

Title: <b>Volunteer Policy</b>		No: <b>43700</b>
Policy Owner: <b>Director Strategic Development and Innovation</b>		
Policy Operational Delegate: <b>Volunteer Engagement Lead</b>		
Date approved: 18 June 2020		Suggested Review date: 18 June 2022
Date reviewed: January 2023		Suggested Review date: January 2025
Reference or source: Volunteering Australia National Standards, Volunteering Australia Definition of Volunteering, Volunteering Australia’s Common Language Guide, Fair Work Australia		
Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To create positive and engaging volunteer programs where all volunteers and volunteer contributions are valued;</li><li>● To clearly outline Family Life’s expectations regarding volunteer engagement; and</li><li>● To clearly outline the Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities;</li><li>● To provide guidelines to managers/coordinators of volunteers and all staff.</li></ul>		
<b>Application</b> All volunteers and staff	<b>Type</b> Policy	<b>Policy group</b> People

## 1. Background

- 1.1. Family Life, formerly Southern Family Life, was founded by community volunteers in 1970 to 'support families and prevent family breakdown' – which now underpins our enduring purpose of Transforming Lives for Stronger Communities.
- 1.2. Family Life engages volunteers in all aspects of our work. Through volunteering, we enable individuals to learn, be active and to strengthen their bonds with community, and for Family Life to strengthen our capability and connectedness.
- 1.3. We provide meaningful roles for our volunteers. Volunteering complements our core service delivery and enables us to expand the reach of our core services to help families, beyond the formal program offering.
- 1.4. We do not place unnecessary stress and responsibility on our volunteers, and acknowledge that they volunteer of their own free will and have the right to not show up. We understand that skills and experience may be gained through the volunteering experience but that there is no expectation of paid work or a role with Family Life.
- 1.5. We consult with and engage our volunteers in decisions affecting their roles and the programs in which they function, and always welcome volunteer feedback.
- 1.6. We value and respect our volunteers and acknowledge the key role they play in making a positive difference in supporting our community.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. Family Life recognises and adheres to Volunteering Australia's 2015 Definition of Volunteering: Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain
- 2.2. Family Life recognises that formal volunteers:
- are people who volunteer of their own free will
  - are unpaid and do not undertake activities for the receipt of a salary, pension, government allowance or honorarium
  - benefit the community and themselves by participating in volunteer programs
  - enhance the client experience
  - complement, but do not replace or threaten to replace paid roles
  - complement and enhance service delivery
- 2.3. Family life excludes the following from the Volunteer Policy and our definition of volunteering:
- students on placement or work experience
  - students undertaking volunteering as a part of the education curriculum
  - board members and directors; those formally appointed and recognised as "responsible persons" for the organisation
  - persons receiving payment outside of the reimbursement framework i.e corporate volunteers who are being paid by their employer
  - philanthropic giving of time where the primary motivation is giving of resources
  - guest speakers and those providing pro-bono professional services
  - Family Life program participants
  - Family Life employees, however, there are times that Family Life employees do undertake specific volunteer roles.
- 2.4. Family Life engages volunteers in two different areas within the organisation; the services area or non-services area. Therefore, volunteers will be categorised as one of the following:
- Services Volunteer - a volunteer that is engaged in a Services team and typically interacts directly with Family Life clients
  - Non-services Volunteer - a volunteer that is engaged in a non-services team and typically does not interact directly with Family Life clients
- 2.5. Family Life engages people between the ages of 15 - 100 years old.
- Volunteers between the ages of 15-17 require written permission from a parent or guardian.
  - People over 100 years old are not eligible to volunteer with Family Life as our insurance does not apply to people over 100 years of age.
- 2.6. Family Life staff, clients and program participants are welcome to apply as volunteers. It is also recommended to re-engage with the wider professional and volunteering community. Appointment to a volunteer role will be at the discretion of the Volunteering team.
- 2.7. Key Industry Definitions

Family Life has adopted the definitions around volunteering put forward by Volunteering Australia's Common Language Guide (copyright 2022). The key definitions that pertain to this document are the following:

- volunteers - Those who give their time willingly for the common good and without financial gain.
- formal volunteering - Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain, taking place within organisations (including institutions and agencies) in a structured way.
- manager/s of volunteers - The person/s who are responsible for the recruitment, induction, training and supervision of volunteers, and who provide ongoing support for volunteers in an organisation.
- corporate volunteering - Where paid staff from a corporate or small or medium sized business engage in unpaid work for a community organisation during work hours for a wider societal benefit, and for the benefit of the volunteer and for the business.
- employee volunteering - Employee volunteering involves the contribution of time, talent, skills and resources by the workforce for a wider societal benefit.
- employee volunteering program - A program where paid employees are given work time and/or payment by their employer to volunteer with another organisation such as a charity. The activities undertaken by Employee Volunteering Programs have been categorised into two main types: - Skills-based volunteering - Short-term team volunteering
- group volunteering - People who assist communities in groups, as opposed to individually, by giving their time willingly for the common good and without financial gain.
- youth volunteering - Young people (those aged 15-24), who give their time willingly for the common good and without financial gain.
- student volunteering - This type of volunteering is undertaken by students, and can assist with building skills, experience, knowledge and interest.
- National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015) - The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015) are recognised as the best-practice guide for volunteer involvement in Australia. The Standards are the intellectual property of Volunteering Australia.
- engage or involve volunteers - Volunteers are 'engaged' or 'involved' in a wide variety of activities or initiatives that support the community. They are not utilised or used, which suggests that volunteers are being taken advantage of or exploited.
- volunteer recognition - This encompasses recognising the volunteer contribution, and ensuring the value and impact of the voluntary involvement is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.
- volunteer roles - Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives
- recruitment and selection - Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies, policies and procedures are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.
- leadership and management - The governing body and senior employees/volunteers lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.

\*Volunteering Australia is the national peak body for volunteering. Our state branch of the overarching organisation is Volunteering Victoria.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1. This policy applies to all Family Life formal volunteers and staff who manage and supervise volunteers.

### **4. Objectives**

- 4.1. To formally acknowledge the role that volunteers play in delivering Family Life's services within the community and the contributions they make to our organisation.
- 4.2. To safely and effectively manage volunteers, to provide inclusive, engaging and meaningful roles and to provide appropriate training and support.
- 4.3. To provide overall guidance to volunteers and staff engaged in volunteer involved programs through a robust Volunteer Framework.
- 4.4. To deliver a best practice Volunteer Program that operates in accordance with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.

### **5. Policy or Practice Provisions**

#### **5.1. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers at Family Life have both Rights and Responsibilities. Family Life is required to uphold volunteer rights, reciprocally volunteers are required to adhere to their responsibilities. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities are governed by Volunteering Victoria.

##### **Volunteer Rights**

- Induction and orientation at Family Life
- Recognition as a valued team member and to be respected
- Clarification of volunteer role (through a position description)
- Agreement about hours and conditions (through a volunteer agreement)
- Access to training to perform duties to the standard required
- Information and consultation on matters directly or indirectly affecting you and your duties
- Support and supervision in your role
- Adequate insurance cover and a healthy, safe work environment
- Awareness of the organisation's grievance procedure
- Reimbursement for agreed upon out-of-pocket expenses
- Freedom of choice (including refusing positions that may be filled by paid staff rather than volunteers)
- Holiday breaks
- Right to privacy
- A safe workplace environment
- Access to relevant information about your host organisation, such as volunteer policies which are hosted online.

##### **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- Commit to your volunteer position
- Be punctual and reliable
- Notify your manager in advance any changes to your availability
- Accept responsibility for your actions and behaviour

- Take responsibility for your own health and safety, and for the health and safety of others in the workplace
- Notify Family Life of any potential hazards or dangerous situations
- Abide by Family Life's Code of Conduct and volunteer policies
- Deal with complaints in the appropriate manner
- Respect the rights and privacy of others
- Carry out the duties listed in your volunteer position description, including training
- Support other team members and ask for support when needed
- Give advance notice to your manager before leaving Family Life.

## 5.2. Volunteer Management

- 5.2.1. Volunteers are managed in practice by the Volunteering Team within the Strategic Development and Innovation Team and in accordance with the Volunteer Framework.
- 5.2.2. Volunteers are supervised operationally within the team that their role provides function.
- 5.2.3. The Volunteering Team will endeavour to engage formal volunteers in an extensive engagement program, including but not limited to access to the volunteer social media group, opportunities to provide feedback on the Volunteer Program, information and training sessions and invitations to formal Family Life volunteer recognition events.
- 5.2.4. All new formal volunteers engaging with Family Life will undergo a term of probation, which unless otherwise stated is a period of 3 months. An opportunity to check in for both the volunteer and the staff member who supervises the volunteer will be provided prior to the end of probation date.
- 5.2.5. Volunteers are recognised and acknowledged for their valuable contributions by staff and colleagues on a regular basis. Additionally volunteers are formally recognised during National Volunteer Week.
- 5.2.6. Family Life is committed to upskilling and developing our volunteers. To do this, volunteers will be invited to available core training sessions as soon as they commence their roles.
- 5.2.7. Worksafe does not cover volunteers in the state of Victoria. Therefore Family Life has taken out an appropriate level of insurance coverage to ensure the safety of our volunteers in the event of an unforeseen incident. Family Life's insurance does not apply to student volunteers as they are covered by the Department of Education's insurance.
- 5.2.8. Volunteers are provided with appropriate training, supervision and support to perform their role safely and effectively in accordance with the Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities and will be governed by the Practice Supervision Policy those volunteers who are involved in direct service delivery to Family Life clients.
- 5.2.9. Volunteers have access to Family Life's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which provides a limited number of free counselling services for

volunteers while they are officially engaged with Family Life.  
Information on the current EAP can be provided by the Volunteer Team.

- 5.2.10. Volunteers are expected to act in accordance with the Volunteer Policy, our Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy, General OHS information and have access to a Complaints Procedure.
- 5.2.11. Corporate and Employee volunteers will be required to review and sign our Code of Conduct and General OHS information prior to commencing volunteering with Family Life.
- 5.2.12. Volunteers can access all volunteer related policies, practice and procedures online at: [https://www.familylife.com.au/volunteer\\_induction](https://www.familylife.com.au/volunteer_induction) or by requesting them from the Volunteering Team.
- 5.2.13. While either party is able to disengage from volunteering at any time for any reason, we request advance notice of resignation and reciprocally will endeavor to provide notice of cessation of volunteering position or role as far as is practicable.
- 5.2.14. We value feedback and strive to continually improve our program. Throughout the course of and upon exit of being engaged in our volunteer program we will provide opportunities for volunteers to provide feedback.

### 5.3. Safety Screening

- 5.3.1. Family Life complies with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Safety screening plays an important role in minimising the risk of engaging unsuitable people. Family Life is committed to pre-employment/pre-volunteering and ongoing screening of all employees and volunteers as part of its commitment to providing a quality service to clients in a safe environment.

- 5.3.2. Services (client facing) volunteers are not able to commence in their role until they have successfully completed our Safety Screening requirements (Working With Children Check and Police Check).

On receipt of a current Working with Children Check, non-Services Volunteers (Social Enterprise Volunteer Retail Assistant roles only) may commence their volunteering role prior to confirmation of a successful Police Check as long as it has been lodged and we have proof of application submission for the National Police Check (including International Police Checks where required). During that period volunteers are supervised by paid staff until their clear Police Check is received. This will be applied on a case by case basis, and Family Life reserves the right to hold commencement until the Police Check is received.

*Eg. Drivers and Jockeys would be ineligible as staff supervision is not possible, volunteers wanting to work on a shift that is volunteer-supervised rather than staff-supervised would be ineligible due to the same conditions, a prospective volunteer may disclose something in their application or interview that would suggest it prudent to wait for the Police Check to be processed.*



- 5.3.3. Youth volunteers under the age of 18 are not required to undergo a Working With Children Check or a Police Check.
- 5.3.4. Corporate and Employee Volunteers are to be supervised by a paid staff member
- 5.3.5. No references are required from Non Services (Social Enterprise) volunteers as a part of their application, but Family Life reserves the right to request references in particular instances.

#### 5.4. Intellectual Property and Moral Rights

- 5.4.1. All Intellectual Property rights arising in relation to any Works created or developed by a volunteer in connection with your volunteering with Family Life (whether alone or with others) will belong to Family Life (as applicable) and volunteers are required to immediately disclose to Family Life all such Works.

- 5.4.2 All existing Intellectual Property rights, title and interest in all Works created or developed by a volunteer in connection with their volunteering (whether alone or with others) are vested in Family Life and, upon their creation, all such future rights will vest in Family Life.

#### 5.5 Single Shift Trial

- 5.5.1 Family Life may permit a Single Shift Trial opportunity where appropriate. The aim is to increase volunteer attraction and recruitment through initiatives such as a 'Bring a Friend' campaign or in instances where prospective volunteers are hesitant to sign up.
- 5.5.2 Prior to commencing the shift, prospective volunteers will be required to register by completing the Single Shift Trial form via website link.
- 5.5.3 The prospective volunteer will be taken through an OHS checklist and task induction by a store employee at the start of the shift.
- 5.5.4 No safety screening is required from the prospective volunteer to complete the Single Shift Trial.
- 5.5.5 Single Shift Trial candidates must be supervised by paid staff at all times and cannot proceed to a second shift without undergoing onboarding requirements as per the standard process for volunteer recruitment.
- 5.5.6 The Single Shift Trial opportunity only applies to certain non-Services Volunteers (Social Enterprise Volunteers), and on a case by case basis.  
*Eg. Drivers and Jockeys are ineligible as staff supervision is not possible, prospective volunteers wanting to trial a shift that is volunteer-supervised rather than staff-supervised would be ineligible due to the same conditions.*