

Volunteering NT

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Leading volunteering in the
Northern Territory

A division of Volunteering SA&NT Inc.

VOLUNTEERING during Coronavirus (COVID-19)



There has been a wave of community kindness and overwhelming support in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Armies of volunteers have put their hands up to help in their community, with support for older people, people who are isolated or to assist our front line workers.

Volunteering SA&NT have compiled some information for people who are wanting to volunteer. It covers how to protect yourself and your community during this time and provides practical steps for volunteers (and volunteer managers) to consider.

1. Does the volunteer involving organisation you want to volunteer with have a COVID-19 policy?

Before accepting a volunteering position, you should ensure that the organisation has a policy and procedure in place outlining how they are dealing with the current pandemic. You need to ensure that they have measures in place to keep their workforce (employees and volunteers) safe.

2. Does the organisation have volunteer insurance?

Volunteer involving organisations should provide insurance to cover you while you are volunteering.

You should ask before you start volunteering is there insurance cover if I hurt myself while I'm volunteering for your organisation. If there is none, you need to consider your volunteer position carefully and weigh up the risks of volunteering for that organisation.

3. Can volunteers clearly communicate their needs?

Check that there is a clear system in place for getting in touch with volunteer managers/coordinators and/or the organisation (eg. when cancelling a shift).

4. I am a current volunteer, am I obliged to continue volunteering?

Volunteers are under no obligation to continue to volunteer if they do not feel comfortable doing so. Volunteers should not replace full or part time paid positions or be used in any positions that would normally be undertaken by employees. If you do continue in your volunteering position then your volunteer involving organisation has an obligation under Work Health and Safety Laws to provide protections around health and safety. You may wish to have a conversation with your organisation about different ways of volunteering, for example continuing to volunteer remotely.

You should not volunteer if you:

- Have travelled or have been in contact with someone who has travelled overseas recently
- Have been in close contact with someone infected with COVID-19
- Are unwell or have an acute respiratory infection (cold/flu, sinus etc)

5. Volunteering remotely

Plan ahead and ask your volunteer manager/coordinator for help to ensure that you can successfully and effectively volunteer from home if you are not sick or don't have symptoms.

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6. Volunteering in the workplace

If you are going to volunteer outside of your home, please ensure you keep yourself safe by;

- Washing your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water and avoid touching your face. Wash your hands after handling money or other donated goods
- Stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as older people and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible.
- Keep at least 2 meters away from others
- Avoid touching anything where possible
- Advise your volunteer manager/coordinator of any areas you've been to or surfaces you may have touched in the office
- Advise of anyone you've been in close contact with since feeling unwell

7. What do I do if you become unwell whilst volunteering?

If you are concerned you may have coronavirus (COVID-19) because of recent travel or contact with a confirmed case, please see information below from the Australian Government Department of Health

- use the [symptom checker](#)
- see how to [seek medical attention](#)
- see more about [testing](#)

If you are feeling unwell but haven't travelled or had contact with a confirmed case, please phone your doctor or Health Direct Australia (1800 022 222) for advice. If seeing your GP, you MUST call ahead and mention your symptoms and any travel details. If you have serious symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for an ambulance and tell the operator your recent travel history.

8. Follow best practice to prevent catching or spreading coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Follow the advice provided by local and national Government departments.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash your hands when you arrive at work, during and when you get home.
- Use hand sanitizer gel if no soap and water is available.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve if you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away immediately and wash your hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth if your hands aren't clean.
- Clean your desk, monitor, keyboard and phone regularly.
- Wash cutlery and crockery used thoroughly with hot water and detergent; dry it thoroughly immediately and put it away.
- Avoid physical contact with others as far as possible including shaking hands or hugging.

Stay up to date with timely and relevant information

[Volunteering SA&NT Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information](#)

[NT Government](#)

[SA Health](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Risk Assessment](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)

[Australian Department of Health](#)