer agreement - Volunteer onboarding & induction processes
Processes are in place to manage relationships with partner agencies for any collaborative volunteering activities.	Partnership agreements, MOUs or project plans
Standard 2: Volunteer participation is championed and modelled A commitment to volunteer participation is embedded in organisational planning and resourcing and supports the organisation's strategic direction by ensuring:	How we do this
A public commitment to volunteering.	- Volunteer page on website - Social media - Engagement with relevant volunteering events across our community

• A volunteering culture is championed and modelled at all levels.	• Board, operations & staff meetings
• Volunteer participation is factored into goals and objectives.	• Business cases, operations plans & project plans
• Effective leadership and management are in place to guide the work of volunteers.	• Leadership program • Delegations • Staff position descriptions
• Resources (including time, funds, equipment and technology) are allocated for volunteer involvement.	• Director of Finance & Operations responsible for monitoring & facilitating resourcing needs

Responsibility - Promote & recruit	
Standard 3: Volunteer roles are meaningful and tailored Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose and meet volunteer interests and preferred style of participation by ensuring volunteer roles are:	How we do this
• Designed and negotiated with volunteers, considering the needs and interests of volunteers.	• Volunteer EOI form • Volunteer recruitment process
• Contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.	• Volunteer recruitment process • Business cases, operations plans & project plans
• Defined, documented and communicated.	• Volunteer role descriptions • Volunteer agreement
• Reviewed regularly including through feedback and engagement with volunteers about their experience.	• Volunteer supervision • Periodic volunteer program reviews

Standard 4: Recruitment is equitable and diversity is valued Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers; they facilitate and value diversity and promote equity and accessibility by ensuring:	How we do this
Planned and innovative approaches are used to attract suitable volunteers with relevant interests, knowledge and skills.	Volunteer recruitment processes
Potential volunteers are provided with information about the organisation, how volunteers contribute to its purpose and vision, available opportunities and the selection process.	Volunteering section on website
Volunteers are selected based on their interests, knowledge, skills and suitability for the role, and consistent with anti-discrimination law.	Volunteer recruitment process
Diversity, inclusivity and accessibility principles are built into recruitment activities, reflecting and promoting awareness of, and respect for, diversity and inclusion and the inherent value this brings to the organisation.	Volunteer recruitment process
Screening processes maintain the safety and security of service recipients, employees, volunteers, and the organisation, in line with legal requirements and regulations.	- Volunteer recruitment process - Volunteer onboarding & induction processes including agreement & checklist

Responsibility – Sustain & Grow	
Standard 5: Volunteers are supported and developed Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to participate safely and effectively by ensuring:	How we do this
Volunteers are provided with relevant induction and training	Volunteer induction program
Volunteers' knowledge and skills are reviewed to identify support and development needs.	Volunteer supervision
Volunteer supervisors have sufficient time and resources to engage with and provide appropriate and required support.	- Volunteer role descriptions - Supervising staff position descriptions - Staff workload management

Changes to the role of a volunteer are fair and consistent and achieved through engaging with the volunteer.	- Decision making framework - Volunteer supervision
Standard 6: Volunteer safety and wellbeing is protected The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected and volunteers understand their rights and responsibilities by ensuring:	How we do this
Effective working relationships with employees, and between volunteers, are facilitated.	- Lunch & learn participation - Volunteer supervision - Volunteer work design
Legal and ethical obligations to protect volunteers from harm are met with processes in place to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers in their capacity as volunteers, including relevant insurances.	- Volunteer induction program - Volunteer portal - Volunteer supervision - OH&S policies & procedures - OH&S committee & processes Volunteer supervision - Grievance & complaints policy
Volunteers understand and have access to complaints procedures.	
Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and inform continuous improvement.	

Responsibility - Celebrate & Review	
Standard 7: Volunteers are recognised Volunteer contribution, value and impact are understood, appreciated and acknowledged by ensuring:	How we do this
The value volunteers contribute to the organisation, service recipients and the community is communicated across the organisation.	- Executive, operational & staff meeting agenda items - Internal communication channels (Teams, SharePoint)
Volunteer effort is measured and acknowledged in the organisation's reporting and used to demonstrate impact.	- Organisational performance dashboard - Board reports - Funding reports
The organisation regularly engages with volunteers about the impact of their contribution.	Volunteer supervision

Volunteer acknowledgement is appropriate to the volunteer and respectful of cultural values and perspectives.	6-monthly volunteer update email - Annual volunteer celebration
Standard 8: Policies and practices are continuously improved Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of best practice, regular review and continuous improvement by ensuring:	How we do this
Policies and procedures are designed and implemented to effectively guide all aspects of volunteer involvement.	Ongoing policy development processes
Volunteer involvement is regularly reviewed in line with the organisation's evaluation and quality management frameworks.	Policy register
Volunteer involvement is monitored and reported to the board, employees, volunteers, and other stakeholders.	- Organisational performance dashboard - Board reports - Executive, operational & staff meeting agenda items 6-monthly volunteer update email
Opportunities are available for volunteers to provide feedback on their experience and relevant areas of the organisation's work.	6-monthly volunteer feedback survey

REVIEW			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1		Board	12 months after approval