



Support Worker Position Description

Position Title	Support Worker
Responsible Council	NSW State Council- Support Services
Reports To	Senior Support Worker
Base Location	Freeman House, Armidale

Primary position objective The Support Worker provides quality services underpinned by best practice principles to clients of the Freeman House residential rehabilitation and homelessness services, and New England Outreach clients. Primary duties of the Support Worker include monitoring client safety and wellbeing, supporting case management processes by ensuring treatment is supported out of hours, administrative and operational duties, and keeping other workers informed of significant events. In addition, the Support Worker provides out of hours telephone support for clients of the New England Drug and Alcohol Outreach program.

St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a member and volunteer based organisation that has been assisting people experiencing disadvantage in NSW for more than 130 years.

The Society was founded by a 20 year old man named Frederic Ozanam in 1833, who with a group of friends, wanted to make a difference to the poverty and disadvantage that he saw around him in post-Revolution France. Leading by example and with boundless energy, Frederic started what is now a world-wide movement in just 20 short years. The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has around 16,000 members and volunteers and 1,400 staff. Our local member networks, referred to as Conferences, are present in over 420 communities across NSW.

Our members and volunteers provide assistance to people experiencing disadvantage including food parcels and vouchers, financial assistance, assistance with energy bills and other debt, budget counselling and the provision of other material items such as furniture, clothing and bedding and any other household items. Importantly, our members also provide vital emotional support and referral services as needed.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a leading provider of community support services and has close to 100 Special Works across the State in the areas of homelessness, mental health, disability, financial counselling, supported accommodation, food provision, refugees and migrants and addiction counselling.

Our work is funded by all levels of government, the generous support we receive from the community and our 250 Retail Centres across NSW.

Organisational Overview

SVDP NSW Support Services provides support for people experiencing need in NSW. It is a Special Work of the St Vincent de Paul Society of NSW and is comprised of more than 40 different programs across the state. SVDP NSW Support Services provides programs across areas including drug and alcohol, gambling, homelessness, disability, mental health, community development and refugee support.

Program Overview

Freeman House and its associated programs are committed to minimising the harm related to homelessness, drug and alcohol use, mental health, cognitive impairment, contact with the criminal justice system and other associated issues and is part of the St Vincent de Paul NSW Specialist Drug and Alcohol Network, which includes the Freeman House Centre in Armidale, the New England Drug and Alcohol Outreach Program, the Maayu Mali centre in Moree, Rendu House Day Program in Campbelltown and Rendu House AOD Services in South West Sydney. SVDP NSW is committed to providing high quality, innovative and flexible responses to drug and alcohol, homelessness and other areas of complex need in the New England region.

The nature and level of support differs according to individual needs, with a range of services offered including drug and alcohol case management and counselling in the community and in residential rehabilitation, access to psychological and psychiatric care, education and therapeutic group work, harm minimisation, living skills, withdrawal management and holistic health care and homelessness case management.

Duties and Responsibilities

The role of the Support Worker is to provide quality services underpinned by best practice principles to clients of the Freeman House residential rehabilitation and homelessness services. Primary duties of the Support Worker include monitoring client safety and wellbeing, supporting case management processes by ensuring treatment is supported out of hours, administrative and operational duties, and keeping other workers informed of significant events. All interactions between Support Worker and client are based on the underpinning St Vincent de Paul Support Services client centred, trauma informed framework.

The Support Worker participates in team case discussion and attends and participates in learning and development in line with organisation expectations.

Residential Duties

- General care-taking and client support during the late afternoon/evening, as such providing an integral linkage between case work and overnight support work.
- Maintaining the cleanliness, safety and other WHS requirements in the facility, and otherwise assisting and supporting the safety and wellbeing of residential clients by:
 - maintaining all other Work Health and Safety requirements as per the Work Health and Safety Policy.
 - ensuring buildings and grounds are kept clean and tidy and free from obstruction;
 - checking rooms after clients have been discharged to ensure they are clean and tidy and that all rubbish has been removed; and
 - being alert to any alcohol or drug usage and dealing with it appropriately and immediately.
- Transporting of clients as required.

Client Services

- Initial reception of clients and general orientation to the service.
- Supervision and support of clients after hours and on weekends and public holidays and participating in the general day to day welfare of clients, which will involve all aspects of their physical and emotional welfare, and may include:
 - providing some advice, support, mediation and conflict resolution.
 - ensuring that clients adhere to the rules and responsibilities relating to being at Freeman House with a particular emphasis on ensuring a safe and supportive environment exists.
 - ensuring that the rights and responsibilities of clients are upheld by staff, other residents and visitors.
 - discharging clients after hours in accordance with the policies and procedures of Freeman House.
 - arranging and/or providing transport when necessary.
 - where appropriate and in line with goals and directions of agreed individual case plans, referring clients to other agencies.
 - conducting random drug testing as necessary, including of all clients on arrival.
 - undertaking room checks and searches as required.
 - Collection of resident statistical data as required.
 - Oversight of evacuations in emergencies.
 - Undertaking after-hours assessment and admissions.
 - Assisting in the preparation, planning and delivery of group treatment
- Conducting out of hours telephone support to clients of the New England Outreach program.

Policy, Continuous Improvement and Planning

- Participating in regular reviews of the operations of Freeman House.
- Communicating any areas where improvement may be possible or where unnecessary risk could be reduced or removed; working with other team members to design improvement strategies; and implementing resulting improvements and changes in the operations of Freeman House as directed.
- Maintaining a broad understanding of state and federal government policies that have a direct impact on the delivery of services to homeless/addicted people and assisting management in responses to such government review or changes as directed.

Community Development

- Maintaining good relationships with other bodies that interact with Freeman House and its clients, including adherence to agreements and procedures aimed at minimising adverse impacts on the welfare of clients and staff.
- Networking with other agencies as required.

Other Duties

- Participating in learning and development in line with needs of the service.
- Working in a 'risk management' framework to ensure the safety and security of program participants and staff, including overseeing fire drills, evacuations and other safety procedures.
- Additional duties as directed/required

Essential Criteria

- Demonstrated ability to maintain an ethical, non-judgmental, attitude towards clients and fellow staff.
- A relevant qualification in the Alcohol and Other Drug / Mental Health field (at least at Certificate IV level), or approved equivalent, or willingness to gain Certificate IV qualifications within 12 months of employment.
- Experience in dealing with challenging behaviours and crisis in a calm and considered manner.
- The ability to establish clear lines of responsibility and approach problem situation creatively, flexibly and with a high degree of initiative.
- Demonstrated ability to work as part of a team and to work independently and unsupervised.
- Demonstrated ability to work within organisational policy, procedures and other directions.
- Willingness to work within the ethos of the St Vincent de Paul Society,
- Sound knowledge of WHS legislation as it relates to the workplace.
- Excellent computer and literacy skills including experience in computerised databases.
- Ability and willingness to work evenings and weekends.
- A current, unencumbered Drivers Licence and willingness to upgrade to an LR licence.

Desired Criteria

- Previous experience working for a Drug and Alcohol / Mental Health rehabilitation service or similar.
- Experience or qualifications in case work and/or case management.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer