

Aim of 3Bridges Community

3Bridges Community is here to assist our clients and to help them remain connected to their Community. Some of the services offered to meet the needs of the community include; Early Childhood, Children Services, Home Modifications and Maintenance, Youth, People with Disabilities, Elderly, Ethnic groups, social groups, workshops, Home modifications and training.

Advocacy

In your role as a volunteer you may be asked by a client to help them resolve a problem. Speak to your supervisor to get approval and assistance if you need it.

Board

3Bridges is overseen by a group of volunteers who are Directors. They are responsible for the strategic, legal and financial decisions of the organisation. The Board oversees employing senior staff and setting strategic directions. There are up to 9 members on our Board.

Boundaries

Sometimes the clients with whom you work will ask you to do tasks outside your usual times of volunteer work. If you choose to do this, both the client and volunteer need to understand that this activity is in the spirit of friendship and outside your responsibilities as a volunteer. Consequently all the protection in place as a volunteer does not apply. It is important to discuss this with your supervisor and act on their guidance.

Clients Rights

Who we are here for!! Client rights include:

- dignity and privacy
- access to services without discrimination
- provision of relevant information
- choice, given all the alternatives
- lodging a complaint, where there is dissatisfaction
- having an advocate of their choice to represent them

Code of Conduct

All members of staff, including volunteers and Board members, are covered by the one Code of Conduct which you should have already signed. This code covers:

1. personal and professional behaviour
2. personal relationships with service users
3. conflict of interest
4. gifts and benefits
5. outside employment & other external business activities
6. party political participation
7. public comment use of official resources

8. use of internet and email
9. security of 3Bridges information
10. recommending services
11. notification of rights to complain
12. discrimination, bullying and harassment
13. corrupt conduct
14. occupational health and safety
15. breach of Code of Conduct

Compliments, Complaints and Feedback

3Bridges welcomes complaints and compliments from our clients (and volunteers!!) as it is recognition that people feel confident they will receive an improved service as a result. Complaints can be given verbally - in person or by phone - or written and given to a volunteer or member of staff. Please encourage clients to have their say and record the details as soon as possible. Complaints are dealt with by Supervisors. All complaints, including disputes between volunteers, will be dealt with fairly, promptly and without retribution.

Confidentiality

In the time you are volunteering with us, you may come across personal information about staff, clients and other volunteers. You are required to keep this information private at all times and breaches of this can constitute an offence under the law. You will have signed an agreement to this effect already. However, where you have a concern about a matter that you feel needs further attention, you need to discuss it with your supervisor. This is particularly important where you believe the health or safety of a client is at risk.

Criminal Record Checks & Working with Children Checks

As our clients are some of the most vulnerable people in our community, 3Bridges conducts a CRC on all employees and volunteers before they begin work for our organisation. The outcome of this check is kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone other than the HR department. Where the police check reveals a history which indicates that a volunteer may be unsuitable, the volunteer will be advised and may not be able to commence volunteering. If you are working with children 0-18 you will be required to obtain a working with children check which is free for volunteers and can be obtained by contacting Service NSW

Definition of Volunteering

Formal volunteering in Australia is defined as an activity which takes place through not for profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion;
- for no financial payment, and
- in designated volunteer positions only

Duty of Care

We all have a duty to care - for each other and for our clients - to ensure that no-one suffers foreseeable harm.

Emergency evacuations

In the event of a fire or other emergency, we need to be able to vacate our workplace as quickly as possible. Regular drills are conducted at the office and your supervisor will discuss with you the process in your volunteer work.

Events

3Bridges hosts regular events to say "thank you" to our volunteers. These usually occur in National Volunteer Week in May and International Volunteer Day in December. All volunteers are encouraged to attend. Volunteers will also be invited to attend our annual Staff Christmas party.

Fun

We want you to enjoy your volunteering experience with us so let us know how you are feeling about your volunteer role. You can speak to your supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator. Your feedback is important to us!

Funding

3Bridges receives its funding from the Commonwealth and State governments. Additional funding is obtained on occasions from Councils and registered clubs to run specific projects. Our social enterprises also generate income streams like our RTO, Home Modifications and Children's services.

Friendships

Volunteers can form some great friendships with the staff, other volunteers and clients. This provides a wonderful experience as a volunteer.

Gifts

The seeking or acceptance of gifts from clients is not permitted as clients may be on a very tight budget. Where the refusal of a small gift, genuinely offered, would cause affront to the donor, acceptance may be permitted but you must advise your supervisor. Cash gifts, including lottery tickets, are not permitted.

Grievances

If a grievance arises, it is important that it be dealt with promptly. The first step is to talk to your supervisor and, if it is not resolved, to the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers are welcome to have someone accompany them to this meeting. If the issue is still not resolved, or the volunteer is not happy with the outcome, they can raise their concerns with the service Manager.

History

3Bridges Community started from small beginnings – a caravan in Forest Rd, Hurstville, provided by the Lions Club. This information service was formalised as St George Community Services in 1978 and then moved into Hurstville Westfield Shopping Centre when it was built. The other services grew, initially from requests made for help with shopping or basic home repairs. In 2014 3Bridges was formed with the amalgamation of Keystone, Menai Community and Pole Depot.

Insurance

Volunteers, while actively volunteering with 3Bridges are covered by Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance. Volunteers are covered for “non-recoverable medical costs” such as physiotherapy and x-rays. It is not possible to cover volunteers for “the gap”, so you could still be out of pocket.

In the event of illness or injury

Please inform your supervisor as soon as possible. You will be asked to complete an Incident Form and given a letter to your medical practitioner requesting that you be bulk billed to prevent you from incurring out of pocket expenses. Should your treatment include costs which cannot be claimed through Medicare or your private health fund (not including the ‘gap’), please notify your supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator who will assist you to make a claim with our insurance company.

Keys

In order to ensure security of our premises, a register of all those who have access to keys is kept and updated regularly. If you are issued a key, you will be required to sign for it and keep it in a safe place while it is allocated to you.

Motor Vehicle Non Owned Insurance

Motor vehicles used in the provision of services (e.g. meals delivery) are covered by Motor Vehicle Non-owned Insurance whilst volunteering for us, providing they are comprehensively insured elsewhere. This ensures that volunteers at fault of causing an accident will not lose their no-claim bonus. You do, however, need to notify your insurance company that you use your car for volunteering and you need to give us a copy of your current licence and insurance policy.

Language

We are fortunate to have staff, including volunteers, who speak a range of languages. This helps us provide more appropriate services to clients from these backgrounds. Staff, volunteers and clients are from a range of cultural backgrounds with different traditions, customs and languages.

Laughter

The best medicine! And we supply lots of it!! We want you to enjoy your volunteering experience with us and have an enjoyable day!

Mentors

Many new volunteers are paired with an experienced volunteer when they start with us. This gives them a chance to have someone to ask questions and “show them the ropes”.

Next of kin

In the event of an accident or other emergency, we need to be able to contact your next of kin quickly. This will be recorded in your file, and any changes need to be notified to your supervisor.

People

You cannot get away from them in this organisation! We have 149 paid staff, around 300 volunteers and 850 active clients. We expect that you will follow the Code of Conduct at all times, treating everyone with respect and in a courteous and ethical manner.

Policies

3Bridges has comprehensive policies that cover the management of the organisation, management of staff and the delivery of services. Our volunteer policy reflects the value of volunteers to our organisation and now complies with the 8 standards for Managing Volunteer Involvement. These are:

1. Leadership and Management,
2. Commitment of Volunteer Involvement,
3. Volunteer Roles,
4. Recruitment and Selection,
5. Support and Development,
6. Workplace Safety and Wellbeing,
7. Volunteer Recognition & Rewards,
8. Quality Management and Continuous Improvement.

Position Descriptions

All 3Bridges volunteer positions have a position description these are updated on a regular basis or as roles change. Your supervisor can provide you with a copy of the current job description.

Principles of volunteering

As agreed by the volunteer sector in The International Year of Volunteers in 2001, volunteering:

- benefits the community and the volunteer
- is unpaid
- is always a matter of choice
- is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government benefits
- is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community
- is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- is an activity performed in the not for profit sector only
- is not a substitute for paid work
- does not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers

- respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- promotes human rights and equality

Privacy & Confidentiality

Legislation is in place to ensure the privacy of client information gathered by community services. We count on our volunteers to help us maintain our clients' privacy. In the time you are volunteering with us, you will come across personal information about clients and other volunteers. You are required to keep this information private at all times and breaches of this can constitute an offence under the law. However, where you have a concern about a matter that you feel needs further attention, you need to discuss it with your supervisor. This is particularly important where you believe the health or safety of a client is at risk.

Quality

3Bridges is quality accredited. We aim to provide the best possible services with the resources we have available. We strive to improve our services and actively seek feedback.

Recognition

As well as the two functions we host to thank our volunteers, We have a volunteer of the month Award recognition within 3Bridges, invite d volunteers to our quarterly General Staff meeting and 3Bridges Christmas Party. 3Bridges values their volunteers and regards them as an important part of the team.

Reimbursement

All 3Bridges volunteers can claim for genuine out of pocket expenses in accordance with Volunteer Policy and Procedure. Volunteers need to check with their supervisor on reimbursements.

Rights - Volunteer's rights:

- The right to be treated and respected as a co-worker, not just free help
- The right to a suitable assignment, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, ability, education and employment background
- The right to know as much as possible about the organisation – its policies, people and programs
- The right to be informed of any new policy decisions which may affect their position and the delivery of services
- The right to appropriate orientation and training for the job, with continued training and information about new developments
- The right to sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced and well informed, and who has the time to invest in giving guidance
- The right to appropriate insurance cover while working for our organisation
- The right to be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions and to be shown respect for an honest opinion

- The right to use an advocate
- The right to say "No"

Organisation's rights:

- The right to receive as much effort and service from an unpaid worker as a paid one, even on a short term basis
- The right to expect acceptance of responsibilities as to promptness, reliability and good performance
- The right to expect enthusiasm and belief in the work the organisation is doing
- The right to make a decision as to where the volunteer would best fit
- The right to express opinions about volunteer performance and to suggest a change to another job if needed.
- The right to expect loyalty to the agency and constructive encouragement
- The right to expect clear and open communication from the volunteer at all times
- The right to expect responsibility and effective work from volunteers given leadership and training.
- The right to release an undesirable/ inappropriate volunteer

Signing in & out

It is important that all volunteers sign in on the attendance sheet for their roster so we can clearly see when they are volunteering with us. This is imperative in the event of an accident, or if we have to evacuate our workplace suddenly. It is also helpful in reminding our funders how much of our work is done by volunteers and helps us to plan for our programs. It's also important to sign out when you finish your volunteering!!

Special needs

Many of our clients require additional support in order to access our services. This could be language support, or physical assistance to get out and about in our community or many other difficulties our clients face. Our services will vary according to the clients' needs. Your supervisor will provide these details if needed.

Standards

There are several sets of standards we operate under, from the Community Care Common Standards on service delivery, to the National Standards for involving volunteers in not-for-profit organisations. There are 8 National Standards for involving volunteers where 3Bridges has now incorporated in their volunteer policy and procedures.

Supervision

All staff, including volunteers, has access to regular supervision with their supervisor. This can be a formal process, or informally over a cuppa!! Supervision gives you an opportunity to clarify any concerns, find out about changes, discuss upcoming or possible training, and much more.

Training

3Bridges is a registered training organisation and offers a variety of training for staff, Volunteers and the community. Some training courses are free to volunteers and is designed to assist volunteers and the work they do in the community. There is a training calendar which changes twice a year so there is always something new! If you are interested in any of the Training courses offered talk to your supervisor and they will assist you in filling in a Training Approval Form.

Understanding

Our community and the clients we service deserve to be listened to and understood. Understanding our client's needs is an important element in offering our programs and services to cater for the community needs.

Volunteers

We couldn't do it without you! You are an essential part of our organisation!!! There are currently around 300 volunteers engaged in different types of volunteer work across the 3Bridges sites. As a volunteer you will feel good you are doing something to help your community, retain and gain skills and make new friends. Thank you for putting your hand up to volunteer!

Website

We have been working on a webpage for our volunteers. This will give you information on what other volunteering opportunities are available, newsletter, policies and procedures, training, forms and templates and social events. It will be great way for you to access information you are seeking.

WHS

3Bridges Community has a WHS policy where all staff have a responsibility for maintaining a safe working environment at all times. Your supervisor is responsible for showing you the safest way of doing your volunteer work. You are responsible for following these instructions. We are all responsible for looking out for each other and reporting any hazards we see.