



Therapy Focus

Volunteering Policy

Last reviewed: January 2022
Due to be reviewed: January 2024

Purpose and Scope

As a not-for-profit organisation, Therapy Focus utilises volunteers to assist with facilitating therapy groups.

Policy Statement

This document outlines Therapy Focus' policy regarding engagement of volunteers and applies to all persons undertaking voluntary work on behalf of the organisation. This policy does not apply to Board Directors and Customer Reference Group members.

A volunteer is defined as someone who willingly donates their time to support Therapy Focus; does not receive monetary remuneration for their work, and does not have a legally bound agreement or relationship.

Volunteering must be mutually beneficial to parties and cannot replace regular paid positions, cover staff on leave or do the work of paid staff during disputes, or while they are injured.

Therapy Focus complies with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement as administered by Volunteering Australia. These standards are recognised as the best practice framework for volunteer involvement in Australia.

Volunteer Rights

Volunteers engaged by Therapy Focus have the right to:

- Be adequately covered by insurance
- Work in a healthy and safe environment
- Be engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination law
- Have a clearly defined position description and agreed hours of volunteer work
- Be provided with an orientation sufficient training for their position
- Have access to the Volunteering Policy and any other organisational policies relevant to their position
- Have their information protected in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988
- Refuse a task if they do not feel safe or do not have sufficient training

Volunteer Requirements

We require relevant personal information and screening documentation to ensure the health and safety of our volunteers, staff and customers.

All volunteers must:

- Provide details of an emergency/next of kin contact
- Disclose any medical history relevant to the volunteer position
- Provide a satisfactory National Police Certificate or Volunteer National Police Certificate less than 6 months old
- Provide a current Working with Children Check if working with children
- Provide a NDIS Worker Screening clearance if working with people with disability
- Provide a satisfactory Department of Education Criminal History Check if working within a school or education facility (in place of a National Police Certificate)
- Read and abide by the Therapy Focus Code of Conduct and any policies and procedures relevant to the volunteer position

Age restrictions

Children aged 12 and under are not eligible to volunteer with Therapy Focus. A child aged 12 or under may accompany a parent volunteering, however Therapy Focus takes no responsibility for the child or their health and safety.

Children aged 13-14 years may volunteer with direct supervision of a parent or guardian.

Youths aged 15-17 years must provide written consent from their parent or guardian to volunteer.

National Police Certificate

Volunteers aged 18+ must supply a [National Police Certificate](#) less than 6 months old prior to volunteering.

Therapy Focus requires a copy of National Police Certificates for auditing purposes. The original document remains property of the volunteer.

Therapy Focus has the right to reject an application to volunteer based on the information captured within a National Police Certificate.

National Police Certificates are considered valid for three years from submission to Therapy Focus. On expiration, the volunteer must supply a new National Police

Certificate to continue volunteering for Therapy Focus. Alternatively, Therapy Focus can apply for a Volunteer National Police Certificate on behalf of a volunteer, at no cost to the volunteer.

Volunteer National Police Certificate

If a volunteer does not have a National Police Certificate less than 6 months old, Therapy Focus can apply for a [Volunteer National Police Certificate \(VPNC\)](#) on behalf of the volunteer, at no cost to the volunteer. Volunteers aged 15+ must have a Volunteer National Police Certificate prior to volunteering.

For Therapy Focus to submit an application for a VPNC, the volunteer must provide a completed VPNC Consent Form. By doing so they agree to Therapy Focus applying on their behalf and retaining a copy of the certificate. The original document remains property of the volunteer.

Department of Education Criminal History Check

The WA Department of Education requires that all volunteers attending a school or education facility complete a [Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check \(NCCHC\)](#).

An application receipt will be accepted as proof of a pending application and enable the volunteer to commence work at the discretion of Therapy Focus. Volunteers will be reimbursed for the cost of the NCCHC on supply of a receipt.

Therapy Focus requires a copy of NCCHC for auditing purposes. The original document remains property of the volunteer.

NDIS Worker Screening Check

Volunteers working with Therapy Focus customers and people with disability must apply for an [NDIS Worker Screening Check](#).

Volunteers will be reimbursed for the cost of the NDIS Worker Screening Check upon supply of a receipt. Volunteers cannot commence work until a clearance is supplied.

Therapy Focus requires a copy of NDIS Check clearances for auditing purposes. The original document remains property of the volunteer.

Working with Children Check

Volunteers working with children are required to provide a valid [Working with Children Check](#).

If a volunteer does not have a valid Working with Children Check, Therapy Focus will assist the volunteer to apply for one and reimburse them for the cost upon supply of a receipt.

An application receipt will be accepted as proof of a pending application and enable the volunteer to commence work at the discretion of Therapy Focus.

Therapy Focus requires a copy of Working with Children Checks for auditing purposes. The original document and card remains property of the volunteer.

Volunteers must carry Working with Children Check cards on them at all time when working with children or working on school grounds.

Medical History

Volunteers are asked to disclose any medical history or health issues that may impact on their ability to volunteer. This information will be used to ensure the volunteer's safety and may be disclosed to employees as needed.

If a volunteer has a medical issue that may impact on their ability to perform the duties of the volunteer position, Therapy Focus will review the role to determine whether reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate the volunteer. Where adjustments cannot be accommodated and there is a high risk to the volunteer or other employees, the volunteer may be asked to consider a more appropriate role.

Volunteer Supervision

All volunteers must be supervised by an appropriate Therapy Focus employee, as identified in the request for volunteer support.

The Volunteer Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring the volunteer complies with Therapy Focus' Code of Conduct and all relevant policies and procedures
- Assigning tasks in line with the volunteer position description
- Completing office orientation (if required)
- Submitting and/or verifying volunteer time sheets

Parents, Guardians and Support Workers

If a parent, guardian or support worker is required to support and/or supervise a volunteer, they must complete all volunteer documentation, abide by Therapy Focus' Code of Conduct, policies and procedures, and complete relevant orientations.

Risk Management

Volunteer Supervisors must complete a risk assessment as part of any request for volunteer support. Risk assessments identify any potential hazards that may impact the safety of volunteer/s, staff, customers or other persons.

Risk assessments cover:

- Environmental hazards
- Hazards associated with volunteer medical issues
- Hazards associated with customer behaviour (i.e. challenging behaviours) and medical issues

Insurance

Therapy Focus has Voluntary Workers Insurance that protects volunteers against accidents and injury while volunteering. Cover applies to all hazards that a volunteer may be exposed to whilst engaged in voluntary work, including necessary direct travel to and from voluntary work for Therapy Focus.

This policy only applies to tasks assigned and managed by Therapy Focus. Tasks undertaken at the volunteer's own discretion or outside of the agreed role description is not covered under the policy.

Volunteers cannot undertake the following tasks at any time:

- Use personal vehicles to transport Therapy Focus customers
- Drive Therapy Focus fleet vehicles
- Attend customer homes unsupervised
- Exceed more than 15 hours of voluntary work per week
- Attend schools or interact with children without a Working with Children's Check
- Undertake tasks without a current National Police History Check

Resources, Orientation and Training

Volunteers will be provided with an orientation session prior to commencing any voluntary work. If required, volunteers will also be provided with all necessary training required to fulfil role requirements.

Volunteers will be provided with the tools and resources required fulfil the role requirements. All resources remain the property of Therapy Focus and are to remain at a Therapy Focus office, unless otherwise permitted by the Volunteer Supervisor.

If a resource is damaged or broken by a volunteer, compensation may be sought from the volunteer at the discretion of the Volunteer Supervisor.

Volunteers are not eligible to be assigned electronic devices such as Surface Pros or mobile phones.

Compensation

Volunteers will not receive monetary compensation from Therapy Focus, but can be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel, as agreed by the Volunteer Supervisor.

Volunteers will not be reimbursed National Police Certificates applied for independently, Working with Children's Checks or NDIS Worker Screenings. Therapy Focus covers the cost of National Volunteer Police Certificates.

Recognition

Therapy Focus formally recognises volunteer contributions through letters of acknowledgment and statements of service.

Informal recognition is provided in communications and publications, such as Therapy Focus' social media channels, website e-newsletters and published InFocus newsletters.

Gifts may given to volunteers at the discretion of Volunteer Supervisors.

Volunteer Termination

Therapy Focus may terminate a volunteer if:

- The volunteer position is redundant
- The volunteer's performance was not satisfactory

Volunteer Supervisors are required to manage volunteer misconduct or grievances in line with the relevant procedures and may seek support from the Senior Manager; People, Talent and Culture as required.

Related documents

- Volunteer Application Form
- Volunteer Recruitment Process
- Volunteer Requirement Matrix
- Volunteer Risk Assessment
- Therapy Focus Code of Conduct
- Managing Grievances Policy
- Managing Misconduct Policy
- Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy
- Privacy Act 1988