

### Host Program Objective

The Host program pairs a child or young person with a disability aged 3+ years and living at home in the southern metropolitan region of Melbourne with a volunteer Host or Hosts.

The Volunteer host provides opportunities to extend the child or young person's social contacts, experiences and friendships through various recreation and social activities, while maintaining a sense of security.

We understand that entrusting the care of your child to a host can be a difficult decision to make. It is very normal to have some anxiety, reservation and possibly guilt when you decide to access respite for your family through the Host Program, but it is a decision that can be very rewarding; for parents and carers, for Host volunteer and especially for young people.

Volunteer hosts can be single people, couples or families over the age of 18 who may or may not have experience with young people with disabilities.

Compatibility is the key to the success of this program. MOIRA carefully considers common interests, lifestyle and flexibility to ensure the successful development of the relationship between the young person and volunteer host.

Volunteers are carefully recruited; MOIRA provides information for parent/carers and ongoing support and training for volunteer hosts

### Who Is Eligible?

Young people who meet the criteria below are eligible to join Moira's Host Program

- Have a disability
- Are aged 3+
- Live in the southern metropolitan regions of Port Phillip, Stonnington, Glen Eira, Bayside or Kingston.
- Live at home with a parent or carer

Please note, young people with ADHD and ADD are not eligible for Home and Community Care (HACC) funded services as directed by the Human Services Standards (HSS).

If you do not meet the criteria for Moira's Host Program, please see below for other organisations which may be able to offer similar support.

Interchange Host Program [www.interchange.com.au](http://www.interchange.com.au)

Extended Families Family Match Program [www.extendedfamilies.org.au](http://www.extendedfamilies.org.au)

Oz Child Recharge Program [www.ozchild.org.au](http://www.ozchild.org.au)

### Recruitment of Volunteer Hosts

Potential volunteers undergo a process of assessment over a number of weeks before they are accepted into the Volunteer Host Program. The Host Assessment procedure includes a number of stages;

**Application Review** - Submitted applications are reviewed by MOIRA. MOIRA will conduct an initial interview over the phone and answer questions regarding the program.

**Interview** – Moira conducts an in-person interview with the potential Host volunteer, finding out more about their experience, lifestyle and motivation for volunteering.

**Referee Check** - Potential volunteer host is required to provide the contact details for two referees, one personal, and one professional.

**Assessment Visit** - MOIRA will arrange a home visit to meet the potential volunteer host, assess the environment and discuss the parent/carer's expectations.

**Security Checks** - All persons over 18 years of age or living at the residential address of the applicant must undergo a police check and a working with children check.



## Training and Support of Volunteer Hosts

Ongoing training is provided for volunteer hosts and includes topics such as;

- The impact of disabilities on families
- Positive Behaviour Support
- Safety Guidelines
- Effective Communication
- First Aid

The Host Program Officer provides ongoing support for all volunteer hosts, and is available during office hours Monday - Friday to discuss any aspect of the Host Program, or answer any questions that may arise.

## Compatibility Process

MOIRA considers a number of factors when finding a compatible volunteer for children on the waiting list for the Host program. Factors may include specific needs, the location in which people reside and availability.

**Step 1** – A MOIRA Program Officer will discuss with the volunteer host a list of children and young people currently on the Host program waiting list that they feel may be suitable to review. The volunteer host will be asked to select up to three services users they feel they would be best suited to.

It should be noted that no identifying information is provided to the volunteer host at this time.

**Step 2** – The Program Officer then discusses the volunteer host's details, with the parent/carer of the selected service user,

**Step 3** – If the parent/carer feels that the volunteer host is appropriate, a time is arranged for an introduction, usually at the child's home, generally with the MOIRA Program Officer present. After the introduction all parties are given time to consider if they would like to continue with the introduction.

**Step 4** – The Program Officer will contact both parties to discuss the outcome of the introduction. If a mutual decision is made to continue with the process a time is arranged for a subsequent visit, usually at the volunteer host's home without the Program Officer.

**Step 5** – Documents relating to the child/young person are then given to the volunteer host including, Indemnity form, further details regarding the child's support needs, Record of Care forms, and Medication forms.

**Step 6** – As the relationship between the parent/carer, service user and volunteer host develops, gradually the duration of the visits may increase. The Program Officer maintains contact to monitor progress during this phase of development.

The hosting arrangement may conclude at any time should either party feel that the program is no longer meeting their needs.

## Ongoing Support

MOIRA provides on-going support to families participating in the Host program and to those on the waiting list by way of regular contact and annual reviews. This is achieved through:

- Review of consumer details.
- Reviewing referral requirements.
- Home visits.
- Email or telephone contact.

For families on the waiting list for the Host Program an annual survey will be sent to families to gauge their interest in remaining on the waiting list. This will ensure the list is kept active and current. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that MOIRA is kept up to date and that any significant changes regarding personal or health information are reported so that the most appropriate service is provided.

## Rights and Responsibilities

HACC Service User's key rights and responsibilities within the HACC Program are:

- The right to respect for their individual human worth and dignity
- The right to be treated with courtesy
- The right to be assessed for access to services without discrimination
- The right to be informed and consulted about available services and other relevant matters
- The right to be part of decisions made about their care
- The right to choose from available alternatives
- The right to pursue any complaint about service provision without retribution
- The right to involve an advocate of their choice.
- The right to receive good quality services.
- The right to privacy and confidentiality, and access to all personal information kept about the consumer.
- To respect the human worth and dignity of the service provider staff and volunteers
- To treat service provider staff and volunteers with courtesy for the results of any decisions they make
- To play their part in helping the service provider to provide them with services
- To provide a safe work environment for staff and volunteers.

## Complaints Procedure

MOIRA's complaints procedure aims to improve the quality of MOIRA as a service provider and employer by;

- making available a simple, responsive and accountable process to deal with complaints,
- publicising the complaints procedure and role relevant to external bodies
- providing information about the procedure in culturally appropriate ways
- analysing complaints and implementing lessons learnt from that process

A complaint may involve Staff, Service Users and/or Volunteers. Complaints occur when one person/party is in dispute or disagreement with the actions of another individual or party.

MOIRA welcomes complaints and people are able to make a complaint without fear of reprisal and with confidence that MOIRA will deal with the complaint in a manner that is sensitive, supportive and non-threatening.

All people have a right to have a representative of their choice, for example a family member, friend or interpreter present at any time during the complaints process.

### Other Resources:

MOIRA Complaints brochure go to <http://www.moira.org.au/resources/general-brochures>  
Disability Services Commissioner at <http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/making-a-complaint>  
Health Services Commissioner (03) 8601 5200

## Privacy and Confidentiality

MOIRA respects the privacy and confidentiality of all service users and their families/carers. MOIRA will endeavour to ensure that all individuals enjoy:

- protection from inappropriate public attention or intrusion,
- being treated with honour, dignity and respect
- confidence that written and spoken information is protected from access and use by unauthorised persons.

MOIRA only collects information that is relevant to effective service delivery. All written, spoken and observed information and documentation, stored in paper form or electronically, is treated professionally and secured appropriately

MOIRA does not seek information about an individual from another service provider without consent (or the consent of the guardian or person responsible).

MOIRA does not disclose information externally to service providers about an individual without their consent (or the consent of guardian/advocate) except:

- non-identifying data required by funding bodies and by government departments for planning purposes,
- where disclosure is required or authorised by law (such as court subpoena or staff testifying under oath),
- where it is reasonable that the disclosure is necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or for a law imposing a fine or for the protection of public revenue
- where it is reasonable that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen serious threat to the life or health of the client, employee or another person.

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while participating as a volunteer. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the Volunteer's relationship with the Agency or other corrective action.

MOIRA are committed to protecting the privacy of personal information that we collect. As an organisation we are bound by the Victorian Privacy Laws, the Health Records Act 2001 and the Information Privacy Act 2000 as well as other laws, which impose specific obligations in regard to handling information.

### MOIRA

- Collects only information we need for a specified purpose.
- Ensures that the person knows why we collect information and how it will be handled.
- Uses and discloses information only for the primary or directly related purpose, or if for another purpose with the person's consent. (unless otherwise authorised by law)
- Stores information securely, protecting it from unauthorised access.
- Retains information for the period authorised by the Public Records Act 1973.
- Provides the person with access to their own information and the right to seek its correction.

Please note that MOIRA is required to pass on some information of the information it collects about the people who receives services under the Home & Community Care (HACC) Program. The information will be used for planning purposes, to ensure that resource levels are adequate and that the right services are available to meet demand. Some of the information we obtain from you will be sent to the Victorian Human Services Standards (HSS) that administers the HACC program. The Department has adopted information privacy principles and uses strict security measures to prevent unauthorised access to database.

The Human Services Standards will forward this information to the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care for statistical purposes. It cannot be used to affect your entitlement or access to HACC or other services



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Families

*"Can I call the Volunteer Host if I need my child looked after for special occasion?"*

Volunteer Hosts are encouraged to be transparent in their responses and only say "yes" when they feel a visit is convenient. Believe it or not, when a parent hears "no" they feel that they can honestly ask – it helps them feel more comfortable within the relationship.

*"I am concerned with my child's diet when visiting the Volunteer Host. What should I do?"*

Open communication between both parties is very important to establish what dietary requirements are acceptable from a parent perspective.

*"I like to know what my child does during their visit. Can I ask?"*

This is a reasonable request. It is expected that all Volunteer Hosts will want parents / carers to hear about their child's experiences, just as they would want to know if their own children spent time with a friend. If parents wish, a more formalised system of communication can be established with the Program Officer's assistance if required.

### Volunteer Hosts

*"I would like to invite my host child's parents in for a drink or coffee at the end of a visit to discuss the visit. Is this OK?"*

The key to a successful match is a natural approach. If you can treat the situation as you would with any other family whose child has visited, you will all feel more comfortable.

*"What if the child does something when they are visiting that I would not allow my children to do? For example: swearing"*

The majority of children can understand that there are rules in any situation. Sometimes rules are different in different situations. Volunteer Hosts should maintain their own rules as they would with any children visiting their home. Children may require support to understand different rules in various settings.

*"What happens if there is a sudden illness in my family and I cannot reach the parents to have the child picked up?"*

Volunteer Hosts are supplied with an emergency contact number of the child's family.

*"What should I do if the child has an accident or feels ill?"*

If it is not an emergency situation, contact the parents who will advise you.

In the case of an emergency, you would naturally seek appropriate medical attention first, and contact the parents as soon as possible.

## Like To Find Out More?

For more information about the Host Program or other respite services which may be available, please contact Community Support at [communitysupport@moira.org.au](mailto:communitysupport@moira.org.au)