



VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

SERVICE NAME: Ashburton Support Services

POSITION TITLE: Gardening Assistant

Address: 296 High St, Ashburton

Ashburton Support Services provides a range of services to frail, elderly people and mature-aged people with a disability. The organisation aims to provide an integrated range of services to enable clients to remain living independently in the community.

Position objective:

Many people, as they grow too frail to maintain their gardens, go through a grieving process over for the loss of their skills and abilities as well as the deterioration of their treasured gardens, which once gave them so much pleasure. Being able to maintain their gardens with the support of volunteers is an important part of maintaining their quality of life. Towards that end, Ashburton Support Services aims to provide occasional gardening support to frail elderly people and people with a disability through the involvement of volunteers who will undertake light gardening tasks.

No. of hours Involved: 1 ½ -2 hrs per session

Times: To be negotiated with clients

Frequency: Weekly, fortnightly or monthly

Tasks/Duties Involved:

Weeding, digging, light pruning, planting, sweeping paths etc. Volunteers are asked to be flexible in their approach to client's gardening needs but not to undertake any major projects or landscaping tasks. Volunteers are also not expected to do any heavy lifting or climbing.

Equipment Needed:

- Clients are asked to provide equipment appropriate for the tasks needed.
- All equipment should be in a safe and working condition.
- Volunteers are requested to wear sun hats, sunscreen, protective gloves and heavy shoes or boots.
- Volunteer insurance cover is provided by Department of Human Services. (This does not cover your car.)

Volunteer Alliance

296 High St, Ashburton, Vic, 3147

Ph: 03 9885 3815

Fx: 03 9885 1239

Email: volunteeralliance@ashburtonsupportservices.com

Web: <http://volunteeralliance.cjb.net/>



Skills/Qualifications/Experience Needed

Physically fit people who are interested in working outdoors.

The ability to work with elderly people and to respect their needs and ways of working is also essential.

Knowledge of plants and good gardening practices would be an advantage.

Reimbursement For Out Of Pocket Expenses

All costs for plants or equipment are to be met by the client. If a volunteer is requested by the client to purchase plants or equipment, prior authorisation from the service is required.

Receipts for goods will be needed to obtain reimbursement from the client.

Structure / Support

Ashburton Support Services is a non-profit organisation, which is managed by a Board of Directors. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for all matters relating to staff and volunteers. Volunteers are an integral part of the work team and should be treated with respect and dignity at all times.

Ashburton Support Services has ultimate responsibility for the welfare and safety of clients and volunteers. Programmes organised by the service, have to be documented so that at all times we are aware of who is receiving a service and from whom. Arrangements must not be changed without prior consent of the relevant staff member and the completion of the documentation required.

The organisation also has a responsibility to provide a safe work environment for volunteers and to ensure that they are covered by insurance should anything untoward happen. To this end, in line with the organisation's policy and procedures, all arrangements for services must be made through the office. It is not incumbent upon volunteers to take bookings and/or organise times for services.

Volunteers must at all times be responsive to staff directions regarding client care and carry out all lawful instructions. If, as a volunteer, you are unhappy with any direction given by staff, the direction should be complied with at the time, in the best interest of the client and the issue referred at the earliest possible appropriate time, to the Chief Executive Office for resolution. The Volunteer Alliance Coordinator is responsible for volunteer support and training. Should you have any needs, concerns or issues relating to job satisfaction, please contact her.

Pre-Start Conditions/ Training Required

- Overview of safe work practices about digging and lifting.
- Police Check required
- There is a trial period of three sessions where volunteers and the service can evaluate whether they wish to go ahead with a commitment/confirmation.



WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

Ashburton Support Services is committed to safety. The achievement of this objective is a shared responsibility of all staff, clients and volunteers.

All volunteers should endeavour to undertake activities in a manner which creates a safe work place by planning and working in a way that reduces the risk of harm to themselves and others.

CAN WE DO IT BETTER?
Please let us know immediately of any safety concerns or issues.

Duty of Care

All persons have a duty of care in how they behave towards others. At a minimum, this care requires you to:

- Not put yourself or others at risk by poor behaviour or work practices.
- Volunteers are not permitted to work at times when the temperature is over 35°.
- Volunteers are also requested not to work at any time when they feel stressed by heat.
- Volunteers will need to take their own supply of water and to have frequent drinks on hot days.
- Volunteers are not expected to work in the rain.
- Sessions are expected to take 1½ to 2 hours. If you choose to stay a little longer to finish a particular task, make sure you take a break & refreshment.
- Volunteers will need to supply their own food & drinks (no alcohol).
- A general guide for working safely is not to undertake anything where you have to use force or strength to accomplish the task.
- Do not do any single repetitive movement for more than 20 minutes at a time.
- Bend your knees, keep your spine straight and move your feet to turn - do not twist.
- Poisons Number is 000 if you have an allergic reactions to a plant.

What to do in an Emergency

Ring 000 and answer questions asked of you by the operator ie

- Your name
- Type of emergency and its location
- What was happening

Help others only if it is safe to do so.

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Injuries

All injuries must be reported to Ashburton Support Services Coordinator. Any injury or accident that happens to yourself or a client must be recorded on an incident/accident form and signed off by the Chief Executive Officer.

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment should always be used when gardening and, where relevant, in other volunteer activities, as this reduces the risk of injury.

Protective equipment could include the following:

- Good sturdy gardening shoes that fully enclose the feet.
- Gardening gloves to protect hands from cuts, spider and insect bites etc.

Volunteers are responsible for providing their own personal protective equipment and it is strongly recommended that you use it to protect yourself from injury.

Working at heights

While undertaking volunteer activities such as gardening, it is recommended that you refrain from working at heights over 1 metre. High work should be performed by trained personnel who have the appropriate equipment, ie suitable and safe ladders, cherry pickers etc.

Drugs & Alcohol

Volunteers should never be under the influence of alcohol or in possession of illegal drugs whilst undertaking volunteer activities.

Horseplay or Bullying

Horseplay or bullying activities are not acceptable behaviors and are not to be conducted whilst undertaking volunteer activities.

Manual Handling

Lifting safely requires you to be aware of the position of your spine.

- Bend forward from your hips and not your back.
- Bend your knees not your back.
- Keep your bottom out and chest up.
- Take time to practise safe lifting techniques.

Lifting correctly is a long term solution to preventing back pain.

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If you are not lifting correctly you are not lifting safely.

PRACTISE STOPPING

A high risk activity is any repetitive or sustained activity that requires twisting, bending, holding your hands above your head, pulling, pushing or using force for more than thirty seconds at a time or that needs to be done more than twice a minute.

For instance, if you are weeding, raking, carrying a weight with one hand etc these are high risk activities so you must STOP frequently and take breaks regularly

Safe manual handling principles apply to other activities (see attached hand out).

Booklets are available ie

- Back Pain a Gardeners Choice
- Back Pain Your Choice at Home

As well as others on the internet: www.spineinstitute.com.au

Housekeeping

After performing volunteer activities, ie gardening, it is important to tidy the area and place waste in the appropriate bins, trailers etc.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER?

**Please let us know immediately of any
safety concerns or issues.**