
VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE	Independent Person (IP) Volunteer
STATUS	Volunteer
REPORTS TO	Designated YRIPP Regional Project Officer
CONTACT	Project Officer, Volunteer Recruitment and Training
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	9340 3777

PROGRAM AREA

YRIPP is the Youth Referral and Independent Person Program. YRIPP delivers a high quality system of adult volunteers called “Independent Persons” who attend police interviews with young people in police custody when a parent or guardian is not available. YRIPP also seeks to divert young people from future offending through early intervention at the point of police contact.

YRIPP is supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by the Centre for Multicultural Youth and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria in partnership with community legal centres, UnitingCare and Victoria Police.

YRIPP is guided by an external reference group made up of a diverse range of stakeholders with an interest in youth and crime prevention issues.

YRIPP provides:

- Volunteer Independent Persons to attend Victorian police stations 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Up-to-date training and ongoing support for volunteer Independent Persons.
- Information about helpful support services for young people.
- Resources about the youth justice system and support services for police and parents.
- Access to 24-hour telephone legal advice for young people in police custody, provided by lawyers from Victoria Legal Aid.
- Evidence based policy advice, advocacy and assistance to improve the criminal justice system for young people.

YRIPP began in 2004 and operates in police stations throughout Victoria. YRIPP provides volunteer Independent Persons to over 3000 police interviews with young people per year. This makes an important contribution to increased access to justice for young people. YRIPP depends on the generosity of volunteers; without their energy, patience and commitment YRIPP could not exist as it does today.

POSITION SUMMARY

Volunteer IPs attend police interviews with young people under 18 years at designated police stations around Victoria. The IP is there to protect the young person from the disadvantage inherent in their age and to ensure that the young person understands what is happening to them and why. The responsibilities of the Independent Person are to:

- Provide support for the young person and assist to reduce any apprehension the young person may feel, particularly during questioning.
- Ensure that the young person's evidence is accurately recorded so as to be able to present an accurate record of the interview at any court proceedings.
- Facilitate communication between the young person and the police, if required.
- Ensure that the young person understands their legal rights and the processes available to them and that you have a role in protecting their rights.
- Observe whether the police are acting properly, fairly and with respect for the rights of the detained young person.
- Take appropriate action (based on your observations and the young person's wishes) if it appears the police are not acting properly, fairly and with respect for the rights of the young person.
- Offer information about and referral to local support services that may be able to help the young person, as appropriate.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

Under the direction of a YRIPP Regional Officer, an Independent Person (IP) will:

1. Perform the role of the IP in accordance with all program policies and procedures as set out in the Independent Person Manual and training sessions.
2. Comply with all training and assessment requirements including an initial training program (approx. 20 hours) and ongoing training (minimum of one session each year).
3. Commit to being available to attend a police station for one 12 hour shift per week, as required.
4. Attend a rostered police station within 30 minutes, when contacted by YRIPP's call centre during a rostered shift.
5. Provide young people with information about and referral to local support services as appropriate.
6. Complete relevant documentation about each police interview and provide it to the Regional Project Officer within 7 days of each interview.
7. Participate in regular volunteer meetings (minimum one session each year).
8. Participate in regular supervision and performance reviews with the Regional Project Officer.
9. Attend court if required.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. An interest in making a positive contribution to the youth justice process.
2. A fair and balanced attitude towards the police.
3. Able to be reliable in responding to phone calls and attend police stations when rostered and called upon to.
4. An ability to remain non-judgmental about young people and their behaviour.
5. An ability to remain calm but assertive in high pressure situations.
6. An ability to engage with young people including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds.
7. An ability to be self-reflective about own response and actions.
8. A willingness and ability to utilise online training material and regularly update online roster systems.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. IPs are required to be independent of police and the justice process. YRIPP has policies in place that require volunteers to declare and avoid perceived and actual conflicts of interest.
2. Prior to undertaking the YRIPP training program, YRIPP asks all volunteers to make an initial commitment to volunteering with YRIPP for at least 12 months after completing the training.
3. Independent Person volunteers must be able to read and write in English.
4. Independent Person volunteers must have access to their own means of transport that will ensure that they arrive at a police station within 30 minutes of receiving a call from YRIPP's call centre (20 minutes travel time).
5. YRIPP applies Equal Opportunity principles to volunteer recruitment and support.
6. Acceptance as a YRIPP volunteer is subject to the satisfactory completion of a Police Record Check and Working with Children Check (free for volunteers). YRIPP will pay for costs associated with a Police Record Check.
7. In the context of Occupational Health and Safety all volunteers are required to carry out their duties in a manner that does not adversely affect their own health and safety and that of others by reporting all incidents and injuries as well as co-operating with any measures introduced to improve OH&S.
8. In the case of pre-existing Injuries potential volunteers to the program are required to disclose full details of any pre-existing injuries or disease that might be affected by taking up this position.
9. Acceptance into the YRIPP IP training is dependent on two referee checks. Referees must be people who have known the applicant in a professional capacity (preferably a former supervisor).
10. Independent Person volunteers are subject to a probation period of three months, if four call outs are completed during this time, or four call-outs if the volunteer takes more than three months to complete four call-outs.

DOCUMENT REVIEW DETAILS

Version Number: 1
Date Reviewed: January 2014
Date of next Review:

I have read, understood and accept the above position description

Volunteer Name _____

Volunteer Signature _____ **Date** / / _____

Regional Project Officer Name _____

Regional Project Officer Signature _____ **Date** / / _____