

VOLUNTARY WORK CAN BE WORTHWHILE!

WHAT CAN I GAIN FROM DOING VOLUNTARY WORK?

You can develop work force skills and contacts through voluntary work. It may help improve self-confidence and you'll also be helping the community.

WHAT TYPES OF VOLUNTARY WORK CAN I DO?

The types of voluntary work you may choose to do will depend on your skills and interests and may include:

- Child care
- Aged care
- Support for families
- Hospital visiting
- Preparing meals
- Coaching
- Sporting events
- Entertainment
- Retail
- Education assistance
- Office work
- Telephone counselling
- Financial counselling
- Museum guiding
- Bush regeneration
- Manual labour
- Marketing
- Hospitality

There are many more areas of voluntary work available.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

There are some real benefits if you do voluntary work:

- Become actively involved in the community
- Build your confidence
- Feel needed in the community
- Meet people and develop social skills
- Share in community life
- Make a difference
- Help someone else
- Develop personal skills
- Develop work skills
- Learn new skills
- Gain valuable job experience
- Develop contacts which may lead to paid job placements

WHERE CAN I DO VOLUNTARY WORK?

You can do voluntary work with any 'not for profit' community based organisation.

Volunteer Centres in each State can help you find work suited to your skills and interests. You can also access a free referral and placement service that will assist you in finding volunteer positions. Your local Centrelink office can advise you how to contact these centres and give you information about the types of community organisations that are approved for volunteering.

In Queensland, a good place to start is "*Volunteering Queensland*".

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Email: volqld@powerup.com.au

www.volunteeringqueensland.org.au

HOW CAN I DO VOLUNTARY WORK?

There are two ways you can do voluntary work

1. *Voluntary work while looking for paid work.*

You can do voluntary work without approval from Centrelink for between 1 and 20 hours per week while you continue to look for paid work and lodge your *Application for Payment forms*.

2. *Voluntary work instead of looking for paid work (approved voluntary work).*

You can do voluntary work for 32 hours or more per fortnight instead of having to look for paid employment. This type of voluntary work needs to be approved by Centrelink. The length of time you can undertake this type of work will depend on your age and how long you have been unemployed, as shown in the table below. If you want to do more voluntary work outside these limits, you'll need to include it in an activity agreement.

Age	Time on Benefit	Limits for approved voluntary work
Under 50	3-12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 6 fortnights in the first 12 months of income support – no activity agreement required▪ Longer periods possible in special circumstances where the voluntary work would improve employment prospects – activity agreement required
	More than 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Activity agreement required for the period of the agreement
50 and over	Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Voluntary work for an unlimited duration, or a combination of voluntary and paid work amounting to at least 40 hours a fortnight for an unlimited duration.