

Victorian **protocol** for people who are **homeless** in **public** places

The aim of the *Victorian protocol for people who are homeless in public places* (the Protocol) is to provide a framework for relations between officials and people who are homeless in public places.

The Protocol has been developed to ensure that people who are homeless in public places are treated appropriately and that their rights are respected.

Individual agencies are accountable for service delivery of this protocol.

Underlying Principles

This Protocol is based on the following principles:

- People who are homeless can have complex social, mental and/or physical health needs.
- All people have a right to be in public places, at the same time respecting the right of local communities to live in a safe and peaceful environment.
- All people have a right to participate in public activities or events.
- People who work in areas where their responsibilities are likely to bring them into contact with people who are homeless will receive sufficient information to assist with referral to appropriate services if needed.
- In the conduct of their normal statutory obligations, Police and other authorities may need to seek further information or personal details from any member of the public.

If you encounter a person who is, or appears to be, homeless, you should only respond if:

- **they request assistance;**
- **they appear distressed or in need of assistance;**
- **they are sheltering in circumstances that threaten the health and safety of themselves and/or others (eg: in derelict buildings);**
- **they are unaccompanied children who appear to be under the age of 15;***
- **their behaviour threatens their safety or the safety and security of people around them;**
- **their behaviour is likely to result in damage to property or to the environment;**
- **their safety is threatened by others.**

* In the first instance, contact should be attempted with parent/s or guardian, or the Child Protection Crisis Line, tel: 131 278 toll free.

Homelessness Assistance in inner Melbourne

If people who are homeless require assistance, there are local government and state-funded services to help them. The following assistance is available in inner metropolitan Melbourne:

- **HomeGround** (Transitional Housing and Housing Information & Referral)
1A/68 Oxford Street Collingwood
Tel: 9417 2500 or toll free 1800 509 387
- **St Kilda Crisis Centre** (24-hour emergency housing response)
29 Grey Street St Kilda
Tel: 9536 7777 or toll free 1800 627 727
- **Melbourne Youth Support Service** (7-days a week service providing information, support and referral for young people aged 15-25 years old)
19 King Street Melbourne
Tel: 9614 3688 or toll free 1800 800 531
- **Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service** (24-hour family violence referral service for women)
Tel: 9373 0123 or toll free 1800 015 188

Interpreting service assistance is available through VITS LanguageLink, tel: 9280 1955

You can:

- contact services directly on behalf of the person/s;
- provide advice or information including location of available services;
- provide a contact point that the person who is homeless can either call or go to for further advice or help.

Endorsing Agencies:

Office of Commonwealth Games Coordination; Department of Human Services; Victoria Police; City of Melbourne; City of Port Phillip; City of Stonnington; City of Yarra, Department of Justice; Council to Homeless Persons; Community Housing Federation of Victoria; Domestic Violence Victoria

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this document is to provide information to support continuity of assistance to people who are homeless during the Commonwealth Games in March 2006.

The Victorian Government is providing more than \$56 million for homelessness assistance services in 2005-06. Responses include 24 hour short-term crisis accommodation, housing information and referral advice, transitional housing, and support services.

This information has been produced as part of a collaborative planning process between homelessness agencies in metropolitan Melbourne and metropolitan Councils, facilitated by the Council to Homeless Persons and supported by the Victorian Government. It aims to ensure that people who are in housing crisis during the Games receive appropriate assistance.

Our plan covers:

- Continuity of homeless assistance during the Games
- Co-ordinated metropolitan and regional Victorian responses that reflect local service arrangements
- Access to crisis accommodation and information
- A protocol guiding officials who encounter people who are homeless in public places

The plan includes 'pre-booked' accommodation to provide additional emergency housing options for the duration of the Games. This will include accommodation for families, couples and single people.

We wish to acknowledge the Victorian Government and the Department of Human Services' Office of Housing for providing funding and support to develop this information booklet.

THE PROTOCOL

Candy Broad MLC, the Minister for Housing, and Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon, have endorsed a protocol developed through collaboration with Victoria Police, community sector agencies, Melbourne City Council, and other Local Government authorities, as well as State Government departments.

The protocol provides a framework for relations between police and other officials with people who are homeless in public places. It was developed to ensure people are treated appropriately and their rights are respected. The protocol will apply during and beyond the time of the Games.

A plan co-ordinating access to accommodation is now in place. This approach will operate until the end of the Games. (late March)

CO-ORDINATED ACCOMMODATION APPROACH

In metropolitan Melbourne, a network of six designated services linked to a 1 800 number will co-ordinate information and referral requests both during and after business hours, including weekends.

In regional Victoria, local plans provide a complementary response.

Please see following pages for more detail.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local Government has a key role in the hosting the Games. The City of Melbourne and other municipalities are welcoming international competitors and guests, local and interstate visitors, and supporting sporting and cultural events.

Local Government offices can be contacted for assistance. The City of Melbourne can be contacted on 9658 9658. Other Council offices can be reached via the Central Contact Number - 1800 509 387.



operational in the Games period,
mid-February to 31st March

Central Contact (business hours)

Toll free **1800 509 387**
or 9417 2500

Central Contact (after hours)

Toll free **1800 509 387**
1800 627 727 or 9536 7777

For an interpreter, contact
LanguageLink on 9280 1955

KEY SERVICES FOR METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

These agencies are the main co-ordination points for accommodation assistance during the Games.

They can provide information on available services including the additional 'pre-booked' accommodation available for the Games period.

These agencies can refer clients to other housing and support services in their local areas, as follows:

CBD and INNER METROPOLITAN

HomeGround Services
1800 509 387 or 9417 2500
68 Oxford Street Collingwood
and
9537 7711
122 Chapel Street St Kilda

WESTERN METROPOLITAN

MetroWest
9689 2777
218 Nicholson Street Footscray

NORTHERN METROPOLITAN

St Vincent de Paul
9300 2977
163-5 Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy

EASTERN METROPOLITAN

Salvation Army Eastcare
1800 811 916 or 9851 7800
16 Church Street Hawthorn

SOUTHERN METROPOLITAN

Hanover Welfare Services
9556 5700
1/11 Chesterville Road Cheltenham
and
1800 183 183 or 9792 0750
224 Thomas Street Dandenong
24 hour Assistance

AFTER HOURS RESPONSE

For assistance outside business hours, the central 1800 number will be directed to the after hours co-ordinating agency:

St Kilda Crisis Centre
1800 509 387 or 1800 627 727
29 Grey St St Kilda

CRISIS ACCOMMODATION

The following agencies are staffed 24 hours a day, and provide short-term crisis accommodation. They also provide a range of complementary advice and support services.

St Kilda Crisis Centre
1800 627 727 or 9536 7777
Accommodation: Self-referral.
Single men, women and couples.
Short term.
29 Grey Street
St Kilda

Flagstaff
Accommodation: Single men, short term. No self-referrals.
Cnr King and Roden Streets
West Melbourne

Referral is via **HomeGround Services** (business hours)
9417 2500 or 1800 509 387
OR
St Kilda Crisis Centre (after hours)
1800 627 727

REGIONAL VICTORIA

Each Department of Human Services regional office will co-ordinate their local response and have developed their own Games accommodation response.

The point of contact for each DHS region is as follows:

Barwon South Western	5226 3844
Gippsland	5133 0200
Grampians	5352 0116
Hume	5761 1205
Loddon Mallee	5444 9931

Hanover Southbank
9699 4566 (24 hours)
Accommodation: Self-referral for single men, women and couples, short term.
52 Haig St
South Melbourne

Ozanam House
Accommodation: For men over 18. Short term. Self-referral after hours only.
179 Flemington Rd
North Melbourne

Referral is via **St Vincent De Paul Transitional Housing**
9300 2977 (business hours) or 9329 5100 (after hours)

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Transitional support services provide medium to long-term support to people who are homeless. Support includes linking people into community services and assistance with personal and emotional issues. Many transitional support services are targeted to meet the needs of particular groups including young people, single adults, women escaping domestic violence, and families.

Listed below are the major transitional support agencies in each region.

NORTHERN REGION

WISHIN
260a High Street Northcote
9482 4976

Merri Outreach Services
137 Sydney Road Coburg
9383 4988

Plenty Valley CHS: Whittlesea Housing
60 Rufus Street Epping
9409 9222

Salvation Army Crossroads
2/23 Sunset Boulevard Jacana
9309 6289

SOUTHERN REGION

Hanover Family Services
217 Cecil Street South Melbourne
9696 5044

Hanover Women's Service
346 Dandenong Road St Kilda East
9525 8499

Hanover Young Adults Service
129 Wellington Street St Kilda
9533 6099

Salvation Army: Peninsula Youth and Family Services
37 Ross Smith Ave (East) Frankston
9784 5000

MOIRA: South Directions Youth Service
2a Station Street Moorabin
9531 2000

Southern Family Life
197 Bluff Road Sandringham
9598 2133

Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau
5 Osbourne Avenue Springvale
9546 5255

WAYSS
1/294 - 300 Thomas Street
Dandenong
9791 6111

EASTERN REGION

Anchor Inc
7 - 9 John Street Lilydale
9739 6400

Harrison Community Services
1012 Burwood Highway
Wantima South
9887 1055

Salvation Army Eastcare Services
16 Church Street Hawthorn
9851 7800

Uniting Care Connections
269 Blackburn Road Syndal
9802 7788

WESTERN REGION

Melbourne City Mission
214 Nicholson Street Footscray
9687 4997

Uniting Care: Werribee Support Services
19 Duncan Street Werribee
9742 6452

Wombat Housing and Support Services
191 - 195 Melrose Street North
Melbourne
9320 8444

Westcare Family Housing Service
1 St Andrew Street Sunshine
9364 9744

BayWest Youth Housing
2 Somers Parade Altona
9315 0061

Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services
354 Main Road St Albans
9364 3200

Sunshine Youth Housing
128 Hampshire Road Sunshine
9315 0061

Footscray Youth Housing
222 Nicholson Street Footscray
9687 3935

Essendon Youth Accommodation
20a Holmes Road Moonee Ponds
9375 2642

OTHER SERVICES

Emergency Services

Police 000
Ambulance 000
Fire Brigade 000
All 24 hours

Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)

BH Crisis line 9344 2210
AH Sexual Assault Crisis Line
1800 806 292
Counselling and Support Line
provides confidential telephone
counselling, information and referral.

Children and Young People

Melbourne Youth Support Service (MYSS)

9614 3688 or 1800 800 531
(Frontyard Services)
19 King Street, Melbourne
Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-8pm, weekends
and public holidays 10am-6pm.
MYSS can help with crisis and medium
to long term accommodation,
legal issues, drug and alcohol issues,
health, food and material aid as well as
training and employment.
For 15 to 25 year olds.

Child Protection

Unaccompanied children under the age
of 15 should be referred to their parents
or guardians. However, where there are
issues of risk, refer to the four regional
offices listed below, or to the Centre
Against Sexual Assault (CASA).

During business hours:

North metro: 9479 0133
East metro: 1300 360 391
South metro: 1300 655 795
West metro: 1300 369 536
After hours 13 12 78

Women Specific

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service

1800 015 188 or 9373 0123 (24 hours)
This is a 24-hour, seven days a week,
confidential service providing
information, support and access to
safe accommodation or refuges
for women and their children.

Women's Information Referral Exchange (WIREF)

1300 134 130
Telephone counselling, information,
referrals and support for Victorian
women. Business hours only.

Health Services

St Vincent's Hospital Emergency Department

Emergency entrance on Princes Street
Fitzroy (enter via Nicholson Street)
24 hours

Living Room Primary Health Service

1800 440 188
7-9 Hosier Lane Melbourne
Business hours only.

Mental Health

Crisis Assessment and Treatment (CAT) teams

Contact your nearest hospital for
details of local services. Provides
crisis intervention and home treatment
as an alternative to hospitalisation for
the seriously mentally ill.

You can also call the central
response number - 1800 509 387 - for
information, advice and/or assistance.

Meals and Practical Support

Ozanam Community Centre
9329 6733
Lunch Mon-Fri 12-1pm
Hours Mon-Fri 9:00- 2:30pm
268 Abbotsford Street North Melbourne

Sacred Heart Mission
9537 1166
Meals: Daily 8:30 to 1:30pm
Material aid: Daily 10-2:00pm
87 Grey Street St Kilda

St Mary's House of Welcome

9417 6437
Meals, showers, social support
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30- 3:30pm (except
Wed- 8:30-2:30), Sat 8:30-11am
Meals: 8:45am, 9:30am, 12:30pm
Morning and afternoon tea 10:30am,
3pm except Wednesdays
165-169 Brunswick Street Fitzroy

Salvation Army Life Centre

9653 3277
Hours: 10-1:00pm
Crisis support, information, referral
and practical assistance.
69 Bourke St Melbourne

Centrelink

131 021
Federal Government offices
responsible for range of income
support services.
Business hours only.

Other Homelessness Services

Royal District Nursing Service - Homeless Persons Program

8327 0100
Outreach to people in rooming houses,
crisis accommodation, hostels, parks
and on the streets. Primary care,
professional nursing care, counselling,
health and social assessments and first
aid.

Homelessness Advocacy Service

1800 066 265
Information and individual support to
people with complaints or problems
regarding homelessness support and
Government funded
accommodation services.

Homeless Person's Legal Clinic (PILCH)

9225 6680
Provides free legal assistance
relating to housing and tenancy, fines,
debts, social security or problems with
Centrelink, victims of crime assistance
and compensation.

Tenants Union of Victoria (TUV)

9416 2577
The Tenancy Union of Victoria provides
information about tenancy rights with
the aim of informing and educating
tenants about their rights. They
represent and speak for the collective
interests of tenants in law and policy
making.

Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)

1300 558 181
Consumer Affairs Victoria can provide
some advice about tenancy and
renting issues.

room for all of us
homelessness responses
during the Games

As Victorian Government Minister responsible for housing and homelessness assistance, I applaud the effort and commitment of Local Governments, community sector organisations, and Victoria Police, who have developed this response for people who are homeless during the period of the Commonwealth Games.

The initiative underpinning this work will have ongoing impact, signalling an important new approach to assist people in need.



Candy Broad, Minister for Housing