



HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.

A Guide for Volunteering With *Housing for the Aged Action Group*

Before you start, make sure this organisation is the right fit for you:

Our Vision

A society where older people have secure, safe & affordable housing

Our Mission

We engage and work with older people through community activism, services & advocacy to achieve social change and housing justice

Our Guiding Values & Behaviours

The way we work and the behaviours which demonstrate that we mean what we say:
Inclusiveness, Commitment, Respect, Integrity, Solidarity, Equity

Our Commitment

HAAG are committed to finding long term solutions to the housing crisis facing older Australians and have partnered with organisations such as the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, Council on the Ageing, the University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research and the University of Adelaide Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning.

HAAG are actively involved in the review of government legislation and our political lobbying has affected change in policy and instigated a parliamentary review of the retirement housing sector.

HAAGs Home at Last program provides practical support to those seeking an appropriate, affordable home and those having issues with their current tenancy, across all housing types.

In 2015 HAAG won the Victorian Homelessness Achievement Award for *Excellence in Ending Homelessness Among Older People*, and in 2017 won the Victorian Homelessness Achievement Award for *Excellence in Ending Homelessness Among Diverse Groups*.

HAAG has a zero tolerance towards discrimination within the workplace and recognises the rights of all staff and service users to be free from all forms of discrimination and harassment regardless of ethnicity, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status or religious belief. We are proudly working towards rainbow tick accreditation to create a safer and more inclusive workplace for all. HAAG acknowledges

that we are on the traditional land of the Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations and offer our respects to the elders past and present. We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of this land where we live, learn and work.

Ask staff for copies of the following recommended reading or look on our website

www.older tenants.org.au

- Housing for the Aged Action Group brochure
- Home at Last brochure
- Booklet: *Finding at Home: Housing options for older people in Victoria*
- Our most recent *Older Tenants Voice*
- Our most recent *Annual Report*
- Check under 'Reports' in our publications file on the HAAG website for relevant HAAG publications

Recommended viewing

- DVD: *Home at Last: Looking for home – Finding Community*

1. Introduction

Thank you for considering volunteering with Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG). Volunteers are a valued and essential part of the organisation and over the years they have ensured HAAG's ongoing success.



Proud volunteers at our Volunteers Lunch at the end of 2018

There are different ways to be involved with HAAG as a volunteer. Some people chose to work for a short period while others have been with us for many years in different roles. We usually ask volunteers to work for 2 hours with us on any occasion. Sometimes people are able to stay a bit longer, but it's important that volunteers look after themselves and keep enough energy on hand for the trip home.

What kinds of volunteer roles are there?

There are a variety of roles for Volunteers at HAAG, and these roles are ever-evolving. The current available roles are General Office work, Peer Education, Community Education, and in-office Aged Care Educators and contributing to working groups or Community Reference Group.

Peer Educators: Aged Care Systems Navigator Project

In 2019 HAAG will begin a project which works with Council for the Ageing (COTA) and other agencies to provide information about the Aged Care System, as well as one to one assistance with registering with My Aged Care.

The aged care system is complex and difficult to navigate. We know a number of people are not accessing My Aged Care, those who are or have been homeless, people who are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds, LGBTI communities and those with disabilities and other barriers to access.

The Aged Care Service Navigator is a national trial testing different models of support to help people understand and engage with the aged care system.

Aged Care Navigators- Home Visits: HAAG Volunteers will visit eligible HAAG clients and help them to register over the phone. Our Volunteers are bi-lingual and will be matched with people who speak their language

Aged Care Navigators- In Office Assistance: Some HAAG volunteers will be able to provide assistance to clients to register for My Aged Care at the HAAG office where preferred.

Community Educators: Some volunteers will deliver information about Housing Options and Aged Care to groups within the community.

We are particularly looking for bi-lingual people, but non-bilingual people can apply.

Peer Educators general

We are looking for people with a 'lived experience' of homelessness or of being at risk of homelessness to build awareness of the issue within the community.

You will receive training to deliver information:

- Speaking on Radio
- Speaking to small groups/friends
- Being at an information stall
- Speaking to larger groups
- Being in the media
- Providing information to services

Peer Educators: professional background

We are looking for people with a 'professional background' in the social services field to speak to groups of people about Housing Options and promote HAAG and Home at Last in the community.

Cultural Diversity Reference Group: Community Advocates

Community advocates are members of the HAAG cultural diversity reference group who

- Share information about HAAG and Home at Last with individuals and groups in your community
- Recognise when a person needs help with housing
- With that person's consent, share their information with Home at Last so that we can provide them with assistance.
- Liaise with the Community Education worker and other HAAG workers regarding any questions you or your community have about the organisation or service.

Cultural Diversity Reference Group: Group members

This is a group that meets monthly to discuss how HAAG can better serve the communities represented on the group. The aim of the group is to:

- Seek the views of your community and represent them on the HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group
- Advocate for the needs of your community on the HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group
- Be a contact point for HAAG to access your community through the HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group
- Speak to media or contribute to a HAAG campaign or position statement.

Working Group Members:

HAAG has a number of working groups. In 2019 these are:

RAAG- Retirement Accommodation Action group. A group of residents of all forms of retirement villages working for stronger rights in retirement villages. This group has a strong history of achievement at HAAG, see website for details

<https://www.older tenants.org.au/retirement-housing>

HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group (see above for details)

NEW: LGBTI Reference Group: We are looking for people who are part of the LGBTI community who are interested in guiding an upcoming project which will be developing and delivering community education to the LGBTI community.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if someone asks for information I don't know?

It is likely that you will always be working with a staff member or have a staff member close by. Never answer a question if you don't know the answer, just tell the person you will get back to them, take their contact details and a staff member will help you answer the question or contact the person as soon as possible.



What if someone I encounter gets upset or is difficult?

Many people experiencing housing stress can feel very vulnerable and become upset when they speak about their situation. This is a perfectly normal response to a difficult situation. You do not need to fix anything for them. Give them reassurance and call a staff member.

Can I do my New Start Volunteering Hours as part of HAAG Volunteering?

HAAG is not a suitable New Start placement. We do not support “work for the dole” schemes as they neither increase people’s chances of employment nor create jobs. If anything, this practice undermines the pay and conditions of other workers.

However, if you are on New Start we are happy to provide the details of the casual volunteering you do at HAAG to your Job Support worker.

How many hours can I Volunteer at HAAG?

Volunteering at HAAG is usually on a casual basis, or based on project requirements. We usually don't expect a volunteer to work for more than 2 hours at a time, once a week or once a fortnight.

Volunteer benefits

People who volunteer with HAAG should not be out of pocket for their travel and meals when working with us. Volunteers are offered a contribution to cover their travel costs. Often we provide light refreshments during the activity, if not volunteers are offered a contribution towards a light meal.

As a volunteer, you are covered by all organisational policy and procedure and insurance.

Diversity Statement



HAAG do not discriminate regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender or disability, and won't tolerate any racist or discriminatory behaviour.

All volunteers must read and sign our Code of Conduct and will be dealt with according to

Complaints & Feedback

If you have any complaints or general feedback about your work with HAAG please see the feedback section on our website: <https://www.older tenants.org.au/feedback> or ask a HAAG staff or Manager for assistance to access it.

Reimbursements

As a volunteer at HAAG you will receive a travel reimbursement or a reimbursement for your time/expertise in a formal Community Reference Group. The following payment rates apply:

Type of Volunteering	Reimbursement
Scheduled office work	\$10
Consultation for outside organisation/researcher	\$10
Any kind of travel for HAAG benefit, eg, coming to speak on Radio with HAAG staff member	\$10

Delivering a talk as organised with HAAG	\$120
Home Visit as part of HAAG Aged Care Systems Navigator Project	\$120
Attendance of a working group requiring specific expertise (eg. LGBTI or CALD Reference Group)	\$50

To be reimbursed you must fill out 2.05-C Volunteer Reimbursement form or the relevant form for your group or project.

It is important that you bring along your bank details so that you can be paid.

1. Contact Details

If you would like to volunteer please fill out the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Contact person and number in case you become unwell when working with us

Name_____Phone_____

Availability (please tick):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Monday | <input type="radio"/> Friday |
| <input type="radio"/> Tuesday | <input type="radio"/> Saturday |
| <input type="radio"/> Wednesday | <input type="radio"/> Sunday |
| <input type="radio"/> Thursday | |

Do you consent to HAAG doing a police check on your behalf?

2.05-A Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

Volunteers are required to maintain confidentiality regarding information involving the organisation, the volunteer program, paid staff, other volunteers and clients.

Information must not be disclosed to anyone outside the organisation or to others within the organisation, unless express permission is given to do so by an appropriate authority.

Breaches of confidentiality will result in termination of the volunteer's engagement with the organisation, other than where the volunteer can show specific circumstances that justify the breach. These circumstances may include:

- disclosure as part of legal proceedings
- where written permission to disclose was obtained from the client in question
- where failure to disclose the information could have led to injury or death

I, [insert name] _____

Agree to maintain the confidentiality regarding information involving the organisation, the volunteer program, paid staff, other volunteers and clients.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

1.02-Code of Conduct Policy

PURPOSE

This policy affirms Housing for the Aged Action Group's belief in responsible social and ethical behaviour from all employees and volunteers. This policy clarifies the standards of behaviour that Housing for the Aged Action Group expects of all employees and volunteers.

PRINCIPLES

Our employees and volunteers contribute to the success of our organisation and that of our clients. Housing for the Aged Action Group fully endorse that all employees and volunteers are not deprived of their basic human rights.

Furthermore, our employees and volunteers have an obligation to the service, our clients and themselves to observe high standards of integrity and fair dealing.

POLICY

Our Code of Conduct policy applies to all employees and volunteers and provides the framework of principles for our service, dealing with other employees, volunteers, clients and service providers. 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:

- Act and maintain a high standard of integrity and professionalism
- Be responsible and scrupulous in the proper use of information, funds, equipment and facilities
- Be considerate and respectful of the environment and others
- Exercise fairness, equality, courtesy, consideration and sensitivity in dealing with other employees, clients and service providers
- Perform duties with skill, honesty, care and diligence
- Abide by policies and procedures that relate to your employment with Housing for the Aged Action Group and our clients
- Under no circumstances may employees accept money from clients
- Any employee, who in good faith, raises a complaint or discloses an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct will not be disadvantaged or prejudiced. All reports will be dealt with in a timely and confidential manner.

Any employee in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Should an employee have doubts about any aspect of the Code of Conduct, they must seek clarification from the Manager.

This policy will be regularly reviewed by Housing for the Aged Action Group and any necessary changes will be implemented by the Manager.

SIGNED:

EMPLOYEE NAME:

DATE: