

<b>Archery Victoria Guidance Note</b>			
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## Occupational Health and Safety and Volunteer Clubs

### 1. Club Requirements from WorkSafe Australia

WorkSafe Australia requires sporting clubs, as Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs), to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health and safety of their workers (including volunteers) by providing a safe work environment, safe plant and structures, safe systems of work, adequate facilities, and necessary information, instruction, training, and supervision. This includes managing simple risks like slips, trips, falls, and more complex ones like psychological hazards, and having clear policies and procedures for emergencies and incident reporting.

Specific Duties for Sporting Clubs ensuring:

- **Safe Work Environment:**
  - Keep playing fields and facilities clear of obstructions and in a safe condition.
  - Ensure adequate lighting and efficient drainage.
  - Implement systems to prevent hazards like falling or tripping.
- **Safe Plant and Structures:**
  - Provide and maintain equipment, tools, and machinery in a safe condition.
  - Ensure non-slip foot grips and clean surfaces where relevant.
- **Safe Systems of Work:**
  - Implement procedures to control entry to high-risk areas.
  - Ensure proper handling and storage of plant and substances.
  - Establish clear emergency procedures (e.g., fire evacuation, first aid).
- **Information, Instruction, Training, and Supervision:**
  - Provide necessary training and instruction to all workers, including volunteers.
  - Offer inductions to members and volunteers when they start.
- **Facilities:**
  - Provide adequate and accessible welfare facilities, such as toilets and dining areas.
  - Ensure sufficient first aid facilities and trained personnel are available.
- **Consultation:**
  - Consult with members and volunteers on health and safety matters that affect them.
  - Establish fair and clear processes for handling complaints and reporting issues.
- **Psychosocial Hazards:**
  - Prevent exposure to hazards like bullying, harassment, discrimination, and inadequate support.
  - Implement policies to address inappropriate behaviour and poor behaviour culture.

Key Considerations:

- All volunteers are considered workers under WHS laws and must be included in health and safety arrangements.
- The duty to provide safety is qualified by the phrase "so far as is reasonably practicable," meaning clubs must take all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise risks.
- These duties are based on Australia's modern Work Health and Safety (WHS) Laws, which apply across all states and territories.
- There are requirements to maintain records of risk assessments, training, and incident reporting.

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## 2. Club Requirements from WorkSafe Victoria

In Victoria, the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2024 (OHS Act) applies to sporting clubs and other organizations are considered a “person conducting a business or undertaking” (PCBU), meaning they must ensure the health and safety of their volunteers. Volunteers are considered ‘workers’ under the Act and are entitled to the same OHS protections as paid employees, covering both physical safety and mental health. However, an organization composed solely of volunteers, or engaged in purely social or domestic activities, may not be covered by OHS laws, though they still have a general duty of care.

When does the OHS Act apply to sporting clubs?

- The Act applies if the club is classified as a PCBU.
- This typically includes clubs that:
  - Employ staff (e.g., bar staff).
  - Pay volunteers, even via an honorarium or waiver fees, as this indicates they are running a business.
  - Engage in activities ordinarily paid for but performed by volunteers.
  - Have a significant degree of control over volunteer activities, such as organizing events or providing equipment.

What are the obligations of sporting clubs under the OHS Act?

If a club is a PCBU, it must:

- Provide the same health and safety protections to volunteers as to paid employees.
- Ensure the health and safety of its volunteers, considering both physical and mental health.
- Provide suitable equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), and clear instructions, information, and training for safe work practices.
- Conduct risk assessments to identify and manage hazards associated with club activities.

What are the obligations of volunteers?

- Even if a club is not covered by OHS laws, volunteers still have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Volunteers are entitled to the same health and safety protections as paid workers.

Where to find more information

- **Safe Work Australia:** Provides comprehensive information and resources on WHS duties for volunteers and volunteer organisations [Safe Work Australia](#).
- **WorkSafe Victoria:** [WorkSafe Victoria](#) can provide advice on specific situations and claims.
- **Volunteering Victoria:** [Volunteering Victoria](#) offers resources and guidance for organisations engaging volunteers.