	ADRA Australia Operational Policies and Procedures		NP 600 100	
	Document Name and Number		Page 1 of 4	
	Volunteer Policy			
	Department: National Programs		Sections (inc. All sections where this document is located.)	
	Developed By	Document Version	Effective Date	
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ADCOM on 5 August 2024 and updated on 21 November 2024	2024/1; 2024/2	July 2026		

NP 600 100 Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

We appreciate your interest in volunteering with ADRA Australia. We recognise that volunteers provide an invaluable contribution to our organisation's purpose of serving humanity so all may live as God intended. We also recognise that we have a duty of care to safeguard children and vulnerable people. All volunteers are required to undergo a screening process which may or may not result in a volunteer role being offered. This policy outlines our commitment to engaging, supporting, and empowering volunteers in their efforts to make a positive impact through service to others.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Volunteer Policy is to establish clear guidelines and expectations for volunteers in Australia, ensuring a harmonious and productive partnership between volunteers and ADRA Australia.

3. Definitions


- **A volunteer** is an individual who, without expectation of compensation or legal obligation, offers their time, skills, and services to support ADRA Australia's mission and values. Volunteer roles are available at ADRA head office, regional offices, and at ADRA Activities across Australia (e.g., Op-shops, Community Centres, and projects, etc.).
- **Safeguarding** is protecting the welfare and human rights of people that are, in some way, connected with ADRA Australia or its work – particularly people that may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- **Vulnerable people include children** and seniors, people with impaired intellectual or physical functioning, people from a low socio-economic background, people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, people who are not native speakers of the local language, people with low levels of literacy or education, people subject to modern slavery, such as forced labour, debt bondage, human trafficking, and child labour.
- The **ADRA Australia Safeguarding Focal Point** is responsible for acting in response to complaints, allegations, or suspicions where a child or vulnerable person may have been subjected to or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The Safeguarding Focal Point is also responsible for developing, promoting, and disseminating safeguarding educational materials.
- A **Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC)** (also known as a National Police Check) indicates if an applicant/individual has any disclosable court outcomes (DCOs) and may include offences and convictions.
- The **Working with Vulnerable People / Working with Children (WWVP/WWC) Check** is an Australian background check requirement, that assesses the criminal record of those working or volunteering in work that involves vulnerable persons and/or children. The State's and Territories' check schemes operate independently of each other.
- **Adsafe** is an entity established to protect children and vulnerable adults concerning Seventh-day Adventist Church entities. The Adsafe Check indicates a person of concern due to substantiated allegations and investigation within the Seventh-day Adventist Church system.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who volunteer their time and services to ADRA Australia, regardless of their roles or responsibilities within the organisation.

5. Volunteer Age Limits and Conditions

This section outlines the age limits and conditions for volunteering with ADRA. Adults between the ages of 18 and 89 can apply for volunteer roles. Volunteers older than 89 are not eligible to serve as ADRA volunteers because ADRA cannot provide accident insurance coverage. Volunteers between the age of 75 and 89 can serve but need to

	ADRA Australia Operational Policies and Procedures		NP 600 100	
	Document Name and Number		Page 2 of 4	
	Volunteer Policy			
	Department: National Programs		Sections (inc. All sections where this document is located.)	
	Developed By	Document Version	Effective Date	
	NP and People Culture Team	2025/1	21 Nov 2024 edited 2/25	
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ADCOM on 5 August 2024 and updated on 21 November 2024	2024/1; 2024/2	July 2026		

understand the strict insurance limitations (for more information refer to the Personal Accident Insurance Cover Limitations).

Minors between the ages of 15 and 17 years can apply for volunteer roles under the following conditions:

- Minors who are potential volunteers are exempt from undergoing a National Police Check and WWVP/WWC Check to become a volunteer with ADRA.
- Minors who are potential volunteers must have completed ADRA’s consent with their legal guardian(s) before being considered for an ADRA volunteering role.
- Legal guardian(s) must be informed of ADRA Australia’s Safeguarding Code of Conduct and related policies and the minor volunteer’s role description.
- Before minor volunteers can start volunteering, they must receive safeguarding training tailored to their age, covering topics such as understanding boundaries, recognising signs of abuse, and the process for reporting concerns including a child-friendly complaint mechanism. Assigned volunteer supervisors of minor volunteers will also receive tailored safeguarding training covering the topics listed above.
- When minor volunteers are accepted into a volunteering role, they must be supervised by an adult volunteer who has been inducted to supervise minor volunteers.

Minors aged 10 years and older may only engage in an ADRA Activity under the following condition:

- As part of an approved excursion by a Pathfinder Club or School. The minors must be enrolled in the Pathfinder Club or school and must always be under the supervision of the Club Leaders and/or School Teachers. The Pathfinder Club or school must conduct a risk assessment before their visit to ensure that the tasks are appropriate for their group. Volunteer application forms and/or screening checks are not required for minors who engage with an ADRA Activity as part of a Pathfinder Club and/or School group excursion.

6. Screening Checks


Full Volunteer screening includes:

- Providing consent to undergo the necessary screening checks (captured on the online Volunteer Application Form)
- Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC), to be completed every three years, if required for the role
- Current Working with Vulnerable Person / Working with Children (WWVP/WWC) Check
- Initial and periodic Adsafe Check

Each state and territory differ in their screening requirements.

In Queensland and Western Australia, a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC) and an Adsafe Check will be required for general volunteers. If the ADRA Activity directly involves children, any volunteer engaged will be required to undergo full screening (NCCHC, WWVP/WWC Check, and Adsafe Check). Activity managers will also be required to complete a full screening. NOTE: If a volunteer already has a current WWVP/WWC Check and is not a manager or treasurer, they may provide the WWVP/WWC check number in place of doing a NCCHC, as the WWVP/WWC Check includes a criminal history check.

In New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory, the WWVP/WWC Check includes a criminal history check. Therefore, only a WWVP/WWC Check and an Adsafe Check will be required for general ADRA Volunteers engaged in these States and Territories.

	ADRA Australia Operational Policies and Procedures		NP 600 100	
	Document Name and Number		Page 3 of 4	
	Volunteer Policy			
	Department: National Programs		Sections (inc. All sections where this document is located.)	
	Developed By	Document Version	Effective Date	
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ADCOM on 5 August 2024 and updated on 21 November 2024	2024/1; 2024/2	July 2026		

In all states and territories, Activity Managers and Treasurers will be required to undergo full screening. All volunteer drivers operating ADRA vehicles will have to provide a driving record from the relevant road transport department. They are also required to complete the Volunteer Vehicle User Agreement and submit a copy of a current relevant driver’s license.

7. Volunteer Application Review, Confirmation, and Appeal

After the Prospective Volunteer completes the online Volunteer Application Form (found here: <https://www.adra.org.au/volunteer/>) and emails the necessary screening checks to volunteers@adra.org.au, the application is reviewed by ADRA Australia’s Volunteer Coordinator.

If the Applicant is deemed suitable for the role they have applied for, and no adverse outcomes are identified in any of the screening checks, the Volunteer Coordinator will email the successful Applicant and the relevant ADRA Activity Manager a letter confirming that the Applicant is approved to volunteer with ADRA.

If an Applicant decides not to follow the outlined procedure of submitting a Volunteer Application Form and providing the necessary screening check documents, they disqualify themselves from being an ADRA volunteer.

Adverse Outcomes

If adverse outcomes are identified in the screening checks, the Volunteer Coordinator and National Programs Director will review the results together, considering the pattern of behaviour, nature and number of offences, and severity of offences. Findings of significant criminal history, sexual abuse matters, or Adsafe concerns will be referred to the Review Panel for a decision.

The Review Panel includes the CEO, the National Programs Director, and the Safeguarding Focal Point. The panel’s decision is communicated in writing to the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will communicate the decision in writing to the Applicant, the relevant ADRA Activity Manager and the Conference ADRA Director/Regional Manager (CAD/RM). Confidentiality is maintained throughout the review process.

Appeals


If an Applicant wishes to dispute the Review Panel’s decision, they can do so. To appeal the decision, the Applicant must communicate in writing to the ADRA Australia Volunteer Coordinator, explaining why the decision should be reconsidered. The Volunteer Coordinator will then contact the Volunteer to request additional information and documentation supporting their case for becoming an ADRA Volunteer in the proposed role.

The Volunteer Coordinator will share the additional information with the Review Panel who will analyse the documentation and may, at its discretion, contact Adsafe for insights and/or to conduct a Risk Assessment and provide a recommendation. The Panel will review the recommendation, make a decision, and communicate it to the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will communicate the final decision in writing to the Applicant, the relevant ADRA Activity Manager and the CAD/RM.

8. Orientation and Training

Volunteers will undergo orientation and induction to prepare them for their roles within ADRA Australia and will receive the necessary training to carry out their work safely and effectively. This will include job-specific training, safety protocols, an overview of ADRA, and other topics as applicable. Volunteers are expected to read the Volunteer handbook, commit, and adhere to the content. If a uniform (t-shirt or vest is available), the volunteer will wear the required uniform while on shift, which includes the provided ID tag.

9. Supervision and Support

	ADRA Australia Operational Policies and Procedures		NP 600 100	
	Document Name and Number		Page 4 of 4	
	Volunteer Policy			
	Department: National Programs		Sections (inc. All sections where this document is located.)	
	Developed By	Document Version	Effective Date	
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Each volunteer will have a designated supervisor for guidance and support. Their supervisor is the first point of contact for duties, absences, and changes in days/hours. Regular feedback sessions will be conducted to discuss performance and address any concerns. Volunteers will be recognised for their contributions through various means (events, certificates, etc.).

10. Code of Conduct and Relevant Policies

Volunteers are required to uphold ADRA Australia's Code of Conduct, and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct, which include expected behaviours such as respecting confidentiality, maintaining professionalism, and treating others with dignity and respect at all times. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your designated supervisor or the ADRA Australia Safeguarding Focal Point.

11. Health and Safety

ADRA Australia prioritises the safety and well-being of our volunteers and will provide an induction on Work Health and Safety. Comprehensive health and safety protocols, insurance coverage, and risk management procedures are in place to ensure a safe volunteering environment.

12. Complaints

Volunteers are welcome to voice any concerns or complaints with their Activity Manager. Formal complaints should follow the complaints policy and can be submitted to ADRA’s Complaints Officer (complaints.officer@adra.org.au). All complaints will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and fairly.

13. Conclusion

By adhering to this Volunteer Policy, volunteers play a crucial role in helping ADRA Australia fulfill its purpose of serving humanity and empowering communities. This policy is subject to review to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in supporting our volunteers and advancing our purpose.

REFERENCE TO POLICIES:

- ADRA Australia Code of Conduct
- ADRA Australia Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Workplace Relations Policy
- Complaints Policy

APPENDIX:

1. Legal Guardian(s) Consent Form for Minor Volunteers