



# Peppercorn's Volunteer Handbook

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April 2019

## Acknowledgement of Country

Peppercorn Services Inc. acknowledges the Darug people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our organisation operates. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the spiritual, physical, emotional, mental and economic connections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the Land and Seas. We acknowledge that the dispossession of Country and the disruption to family relationships have resulted in a breakdown of social networks.

Peppercorn Services Inc. is committed to working in ways that support and empower Aboriginal people and their families and communities. We are responsible for ensuring that our services are culturally competent, safe and sensitive.

Peppercorn Services Inc.

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## Welcome! You are a valued Volunteer

You can join an amazing group of people who volunteer in the Hawkesbury community. Working together, we can make our Vision of a connected, healthy and inclusive Hawkesbury a reality. And here at Peppercorn you will have the opportunity to change the lives of thousands of people who use or access our services each year.

This Handbook will provide you with an insight into Peppercorn, who we are and what we do. The Handbook will set out what your rights are as a volunteer, what your responsibilities will be, and what our expectations are as we work with you.

You will also find useful information about Volunteer roles across the organisation, how you will be supported as a volunteer, what training you can access, and how you will be recognised for your volunteer service.

We look forward to your participation, whatever your role may be. We anticipate you will have an interactive and productive experience with us. We wish you all the enjoyment you can get from being a volunteer.

Note: We will refer to Peppercorn Services Inc simply as Peppercorn throughout this document.

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## Why should I be a Volunteer?

### Volunteering can make you healthier and happier

We all have busy lives and it can be hard to find time to volunteer. Yet volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of your busy day. It can be as little as a couple of hours, or as much as 15 hours a week. You can decide, and volunteering will generate wonderful benefits to you, your family, and your community.

You can be happier when you volunteer. Helping others stimulates happiness. Researchers at the London School of Economics examined the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness in a large group of American adults. They found the more people volunteered, the happier they were, and people who volunteered every week experienced an increase in happiness equivalent to having an income of \$100,000 versus \$20,000.

### Volunteering connects you to others

One of the better-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. Even helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people and organizations in need.

Volunteering is a wonderful way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. It strengthens your ties to the community and broadens your support network, and helps you find people with common interests, neighbourhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

While some people are naturally outgoing, others are shy and find it difficult to meet new people. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills, since you are meeting regularly with a group of people with common interests. Once you have momentum, it's easier to branch out and make more friends and contacts.

Children watch everything you do. By giving back to the community, you show them firsthand how volunteering makes a difference and how good it feels to help other people and animals and enact change. It's also a valuable way for you to get to know organizations in the community and find resources and activities for your children and family.

### Volunteering is good for your mind and body

Volunteering provides many benefits to both mental and physical health. Volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. The social contact aspect of helping and working with others can have a profound effect on your overall psychological well-being.

Volunteering combats depression. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turn protects you against depression.

Volunteering increases self-confidence. You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Your role as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity. And the better you feel about yourself, the more likely you are to have a positive view of your life and future goals.

Volunteering provides a sense of purpose. Older adults, especially those who have retired or lost a spouse, can find new meaning and direction in their lives by helping others.

Volunteering helps you stay physically healthy. Studies have found that those who volunteer have a lower mortality rate than those who do not. Older volunteers tend to walk more, find it easier to cope with everyday tasks, are less likely to develop high blood pressure, and have better thinking skills. Volunteering can also lessen symptoms of chronic pain and reduce the risk of heart disease.

## Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life

Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. Doing volunteer work you find meaningful and interesting can be a relaxing, energizing escape from your day-to-day routine of work, school, or family commitments. Volunteering also provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision that can carry over into your personal and professional life.

So, if you're thinking "why should I volunteer?" remember, volunteering

- makes you happier
- connects you to others
- is good for your mind and body
- brings fun and fulfillment to your life.

Talk to us today about what role you could be part of as part of Peppercorn in bringing the Hawkesbury together.

Source: *World Volunteer Web*

## What can I do as a Volunteer at Peppercorn?

Peppercorn is looking for people who can work in the following Volunteer Designated Roles. We have multiple vacancies available for most of these roles.

### Community Transport – Medical Driver

Community Transport Medical Drivers ensure the safe and comfortable transport of clients to and from destinations using Peppercorn Community Transport vehicles (usually cars). Medical drivers are responsible for ensuring the safety of themselves, their passengers and the public as they convey passengers to and from medical appointments, treatments or hospital.

### Community Transport – Bus Attendant

Community Transport Bus Attendants provide support for passengers using community transport during journeys and social outings. Bus Attendants support passengers to get on the bus, be seated safely and secure their seatbelts, stow and store walking frames and shopping bags, and assist passengers to safely exit the bus and access their destinations.

Community Transport Bus Attendants also provide support during social outings, assisting with serving of meals and drinks, and engaging passengers and other clients in social support activities.

### Community Transport – Customer Service Assistant

Community Transport Service Assistants provide telephone support, information about our transport services, enrol clients (our customers) into the CTABS database for transport service bookings, and support customers getting where they need to go. They assist in developing and coordinating social outings and may join in an outing to engage and assist clients with social support activities.

### Community Care – Group Activities and Seniors Meals Assistant

Seniors Group Activities Assistants provide support during social outings, assisting with serving of meals and drinks, guiding and supporting craft activities or other activities such as strength training or elderly fitness, and engaging clients in conversation and social support activities. Group Activities Assistants may also support clients during shopping trips. These activities provide opportunities for people to develop friendships, experience new activities, and participate in the community.

### Community Care – Community Visitors Scheme Volunteer

Community Visitors Scheme Volunteers visit residents in aged care facilities who are at risk of isolation from the general community. Community Visitors visit at least fortnightly and provide friendship and companionship. Community Visitors may escort the resident on social outings.

Community Visitors support residents to maintain their independence, improve their quality of life, enhance their social contacts, and support their participation in community, cultural and civic life. Community Visitors provide an important link between the residents and the wider community.

## Hawkesbury Leisure and Learning Centre (Richmond)

### Concierge Services

Concierge Services at Hawkesbury Leisure and Learning Centre (HLLC) provide liaison and assistance for guests and patrons attending the Centre. Concierge Services assist guests and patrons with inquiries and information about attractions, facilities, services, or activities in the Centre and in the wider Hawkesbury LGA. Concierge Services provide concise and accurate directions, make referrals to other services, connect guests and patrons with activity coordinators, assist with bookings and payments, assist with administration and special events.

### Children & Families – Family Fun Day Host

Family Fun Day Hosts help run the Family Fun Day events at South Windsor Family Centre. From setting up the stalls on site to managing the crowds to handing out materials and freebies, and then helping with packing everything up again, Family Fun Day Hosts make this community event an engaging and enjoyable day for hundreds of people in the area.

### Children & Families – Craft in the Park Host

Craft in the Park Hosts help run the monthly Craft in the Park events at McQuade Park in South Windsor. From setting up tables of crafts and activities, to guiding eager and curious children into different activities, to engaging with parents in conversation, and then helping with packing everything up again, Craft in the Park Hosts make this community event the place to be for children after school in South Windsor.

### Children & Families – Breakfast Club & Pepper's Pantry Hosts

Breakfast Club & Pepper's Pantry Hosts help run the Breakfast Club for hungry children in South Windsor. The Hosts help prepare the food and serve the children. Hosts also assist with trips to Foodbank to obtain supplies and support vulnerable families looking for food at Pepper's Pantry in the South Windsor Family Centre.

### Children & Family Services – Playgroup Assistants

Playgroup Assistants work with the Children & Families team to set up the rooms for playgroups, connect with parents and children who attend the sessions, support activities during the playgroup sessions, and help pack up afterwards.

## LINCS – Family Support Volunteer

Family Support Volunteers support vulnerable and isolated parents to improve family health, parenting capacity and family and community relationships through home visiting, conversations and shared experiences, and meeting immediate needs.

## Forgotten Valley Preschools Activity Assistants

Forgotten Valley Preschools Activity Assistants support Peppercorn's preschools at South Maroota and Wisemans Ferry. They interact with children during activity times, read stories, conduct music sessions, get their hands dirty with paint or playdough, and help clean up the service at the end of the day.

## Front Desk Services and Reception

Front Desk Services and Reception Volunteers provide front-desk support and receptionist duties to the various hirers at Peppercorn Place and South Windsor Family Centre. Front Desk Services and Reception Volunteers also provide information and advice to members of the public seeking assistance or direction to other community services, aged care and disability support agencies across the Hawkesbury.

As more roles are developed we will add descriptions here.

## Becoming a Volunteer at Peppercorn

Volunteers must be between 16 years and 75 years of age. If you want to become a Volunteer at Peppercorn we will ask you to:

1. Choose one or more roles (called Volunteer Designated Positions) that you would like to do
2. Complete a Volunteer Service Application
3. Be interviewed and provide the necessary identification documents
4. Complete the National Criminal History Check (and supply a Working with Children Check if you choose a role with children)
5. If successful, sign a Volunteer Services Agreement
6. Sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct
7. Complete the required training for your designated role
8. Complete your orientation into your role

## What are my rights as a Volunteer?

As a Volunteer you have the right to:

- be interviewed and engaged as a volunteer in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- receive information about Peppercorn
- have a clearly written role description
- know to whom you are accountable
- be recognised as a valued team member
- be supported and supervised
- work in a healthy and safe working environment
- be protected by appropriate insurance
- say no if you feel you are being exploited
- be reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses
- be advised of the travel reimbursement policy
- be informed and consulted on matters which directly or indirectly affect you and your work
- be made aware of Peppercorn's grievance procedure
- receive appropriate orientation and training
- information about policies and procedures that affect your work
- have your confidential and personal information protected in line with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

## What are my responsibilities as a Volunteer?

As a Volunteer you have the responsibility to:

- be reliable
- respect confidentiality
- carry out the tasks defined in the role description
- be accountable
- be committed to Peppercorn
- undertake training as requested
- ask for support when you need it
- give notice before you leave
- value and support other team members
- carry out the work you have agreed to do responsibly and ethically
- notify Peppercorn as soon as possible of absences
- adhere to Peppercorn's policies and procedures.

## What we expect of you as a Volunteer

At Peppercorn we expect everyone to behave as a professional, including volunteers. We will work with you to ensure that you understand what is expected of you: the work that you will be responsible for and the way you work with others. This way of working as a professional supports our accreditation against Quality Standards and assures the public and Government that we are a trustworthy, responsible and accountable charity.

To guide you in this, Peppercorn has a Volunteer Code of Conduct. This is very similar to the Codes of Conduct for employees, managers, the Executive Officer and the Board – each group has a more detailed and increasing level of expectation.

The general principles and expectations are briefly set out below. More detailed guidance can be found in the Volunteer Code of Conduct and in the *Employee Code of Conduct and Ethics Guidebook* and the *Statements of Professional Behaviour*.

### Commitment

I took up this position to work for something larger than myself. I will carry out this work honestly and in fairness to everybody involved, placing the interests of others before my own.

### Compliance

I will work within the law, and within the rules, and I will see that my organisation does too.

### Conflicts of interest

In my dealings with Peppercorn I shall be honest and open. I will not take advantage of my position as a Volunteer.

### Confidentiality

I shall keep confidential any information that has been entrusted to me and protect the privacy and confidentiality of personal information. I shall respond with transparency and openness to anyone who requests information they are entitled to know.

### Conscientiousness

I shall do the job fully and without reservations.

### Communication

I shall know what Peppercorn does, and why, and I shall tell my community about it.

### Community

I will treat the people involved with Peppercorn respectfully, fairly and without prejudice.

## What we will provide for you as a Volunteer

### Orientation

You will be provided with orientation that covers expectations of volunteers, the benefits of volunteering, Workplace Health and Safety and provides an opportunity for new you as a new volunteer to get to know Peppercorn.

### Training

When you commence as a Volunteer with Peppercorn, you will be provided with training designed to enable you to perform your roles and duties within the organisation. Much of this training can be done in your own time as on-line courses. You may also be asked to attend training workshops.

### Volunteer workers personal accident insurance

Volunteers engaged by Peppercorn are covered by our Personal Accident Insurance Policy. This means that if you are involved in an accident while carrying out voluntary work for Peppercorn, or you travelling to or from a client or a Peppercorn workplace, you are covered for injury and death. You can ask the Finance Manager for more details about the coverage of our Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance Policy.

### Public liability insurance

Volunteers who are engaged by Peppercorn in voluntary work are covered by Peppercorn's Public Liability Insurance Policy. Volunteers must be between 16 years and 75 years of age to be covered by insurance.

### Reimbursement for expenses

You will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses because of your service as a Volunteer for Peppercorn. We will need to see receipts, and the expense must be pre-approved.

## Workplace Health & Safety

Peppercorn is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe workplace. Peppercorn is committed to protecting its workers, volunteers and visitors from the risk of injury or illness in the workplace. We want you to perform your duties and role with care and thinking ahead to ensure the best possible result. Doing what you can to prevent an incident is the first and best response to promote safety at work.

### Your responsibilities for safety at work

As a Volunteer at the organisation, you have a responsibility to:

- Take all reasonable care to ensure your own safety and health and that of others, and exercise a duty of care to clients, the public and other employees
- Participate in the development of a safe and healthy workplace and cooperate with management in fulfilling Work Health Safety obligations.
- Follow all prescribed work policies, procedures & rules at your workplace, especially those designed to ensure your safety at work.
- Report all accidents, injuries, near accidents and unsafe conditions to your manager, or to the Corporate Administration Officer, and arrange for prompt first aid for all injuries, no matter how minor.
- Complete an Accident & Injury Report as soon as possible to help minimise the chances of similar hazards or incidents arising in the future.

### Register of hours

As part of our Work Health and Safety practices, you will be required to keep a record of when you commence your volunteer service hours and when you finish. We have various systems depending on the program. Sometimes you will be able to do this by SMS; sometimes you will need to physically sign an attendance sheet.

We also use this information to ensure your safety and document when you are covered by our insurance, report to our Board and community about the number of volunteers who have served with Peppercorn, the total number of labour hours provided, and the estimated labour value contributed to our programs.

## Working well with others

Peppercorn has many resources to help you work well with others.

You can talk to your manager or read the *Code of Conduct and Ethics Guidebook* (the complete version given to employees) to get more detailed guidance on:

- Understanding Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk
- Preventing harassment and discrimination
- Preventing workplace bullying
- Managing abusive behaviour from clients or the public
- What to do when there are complaints and disputes between workers
- What to do when clients want to give you gifts

Volunteers will also be able to complete online training modules such as:

- Introduction to Ageing
- Introduction to Dementia
- Introduction to Disability
- Abuse in Disability Services
- Understanding Behaviour
- Managing Behaviours of Concern
- Manual Handling in Aged Care and Disability Care
- Therapeutic Relationships and Professional Boundaries
- Person Centred Care & Empowerment

## Disability awareness

When interacting with a person with a disability, focus on the person, not the disability, and always ask if assistance is required. Don't assume that they need your help. Respect and effective communication skills are important aspects of our work.

## Working with frail aged or people with dementia

You may choose a role where you will work with someone who is old and frail, and they may even have early signs of dementia. Even though they might need assistance using a walking frame or wheelchair, again don't assume they need your help. For these roles you will need to show:

- Patience – older people just don't move as fast as you
- Respect – old age doesn't stop a person from having valid opinions and feelings
- Support – allowing an older person independence, choice and control over their life, and encouraging them to make their own decisions.

## Supervision and Support

You can expect Peppercorn to provide you with regular supervision and support where you can discuss aspects of your role and how well you are performing your duties. See the *Support Recognition and Performance Management Policy* for further details.

## Hearing your voice

Every year we will give you an opportunity to tell us about your volunteer experience at Peppercorn through the Annual Volunteer Survey. We will also listen to your feedback throughout the year in regular supervision sessions. We look forward to hearing from you how we can improve the experience of volunteers at Peppercorn.

You can also provide feedback and suggestions during supervision sessions, or at any time by sending an email direct to the Corporate Administrator [frontdesk@psinc.com.au](mailto:frontdesk@psinc.com.au)

## Peppercorn Contact Information

Corporate Administrator	Kristine Cooper	4587 0222
LINCS Volunteer Coordinator	Annette Price	4504 7009
HLLC Community Development	Khrise Craig	4578 2072
Children & Families Manager	Meigan Williams	4577 9804
Preschools Coordinator	Nicole Scott	4575 0252
Community Transport Coordinator	Dianne Pausey	4578 0274
Operations Manager	Sharon Fisher	4587 8146
Executive Officer	Andrew Tuck	4545 2549

## About Peppercorn Services Inc.

Peppercorn Services Inc. is an incorporated organisation governed by a Board of Management. It was established by Hawkesbury City Council in March 2001. Peppercorn is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Hawkesbury City Council has delegated to Peppercorn the responsibility for managing and operating Council's externally funded community services.

Peppercorn holds several contracts separate to Council. Peppercorn provides a range of services for Hawkesbury residents, with a focus on disadvantaged, vulnerable, or geographically and socially isolated groups within the community.

The Peppercorn administrative centre is located at Peppercorn Place, Windsor. Peppercorn's services are delivered from more than half a dozen locations around the Hawkesbury.

Peppercorn has established several service partnerships with other agencies and works with its partners to strengthen and improve local services.

Federal, State and Local Government Departments provide funding towards the delivery of Peppercorn's programs:

- Commonwealth Department of Health
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services
- NSW Department of Family & Community Services
- NSW Health
- Transport for NSW
- NSW Department of Education
- Hawkesbury City Council

Individual donors, corporate sponsors and philanthropic grants further support the work of Peppercorn.

## Our Vision, Mission and Values

Peppercorn's Vision and Mission reflects the key intent for Community in Hawkesbury City Council's *Community Strategic Plan*: "Partner with our community and key service providers to deliver outcomes that support a connected, healthy and inclusive community."

### Our Vision

A connected, healthy and inclusive Hawkesbury

### Our Mission

Reducing social isolation, maximising participation

### Our Values

Community: We value and promote local people, communities, resources and partnerships

Opportunity: We value and promote opportunities for everyone to participate in a healthy community

Service: We value flexible and responsive services that meet the changing needs and expectations of our community

Learning: We value learning and trying different approaches to strengthen vulnerable communities

Leadership: We value the respect and trust of our community and seek to lead for the benefit of others

## Our Strategy

Peppercorn's has developed a strategy to achieve this Vision. It focuses on four strategic goals:

- A. Building stronger, inclusive, cohesive communities
- B. Providing flexible services that adapt to changing community need
- C. Encouraging participation in community, cultural and civic life
- D. Supporting access and equity to services that strengthen wellbeing

You can learn more about our Strategy, these goals and the initiatives we are working on by reading the *Peppercorn Services Operational Plan 2018-2020*.

## Take the next step!

We trust that this Handbook has provided enough information for you to come and join our team as a volunteer at Peppercorn.

If you want to discuss any of the Volunteer Designated Positions in detail, then please call Front Desk Reception at Peppercorn Place on 4587 0222.

Detailed role descriptions for each of the Volunteer Designated Positions can be downloaded from our website or call/email Front Desk and we will send the role description to you.

When you have read the role description, please fill in the Application Form and other details and we can get this process started.

We look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you to our team.

Together, we can make the Hawkesbury a connected, safe and inclusive community.



Andrew Tuck  
Executive Officer  
April 2019

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