



Leisure Buddy Volunteer Handbook



Welcome to Inclusion Melbourne's Leisure Buddy Volunteer program

A message from the Manager of Community Support

On behalf of Inclusion Melbourne (IM), I would like to welcome you as a volunteer.

We hope that your involvement as a Leisure Buddy will be a rewarding and fulfilling experience for you and that you enjoy bringing companionship to the people we support.

Our volunteers are the backbone of this program. We value your contribution and commitment and will provide you with ongoing support.

The Community Support team is passionate about volunteering and the benefits it brings to both volunteers and recipients.

Our Community Support Coordinators, have a wealth of experience in disability and community services. You will find more information about their experience on the Volunteer Hub.

Thank you for your decision to become a volunteer and congratulations on joining Inclusion Melbourne.

Warmest regards

Gaye Berry

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Manager, Community Support
Inclusion Melbourne

Table of Contents

Leisure Buddies	3
Inclusion Melbourne’s philosophy of volunteering	3
The benefits of volunteering	3
Your rights as a volunteer	4
Your responsibilities as a volunteer	4
Minimum Contact requirements.....	4
The Volunteer Hub.....	5
A further note about monthly activity reports..	6
The role of the Community Support Coordinator	7
Your role as a Leisure Buddy.....	7
NDIS worker Screening check and compliance	7
Supporting a person with an Intellectual Disability or a cognitive impairment.....	7

Leisure Buddies

The Leisure Buddy program was established in 1998 and is unique to Inclusion Melbourne. The program aims to foster relationships for adults with a cognitive disability that are not family or paid roles.

As a Leisure Buddy volunteer, you have been carefully matched, to ensure you have every opportunity to build a mutually rewarding and enduring friendship through shared outings and activities in the community.

The Leisure Buddy service refers to the person you are matched with as your 'buddy'.

Inclusion Melbourne's philosophy of volunteering

IM values the contribution made by volunteers and seeks to recognise this by:

- Acknowledging that the relationship between volunteers and Inclusion Melbourne is a reciprocal one.
- Acknowledging that volunteers exercise free choice when committing to Inclusion Melbourne.
- Acknowledging that volunteers are of equal status and deserve the same treatment and respect as paid employees, therefore Inclusion Melbourne expects the same standards of its volunteers as it expects of its paid employees.
- Ensuring volunteers are not used to replace paid staff positions and only carry out work that they have agreed to undertake.
- Stating and acknowledging the contribution of volunteers in Inclusion Melbourne documentation and recording hours volunteered.
- Providing an opportunity for the development of skills and experience.
- Providing support in the form of clear policy guidelines, training, recognition and support. A statement of service and clarification of their role can be provided by the relevant Community Support Co-ordinator .

The benefits of volunteering

There is much to be gained from volunteering, including the opportunity to:

- gain valuable work experience
- learn new skills
- meet new people and gain new friendships
- support others in our community who would benefit from services provided
- develop self-confidence

You can find more information about Volunteering at www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Your rights as a volunteer

- Receive information and be kept informed of changes to the program.
- Receive a Position Description and the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Say “no” to additional tasks or requests beyond the position description.
- Be supported in the role by a designated staff member.
- Be reimbursed for preapproved expenses as per Inclusion Melbourne volunteer reimbursement policy.
- Provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations regarding your role or the wider program.
- Have access to dispute resolution procedures and to be supported through such a process.
- Have personal details kept in a confidential manner.
- Work in a safe and healthy environment.
- Be trained and resourced to perform duties as per role description.
- Recognition for years of services.
- Be covered by insurance.

Your responsibilities as a volunteer

- Adhere to the Position Description and the Code of Conduct.
 - Be reliable and committed.
 - Strict adherence to the confidential nature of information that may be acquired during your duties.
 - Be a positive advocate of Inclusion Melbourne and the Leisure Buddy program.
 - Notify Inclusion Melbourne Community Support Coordinator and other relevant staff of any absences or if you are no longer able to volunteer.
 - Advise of any changes to contact details.
 - Ask for support when needed.
 - Abide by policies and procedures relevant to your volunteering.
 - Discuss any grievances or problems with your Inclusion Melbourne Community Support Coordinator. If issues remain unresolved, speak to the Manager, Community Support.
 - Seek prior approval from Inclusion Melbourne Community Support Coordinator for any travel or out of pocket expenses.
 - Work in a safe and healthy way and not jeopardise the health and safety of others.
 - Inform Inclusion Melbourne Community Support Coordinator of any medical condition that would impact on your ability to undertake your role.
 - Report any accident or injury immediately as per procedure provided.
 - Smoke only in approved smoking areas
 - Remain drug (non-prescribed) and alcohol free whilst undertaking a volunteer role for Inclusion Melbourne.

Minimum Contact requirements

- **Fortnightly activities are preferred** (minimum number of visits, as per our funding is two per month).

The Volunteer Hub

The **Volunteer Hub** located on the **Inclusion Melbourne website**.

The **Volunteer Hub** is designed to give volunteers easy access to information and provide a simple way to report as needed.

The **Volunteer Hub** is the 'go to' place for accessing:

- Community Support Team information and contact details
- Inclusion Melbourne Policies and Procedures
- Useful resources
- Link's to Inclusion Melbourne blogs

The Volunteer Hub also has three online reporting/survey type forms to simplify documentation.

Reporting forms are:

1. Monthly activity update

Community Visitors are asked to report monthly about their activity. The monthly activity report prompts for basic information, including what day and how many days in the month you volunteered. There is also an option to share a good news story or success about your volunteering for the month.

The data in the report helps track progress and issues, but also provides the information we need to report to our funding bodies

The monthly activity report is due at the end each month

2. Update personal details

Simply access this form to notify us of a change of your contact details.

3. Record of an event

The Record of Event form is completed at any time documentation is required during the course of your volunteering, such as incident, accident, injury, hazard, or a 'near-miss', or for any complaints or compliments or feedback.

Note: The Volunteer Hub does not replace routine communication between Volunteers and Support via email, telephone and text.

How do I access the Volunteer Hub?

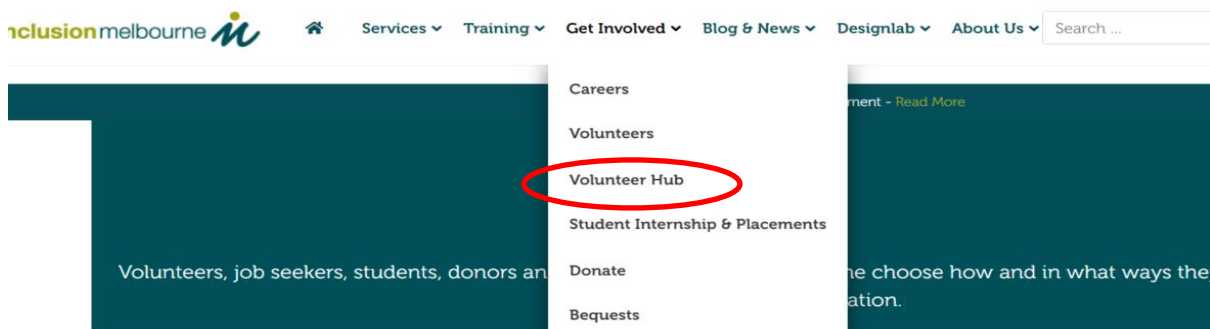
1. Access directly via this link <https://inclusionmelbourne.org.au/volunteer-hub/>
2. Enter password provided by your Community Support Coordinator.

*Note: Remember to save the password in your browser. The next time you access the site you will not have to put in the password.

3. An alternative way to access is via Inclusion Melbourne's website. Simply google Inclusion Melbourne.
4. Click on the 'Get Involved' tab on the Inclusion Melbourne web site.



5. From the menu, click on the Volunteer Hub



Note: Your feedback about the Volunteer Hub is highly valued, so don't hesitate if you can see an opportunity for improvement!

A further note about monthly activity updates.

Your monthly activity update ensures:

- We are kept up to date with your routine visits and activities
- We can identify trends, successes/celebrations and issues.
- Ensures we meet our funding body requirements for monthly reporting of visits

To complete a monthly update, simply access the Volunteer Hub on Inclusion Melbourne's website.

You will be sent a reminder text each month with a direct link to the monthly activity update.

The role of the Community Support Coordinator

The Community Support Coordinator role is to:

- Recruit, interview and induct new volunteers.
- Keep in regular contact with you and provide ongoing support.

Your Community Support Coordinator will stay in touch via phone calls, text messages or email. You can be assured that they are only a phone call away.

- Organise meetings, training and recognition events for volunteers.
- Keep in contact on a with the NDIS Participant /your buddy and other supporters as required.

Your role as a Leisure Buddy

Inclusion Melbourne Leisure Buddy volunteers commit to developing and sustaining a friendship with an adult with a cognitive disability over an extended period.

The Leisure Buddy Position Description outlines the objective of the role, key responsibilities and Inclusion Melbourne's values. Please take some time to familiarise yourself with your position description

NDIS worker Screening check and compliance

All Leisure Buddy volunteers require a NDIS worker screening check to determine their suitability to engage with NDIS Participants.

NDIS worker screening checks are conducted on all workers engaged by an NDIS registered organisation. The NDIS worker screening costs are waived for volunteers.

NDIS workers screen checks must be renewed every five years. You do not need to remember this. Your Community Support Coordinator will contact you in plenty of time prior to your NDIS worker screening check expiring.

Other compliance requirements include that volunteers complete the NDIS new worker online training module, complete Inclusion Melbourne's induction program and provide evidence of COVID vaccination.

Supporting a person with an Intellectual Disability or a cognitive impairment.

People with disabilities come from all sectors of the community and reflect a diverse range of ages and cultural backgrounds. People with a disability do not want their impairments, diagnosis or disability to become the defining aspect of their life. The most appropriate terminology 'person with a disability' puts the emphasis on the person not the limitation or disability.

The most effective strategy is to treat all people in the same way as you would wish to be treated yourself, with respect, politeness and consideration.

Learning Styles

There are a number of different learning styles, including visual auditory and kinaesthetic, some people will learn by a mixture of learning styles.

It is helpful to understand your Leisure Buddy's preferred learning style if you are planning on trying out an activity together that requires learning new skills.

Teaching a skill

- Use concrete examples
- Ensure that tasks and instructions are clear and specific
- Provide as much hands-on experiences as possible
- Provide logical, clear instructions
- Slow down the pace when necessary
- Complete one step at a time before moving onto the next
- Consider providing handouts or simple written instructions to reinforce steps in instructions
- Repeat new information
- Break task into small achievable chunks
- Give praise often and genuinely

Communication

- Provide enough time to communicate
- Be prepared to explore alternative methods of communication – such as pictures and photographs
- One topic at a time
- Provide information in small amounts
- Use plain English
- Your body language is important
- Check in to make sure of understanding
- Ask open questions
- Take extra time over the phone. Ask if a phone call is working for the person and if not choose another method of contact
- Don't be afraid to ask questions about how to communicate

Courtesies

- Look and speak directly with the person with a disability, even if a support person accompanies them
- If the person with a disability offers to shake your hand respond accordingly
- If you know the person's name, address the person by their name
- Ask the person with a disability the best way to communicate if you are unsure
- Only help if it appears necessary, don't assume that a person with a disability needs or will accept it. Wait for acceptance before proceeding

Terminology

In term of preferred terminology, the following phrases are offered:

- Person with a disability
- Person with a physical disability
- Person who uses a wheelchair
- Person with cerebral palsy
- Accessible parking and toilets
- Person with a vision impairment

It's OK to say 'deaf' as this is a term that is often preferred by the deaf community. However, it can be helpful to ask the person first.

Resources

You will find some helpful resources on Inclusion Melbourne's website.

Inclusion Melbourne's DesignLab has developed a number of great resources. Below is one that may be of interest.

Click on the link below to read or download a copy.

1. Working Well Together

<https://inclusionmelbourne.org.au/resource/working-together-well/>