

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Saturday, 29 August 2020

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS AND VICTORIANS THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

The Victorian Government is connecting Victorian volunteers with Victorians who need help, with a new online platform to match volunteers to roles where their skills are best suited.

'*We Volunteer*' is open for registration from today and will strengthen the supply of eager, skilled volunteers in local communities and support recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

Many have found themselves needing extra support and connection during the pandemic, and Victorians have risen to the challenge, with volunteers from all walks of life making simple – yet meaningful – contributions, whether its picking up the phone and having a chat, dropping off food or teaching people how to video call their loved ones.

Now, the *We Volunteer* portal provides a platform where people looking for volunteer roles can register their skills and search for roles that meet their interests – with many of these roles able to be performed from home.

Volunteer organisations will also be invited to sign-up to the portal and use it to make call-outs for volunteers needed on their various projects.

Its critical essential volunteers working through the pandemic are safe and supported, and have the information and training they need – that's why the Government will fund 12 volunteer support organisations through Volunteering Victoria to help design volunteer roles and provide advice on induction, training and management.

The Government is also investing \$2 million to boost the Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) initiative.

CASI is an expansion of the Victorian coronavirus hotline (1800 675 398) and is already supporting people experiencing loneliness or social disconnection by linking them to support services and help in their local area.

To make sure those supports are available, the Government is providing funding to every local council in the state to boost the capacity of their local community organisations to support people in need.

The initiative is a partnership with the Australian Red Cross, whose volunteers have been trained in psychological first aid to provide emotional support and help to callers who may be distressed or anxious.

For more information and to access the new *We Volunteer* portal please visit wevolunteer.org.au.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Community by community, street by street, home by home, this is about building connection."

"We want to match those who can help with those who need it – whether that's dropping off a food parcel, a quick chat on the phone or a lesson on how to Facetime with loved ones."

Quote attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Luke Donnellan

"Through good times and bad, Victorians care about each other. 'We Volunteer' will make it easier for our incredible volunteers to continue to support Victorians in need."

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