

Volunteer Induction Book

2023



Contents

Part 1 About the Community Information Centre

Contact details	3
Office hours	3
Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives	3
Guiding principles	4
Goals	3
Policies and procedures	4
Anti-discrimination	4
Confidentiality	4
Involvement of volunteers	4
Volunteer representative	5
Your role	5
Volunteer rights and responsibilities	5
Centre activities	5
Volunteer tasks	6
Volunteer training	6
Volunteer supervision and support	6
Health and safety	6
Security	6
Emergency evacuation	7
Insurance	7
Blue card	7
Attendance sign-in and sign-out	7
Parking	7
Travel and general expenses	7
Personal phone calls	7
Photocopying	7
Visitors	8
Updating personal records	8
Daily record book	8
Messages for volunteers	8
Note-taking	8
Breaks	8
Cleaning	8
What to wear	8
Who to contact if unable to come in	8
Spare key	8
Volunteer grievance procedure	8
Concerns and complaints in relation to volunteers	9
Resignation	9

Part 1 About the Community Information Centre

The Community Information Centre Townsville (CIC) is a community based not-for-profit information and referral service, funded primarily by Townsville City Council (TCC). The centre was established in 1976 as a volunteer organisation and has since continued to provide information to Townsville residents, community groups, government, and non-government organisations.

CIC is governed by a Board which is elected each year by the organisation's members. Its staff includes a General Manager and Information Officer, and up to 15 volunteers.

Contact details

Northtown, 280 Flinders Street, Townsville 4810

PO Box 1314 Townsville 4810

Ph: 4727 9730

Email: cic@townsville.qld.gov.au

www.cictownsville.com.au

Find us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn

Office hours

9am – 4pm Monday to Friday

CIC is guided by the vision, mission, goals, and underlying principles outlined below:

Vision

A connected and informed community.

Mission

To connect our Townsville community to supports and services that offer opportunities to promote positive change, inclusion, good health and wellbeing.

Purpose

The Community Information Centre is a central point of information for Townsville residents, to access a comprehensive information and referral service. By providing quality and diversity in the range of information, the Townsville community has the opportunity to connect to relevant supports and services. The CIC also plays an integral role to advocate for supports needed when gaps in services are identified.

Values

Our work is underpinned by a commitment to:

Accountability

Maintaining organisational integrity, accountability, and good governance

Equity

Providing equitable access to quality information, services, and learning opportunities

Treating all people with dignity and respect

Innovation

Striving to enhance the performance and profile of the organisation.

Integrity

Respecting and upholding rights to privacy and confidentiality in all aspects of practice and management

Collaboration

Collaborate and strengthen partnerships to achieve our vision

Policies and procedures

CIC's policies and procedures are set out in a manual which will be made available to volunteers as part of their orientation. The manual contains key policies and procedures in areas such as the organisational and legal structure, confidentiality and privacy, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination, health and safety, and administration and office procedures. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly by the Board, in collaboration with staff (both employees and volunteers).

Two key policy areas of anti-discrimination and confidentiality are highlighted below:

Anti-discrimination

CIC is an equal opportunity employer and will not condone any unlawful discrimination relating to age, race, descent, nationality, gender, sexual preference, marital status, parental status, family responsibilities, physical or mental impairment, religion, or political beliefs. This goes for fellow volunteers as well as our clients. We want everyone who is in contact with CIC to feel comfortable doing so.

Confidentiality

CIC has an obligation to our members, Board, volunteers, and clients (including individuals and agencies) to maintain their confidentiality and respect their right to privacy. During the course of your volunteer work, information of a confidential nature may be shared with you. You must not share this information with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know it. No one is permitted to remove or make copies of any CIC records, reports, or documents without prior approval.

All personal details of volunteers are kept in a confidential manner. Any personal details are not to be given out. If someone is trying to contact a member of CIC, ask them to leave a message with their details and you can pass this on.

Involvement of volunteers

Volunteers are a valuable resource to our group. We are committed to involving volunteers in CIC's direction setting, decision-making and service delivery. We recognise that without the skills, generosity, and commitment of our volunteers, it would be impossible to maintain the quality of our service. Volunteers are encouraged to become members of the organisation.

Your role

This handbook is provided as a general guide to CIC. It includes your role, and rights and responsibilities (as well as ours to you). You will be provided with a volunteer agreement and a position description to give further information in these areas. Time will also be spent during your orientation showing you around the centre, including its amenities, and health and safety considerations.

Four weeks after your commencement as a volunteer, you will be asked to complete a checklist including some questions to gain your feedback on the orientation process from

the beginning. Feedback is a gift and gives us the opportunity to improve our service in the future.

Volunteer rights and responsibilities

Volunteers have the right to:

- be given meaningful volunteering opportunities
- receive adequate information and a clear volunteer position description
- have their personal details kept in a confidential manner
- be adequately insured
- be treated equally and respectfully and feel safe
- receive ongoing and effective support
- be recognised for their contribution to CIC

In return, volunteers agree to:

- actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities
- to ask for support when needed
- agree to do the job training necessary to carry out duties
- be accountable to CIC
- appreciate and respect the confidential nature of information that may be acquired during the course of duties
- follow CIC's policies and procedures
- remain faithful to CIC's guiding principles

Centre activities

CIC's main activities include:

- a face-to-face, telephone and on-line information service
- Community Resource Directory – updated yearly
- Recreation Directory – updated yearly
- CIC Publications
- Halls and Venues Guide –
- Creative and Performing Artist Directory
- New Residents' Information Pack
- photocopying for the public
- Social Media updates
- brochure displays and stocktake
- window displays
- Together Townsville - Network, partnerships, Training and Connects
- Learning Links - English classes,
- Memberships
- Meeting room hire
- Book Crossing

An organisational structure will be shown.

Volunteer tasks

We try to allocate jobs on the basis of interest and skills. The following are some of the tasks available:

- updating, inputting, and editing information
- answering inquiries made at the front desk and by phone
- staffing information stalls at events
- maintaining statistics
- organising brochures
- checking noticeboards, social media, newspapers, and other sources
- office tasks such as typing, photocopying, filing, and cleaning.
- Ensuring the office is clean and tidy and presented well

- Projects and allocated specific tasks

Each volunteer has their own tray where they can keep what they are working on.

If you are unsure of what to do, please check with the General Manager or Information Officer. Tasks may also be noted on the whiteboard or in your tray.

We encourage a teamwork environment where everyone helps everyone, so please don't hesitate to ask your fellow teammates for assistance or help.

The provision of information in person or by phone is a key function of the centre. Often, we want to empathise with a client, but we must try to remain neutral in any conversation and resist the temptation to give advice or our personal opinion.

Volunteer training

CIC has a commitment to best practice which includes ensuring that volunteers are properly trained to carry out their work. All volunteers will be invited to participate in ongoing training, using a learning needs assessment tool to determine the training which will be beneficial and relevant. Induction videos and a website quiz also is to be completed to support your understanding and learning of the organisation.

Volunteer supervision and support

Volunteer recruitment, training, supervision, and support lies within the responsibilities of the General Manager, with the assistance of the Information Officer.

Health and safety

CIC is committed to ensuring health and safety is a priority to its members and volunteers. Further information in CIC's policies and procedures manual will be provided to you on health and safety concerns such as emergency evacuation and hazardous substances, as well as issues such as discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and victimisation.

If an accident does occur, it should be reported immediately to the General Manager or Information Officer. If it is an emergency or serious accident, contact 000.

Please remember 'the standard you walk past is the standard you accept'. If you see anything that needs attention, please report to the General Manager or Information Officer. Do not assume they already know about it. Ensure you take reasonable care of your health, safety, and welfare and that of others.

Security

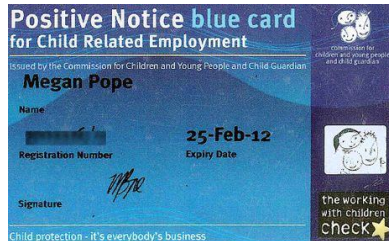
Do not allow strangers to roam freely throughout the office. Never leave the office unattended without first locking the doors. In the event of a situation where you feel threatened you ask for assistance from a staff member in the office.

Emergency evacuation

CIC's evacuation plan is displayed on the front noticeboard. In the event of an evacuation, you will hear the alarm sound. Please take your personal bag, lock the centre door, and exit to the designated area which is in Flinders Street. Please follow the instructions of the fire warden (CIC General Manager) during this procedure and do not re-enter until given the all clear. Ensure all rostered staff and volunteers are made aware of the situation (including if they are in transit to the office).

Insurance

- CIC has insurance policies to cover volunteers of any incident or injury that may occur. Please note that the policy will only cover when policies and procedures have been followed and you have not intentionally put yourself or others at risk.



Blue card

CIC encourages all volunteers, Board members and staff to hold a valid blue card. There is no cost to the volunteer. Please let us know if you need to apply for a blue card.

Attendance sign-in and sign-out

Attendance sign-in and out sheets are necessary for our program, in order for us to keep an accurate record of your contribution, to ensure insurance coverage and to indicate your presence in the building. This is especially important in case of evacuation when we will need to know who is in the building.

Doors are to be opened at 9am, lights turned on, and the sign turned to open, then the process reversed for closing at 4pm. Leave computers turned on as they do updates overnight.

Parking

Cars can be parked for free in the TCC car park 1 (Flinders Street East) or 9 (The Strand), as directed by the General Manager. You will need to place a CIC parking permit on your dashboard. Please note that only 4 volunteers can park there at any one time. This permit is to be used for your shift only, or if we have training or a function.

Travel and general expenses

CIC has budget limitations and can only reimburse travel expenses and other purchases approved in advance. Documentation, including receipts, must be provided to the General Manager. Unfortunately, CIC is unable to pay for travel to and from work.

Personal phone calls

Volunteers are asked to make personal calls on their own mobile phones, and only use the CIC's phone if this is not possible, or in the case of an emergency. Please inform the General Manager or Information Officer if you need to use CIC's phone.

Photocopying

Volunteers are welcome to occasionally use the photocopier free of charge. Large runs maybe provided at cost.

Visitors

Volunteers should ensure that when friends visit, service to our customers is not affected.

Updating personal records

Please notify the office immediately of any change of personal details. This could include your address, telephone number, emergency contact, and any health concerns. All volunteers' personal information will be treated with confidentiality.

Daily record of statistics

All enquiries are entered in the daily online statistics link that is provided on every computer. Our credibility depends on the keeping of accurate records. They prove that we answer a wide variety of enquiries and provide information on what gaps exist in community services. A volunteer is responsible for entering these statistics into the statistic link. A demonstration will be given on how to enter statistics and different scenarios

Messages for volunteers

Our volunteer diary is our formal way of keeping everyone informed about new policies, changes in procedures and information, special events etc. Information of general interest is also placed in the diary. Please read the diary each time you come in (catch up on the last week as well as present and future). Leave messages to other volunteers in this book.

Note-taking

Use the message notebooks provided when answering the phone especially if the General Manager and Information Officer need to follow up.

Breaks

When you are working, feel free to take a break as you need it, especially if you are doing a lot of computer or repetitive work. Help yourself to tea and coffee. If leaving the office, please let your fellow colleagues know.

Cleaning

The centre is given a general clean after hours by contracted cleaners. It is up to us however to keep our work areas neat, tidy and presented well. We are responsible for cleaning such as our dishes, shelves, brochure stands, kitchen cupboards and fridge. We also have a recycling bin which we take downstairs for a fortnightly collection. **THIS IS EVERY VOLUNTEERS RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THE OFFICE IS PRESENTED WELL AND TIDY. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THIS EVERY SHIFT.**

What to wear

You will be provided with a CIC uniform shirt. This should be worn during your volunteer shift (with clothing appropriate for an office), especially if attending a community event for CIC. This shirt must be returned to the CIC when you finish. Please keep in mind that when wearing this uniform you are representing the organisation.

Who to contact if unable to come in

If you cannot attend CIC for your normal shift, and if notice is being given on the day, please contact the General Manager or the Information Officer as soon as possible, especially if you are opening the centre. If you are giving notice before the day of your shift, you can call CIC on 4727 9730 or 0428885245

Spare key

We have a spare key located in the library, especially if the General Manager or Information Officer is not available to open the centre. Your name will be placed on an approved list of people who can collect this key and you will be asked to show your ID. You will be required to sign for the key and to return it by the end of the day.

Volunteer grievance procedure

If a volunteer is concerned about an issue or has a complaint, the following internal steps may be taken:

- the volunteer may approach the General Manager or volunteer representative for a confidential discussion and advice on the issue

- if the problem is not resolved, the volunteer may put the issue in writing to the General Manager or volunteer representative and request that the issue be raised with the Board at the next committee meeting
- the Board shall decide on the issue and advise the volunteer within 7 days
- if the problem is still not resolved, the volunteer may attend a meeting of the Board, with a representative of their choice if wished, and shall be entitled to address that meeting
- the volunteer may request that any person who may be the subject of the complaint not be present while they address the meeting
- the Board shall make a final decision on the issue and advise the volunteer of their decision within 7 days.

All attempts will be made to reach a resolution which respects the rights of all parties involved and may involve a mediation process. If the concern or complaint involves serious and/or unlawful behaviour, such as discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying or victimisation, then the volunteer may act external to the organisation. Please refer to the relevant sections in CIC's policies and procedures manual.

Concerns and complaints in relation to volunteers

CIC is committed to ensuring that any concerns which are raised in relation to a volunteer performing their tasks will be fairly and promptly resolved, respecting the rights of all parties. Please refer to the relevant sections concerning complaints in CIC's policies and procedures manual.

It is noted, however, that in the case of serious misconduct, the volunteer will be asked to leave CIC immediately until the issue may be resolved. Examples of serious misconduct include theft, wilful damage of service property, intoxication, verbal or physical harassment, disclosure of confidential information regarding the organisation to any other party without prior permission, falsification of any organisational record, and failure to uphold key principles.

Resignation

Volunteers are an invaluable resource to CIC, but it is recognized that due to changing circumstances, a volunteer may need to resign from their voluntary position. CIC asks all volunteers to give as much notice as possible. All volunteers are asked to return shirts, any books, materials, or files (electronic or otherwise) belonging to CIC before they leave.

CIC is committed to constantly improving its volunteer involvement and all feedback regarding the volunteering experience with CIC would be appreciated. This will help in decision-making to ensure ongoing volunteer satisfaction and commitment, in addition to the effective delivery of services. If the volunteer was leaving due to any sort of problem or dissatisfaction with CIC, it would be beneficial to us if they notified the General Manager or volunteer representative as to their reasons. Confidentiality will of course be respected in all matters relating to this feedback. We ask that each volunteer take the time to complete the confidential exit survey included as an attachment to this handbook. However, do not sign the survey, unless you choose to do so.

Thank you for your interest in joining CIC as a volunteer. The contribution of volunteers is vital to the CIC. Without volunteers we couldn't provide our service. We recognise the reciprocal nature of volunteering and are committed to providing an experience that supports the work of CIC and meets the needs and expectations of individual volunteers.