

**volunteer.
do what you love.**



Michael Pervan
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
GPO Box 125
Hobart TAS 7001

National Code of Conduct for health care workers in Tasmania

Volunteering Tasmania is the Peak body for volunteerism in Tasmania. We make a positive impact on volunteering, and as a result, we help to improve and sustain our wonderful community and the people within it. We believe that all members of our community equally deserve the right to experience the benefits of volunteering, regardless of their background.

We welcome the opportunity to provide comment on the National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers (the Code) in Tasmania, and its incorporation in the *Health Complaints Act 1995*.

We recognise and agree with existing comments that volunteers can be covered under the Code and wish to bring two key concerns to your attention.

First is the clarity needed around the role of volunteers and their duties under the Code. The definition currently refers to volunteers as recruited by an organisation providing a health service. In Volunteering Tasmania's experience, volunteers are likely to play a variety of roles within this broad definition – particularly around the support services given in the health sector. We would appreciate clarity around any roles that could be excluded, as this will allow Volunteer Involving Organisations to make informed risk assessments in their induction and training processes.

Volunteering Tasmania would appreciate clarity around the process for directing complaints, specifically when the complaint may be directed at the activities undertaken by a volunteer. It is Volunteering Tasmania's understanding that currently the Commissioner works as an advisory body with a focus on the resolution of conflict for paid workers, with any further complaints are then directed to AHPRA.

It is Volunteering Tasmania's understanding that if a complaint is made around the activities of a volunteer (covered under the Code), there are few formal processes that can be taken.

www.volunteeringtas.org.au

HEAD OFFICE (03) 6231 5550 | 95–97 Campbell Street Hobart TAS 7000

VOLUNTEER RESOURCE CENTRE (03) 6331 1567 | 72 Tamar Street Launceston TAS 7250

admin@volunteeringtas.org.au

**volunteer.
do what you love.**



Consequently, there are no legal protections or supports available for the volunteer. As such any disciplinary action taken by a Volunteer Involving Organisation cannot be appealed by the volunteer- outside approaching the Board of Governance. This is largely because there is no employment relationship established between an organisation and its volunteers. This is in recognition of the volunteers donating their time willingly, for the common good, for no financial gain. However, it leaves little room for volunteers to appeal against any complaints.

Volunteering Tasmania recommends that acknowledgement is given around the role of a volunteer receiving a complaint under the Code. We also recommend clarifying the responsibility that applies to individual volunteers be addressed.

If you wish to discuss this feedback further please do not hesitate to get in touch. I can be reached on (03) 6231 5550 or at alisonl@volunteeringtas.org.au

Kindest Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alison Lai'.

Alison Lai
Chief Executive Officer
Volunteering Tasmania

www.volunteeringtas.org.au

HEAD OFFICE (03) 6231 5550 | 95-97 Campbell Street Hobart TAS 7000

VOLUNTEER RESOURCE CENTRE (03) 6331 1567 | 72 Tamar Street Launceston TAS 7250

admin@volunteeringtas.org.au