



St Vincent de Paul Society
CANBERRA/GOULBURN
good works

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER HANDBOOK



“Serving in hope, with compassion, respect, and justice.”

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn. By joining the Society, you become part of a worldwide community of people committed to supporting those experiencing hardship through friendship, compassion, practical assistance and advocacy. Membership is more than volunteering. It is an opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others while growing personally, spiritually and as part of a community of people who share a desire to serve.

The Society welcomes people of all backgrounds, faiths and cultures who support our mission and values. Whether you have a few hours a month or are looking for a deeper involvement in serving your community, there is a place for you within Vinnies.

About the Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society was founded in Paris in 1833 by Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and a group of university students who wanted to put their faith into action through practical service.

Today, the Society operates in more than 150 countries and supports people experiencing disadvantage through emergency relief, home visitation, advocacy, housing support, community programs and friendship.

In Canberra/Goulburn, members work alongside volunteers and staff to support people and communities across the ACT and southern NSW.

At the heart of everything we do is a belief in the dignity of every person and a commitment to walking alongside people with compassion, respect and hope.

What Does Membership Involve?

Members participate through local Conferences, which are groups of Vincentians who meet regularly for prayer, reflection, friendship and service.

Activities may include:

- Home visitation or centre-based conversations with companions
- Emergency relief assistance
- Community outreach activities
- Advocacy and referral to other services
- Fundraising and local good works
- Supporting parish and community initiatives
- Participating in Conference meetings and planning

Not every member participates in every activity. Members contribute according to their skills, interests, availability and circumstances.

The Society values teamwork and recognises that everyone brings different gifts and experiences.

Being a Vincentian

All members are asked to:

Serve with Compassion and Respect

Treat every person with dignity, kindness and without judgement.

Maintain Confidentiality

Respect the privacy of companions, fellow members and the Society.

Work Safely

Follow safeguarding, privacy and safety requirements to protect yourself and others.

Participate in Conference Life

Attend meetings where possible and contribute to the life and mission of your Conference.

Continue Learning

Complete required training and take advantage of opportunities for ongoing development and formation.

Live the Society's Values

Act honestly, respectfully and in a way that reflects the Vincentian spirit of service.

What Support Will I Receive?

The Society is committed to ensuring new members feel welcomed, supported and equipped for their role.

You can expect:

- A welcoming and supportive Conference community
- Guidance from experienced members
- Access to training and learning resources
- Ongoing mentoring and support
- Access to policies, procedures and member resources
- Opportunities for personal and spiritual growth

No one is expected to know everything immediately. Learning is a gradual process and support is available throughout your membership journey.

How Do I Become a Member?

Step 1 – Express Your Interest

Speak with a local Conference, contact the Conference Support Team, or submit an enquiry through the Society.

Step 2 – Meet with a Conference

A Conference representative will talk with you about membership and answer any questions you may have.

Step 3 – Complete Membership Requirements

This includes completion of the membership application and required compliance checks.

Step 4 – Induction and Training

You will be provided with access to training, resources and support to help prepare you for your role.

Step 5 – Become Part of the Conference

You will be welcomed into the Conference community and begin participating in activities appropriate to your experience and level of training.

Detailed information about onboarding, training requirements, safeguarding, compliance obligations and operational procedures is provided in the **New Member Induction Pack**.

Member Resources

Members have access to a range of resources designed to support learning, governance and service delivery.

These include:

- Training modules
 - Policy and procedure documents
 - Home visitation guidance
 - Safeguarding resources
 - Learning and formation materials
 - Conference resources and templates
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Further Information

For more information about membership or to discuss becoming involved, please contact:

Conference Support Team

St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn

 02 6282 2722

 conferences@vinnies-cg.org.au

The Rheinberger Centre

2 Loch Street

Yarralumla ACT 2600