

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH VICTORIA INC.**  
**OPERATING CHARTER FOR INDEPENDENT AFFILIATED GROUPS**

**Introduction**

- Neighbourhood Watch is a community-based crime prevention program which works in partnership with Victoria Police and the Department of Justice to reduce the incidence of preventable crime and provide a safer community for all Victorians.
- The purpose of this Charter is to establish and define the relationship between Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Incorporated, as the coordinating body for the Neighbourhood Watch program in Victoria and groups across Victoria who wish to participate (or continue to participate) in the program.
- Local groups are organised at a Local Government Area (LGA) level wherever possible and such other subordinate levels within the LGA as may be determined by the Committee of the relevant LGA Group. LGA Groups, or other approved groups at the discretion of the Board, will affiliate with NHW Vic and operate independently and in accordance with this Charter (the Charter)

**Definitions**

1. In this Charter '**the Rules**' means the Rules (formerly 'the Constitution') of Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Incorporated (NHWV) (as amended from time to time) and 'the Board' and 'voting member' have the same meaning as in the Rules.
2. In this Charter '**the relevant Policies**' means the following Policies of NHWV as approved by the Board and available on the NHWV website. Compliance with these Policies is a condition of affiliation.

The relevant Policies are:

- Privacy Policy
- Membership Policy
- Communications Policy, including Social Media Policy

The Board may amend the relevant Policies if required by legislative or regulatory changes. If the Board deems it necessary to make other changes to the relevant Policies or add other policies to this list, such Policies shall first be circulated to all Affiliated Groups for comment. The new or revised policy shall be considered by a Special Meeting if requested by 10% or more of Affiliated Groups.

3. In this Charter **‘the Operations Guide’** means the Operations Guide available in the Volunteer Toolkit on the NHWV website, as approved by the Board and amended from time to time.

### **The “Four Faces” logo**

4. NHWV is the owner of the NHW “Four Faces” logo. Within Victoria, this logo may only be used by affiliated groups or in other situations if approved by the Board. The logo may not be changed or altered in any way without the prior written approval of the Board.

### **Affiliation**

5. The preferred structure for affiliated groups is at a Local Government Area (LGA) level and any LGA group which supports the objectives of Neighbourhood Watch may apply to be affiliated with NHWV by completing the “Application for Affiliation Form” (Schedule 1 of the Rules).
6. Local area groups within an LGA, however designated or described, will be deemed to be part of the appropriate LGA group unless NHWV State Office is otherwise notified by that LGA group.
7. If there is only one group in an LGA the Board, at its discretion, and in accordance with the Rules, may affiliate that group. Alternatively, the Board may allow that Group to be part of another affiliated LGA.
8. In special circumstances, the Board, at its discretion, and in accordance with the Rules, may affiliate more than one group in an LGA.

9. An affiliated group may be de-affiliated in circumstances specified in the Rules. The Board will always use its best endeavours to resolve issues that may arise: de-affiliation will be a last resort.
10. Affiliated Groups may continue to use the Neighbourhood Watch name, logo and other program material and to receive and share information about project/program implementation, including bulk purchases of printed material and signage. They will also be entitled to the protection of public liability insurance and to access volunteer accident insurance. They will be supported by NHWV, as appropriate, in grant applications.
11. No subscriptions are charged by NHWV State Office for the facilities and services provided by NHWV State Office

#### **Representation of affiliated groups in NHWV.**

12. Every affiliated LGA group is entitled to nominate one of its accredited volunteers to be its delegate at NHWV general meetings and forums as a voting member of NHWV in accordance with the Rules.
13. If there is no LGA group in an LGA but the Board, under Clause 7, has affiliated a local group, that local group is entitled to nominate one of its accredited volunteers to be its delegate at NHWV general meetings and forums as a voting member of NHWV in accordance with the Rules.
14. If, under Clause 7, the Board has affiliated more than one group in an LGA, those groups may collectively nominate from among their accredited volunteers one person to be their delegate at NHWV general meetings and forums as a voting member of NHWV in accordance with the Rules.

#### **Finances**

15. LGA and local groups will retain control over their finances. Local groups which are part of an affiliated group must provide financial information to their Affiliated Group to enable statutory accounts to be prepared annually.

16. If a group ceases to operate, its funds will pass to the LGA group for that local government area to be held in trust until the earlier of

- another group becoming operative in the inactive area , in which event the funds will be remitted to that group and no longer held by the LGA group
- a period of three years from the cessation of operations, in which event the LGA group will assume full and permanent ownership of those funds.

17. If a group ceases to operate and there is no LGA group in that local government area, the funds of the inactive group will pass to NHWV to be held in trust until the earlier of

- another affiliated group becoming operative in the inactive area, in which event the funds will be remitted to that group and no longer held by NHWV
- an LGA group being established in that local government area, in which event NHWV will transfer the funds to that LGA group to be dealt with by that LGA group on the same terms as are set out in clause 16
- a period of three years from the cessation of operations, in which event NHWV will assume full and permanent ownership of those funds.

### **Undertakings by NHWV to affiliated groups**

18. NHWV undertakes:

- (a) to comply with its legal and governance requirements as an incorporated charitable organisation
- (b) to manage the relationship with Victoria Police at a senior level and the relationship with the Department of Justice
- (c) to arrange and fund the provision of public liability insurance to cover the activities of NHWV and affiliated groups
- (d) to coordinate the provision of bulk volunteer personal accident insurance for groups requesting and paying for cover for their volunteers

- (e) where appropriate, to provide support for grant applications made by affiliated groups.
- (f) to promote and market the Neighbourhood Watch program throughout the general community
- (g) to assist in the establishment of new Neighbourhood Watch groups, as deemed necessary and appropriate
- (h) to develop guidelines and policies for the operation of affiliated and local groups. (These are available on the NHWV website).
- (i) to provide a range of resource materials such as membership application forms, service certificates, etc.
- (j) to provide and maintain the NHWV website and social media platforms
- (k) to provide email support for local NHW groups

### **Undertakings by affiliated groups to NHWV**

*Note: This section applies only to affiliated groups. It does not apply to local groups which are part of an affiliated group (although local groups are expected to cooperate to ensure compliance by their affiliated group).*

19. To ensure that the reputation and integrity of the Neighbourhood Watch program is maintained, each affiliated group undertakes
- (a) to abide by this Charter and the relevant Policies of NHWV
  - (b) to comply with all relevant State and Federal laws
  - (c) to adopt the Model Rules in the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* or if changes to the Model Rules are desired, to ensure that such changes are not inconsistent with the Rules of NHWV.
  - (d) subject to (b) and (c) (as the case may be), to conduct its operations having regard to the Operations Guidelines on the NHWV website, as varied from time to time.
  - (e) to provide annually to NHWV a Group Information Report in the required format
  - (f) to provide annually to NHWV a financial statement
  - (g) to provide quarterly to NHWV a membership list in the required format  
*(Note: Affiliated groups will be given advance notice of reporting requirements and due dates).*

- (h) to notify NHWV of any changes in the office bearers of the affiliated group within one month of such change occurring
- (i) to comply with the Neighbourhood Watch Membership Policy and to ensure as far as possible
  - (i) that applicants for membership of the affiliated group and local groups within the affiliated group are of good character
  - (ii) that any member or applicant for membership of the affiliated group (or a local group within the affiliated group) requiring a National Police Check under the Policy submits to such a check
  - (iii) that if it becomes apparent that a member is no longer of good character, to take all necessary steps to terminate that person's membership
- (iv) if requested by the Board on reasonable grounds, to appropriately discipline/ terminate the membership of a member who is not of good character or who has conducted himself/herself in a manner harmful to the reputation of the Neighbourhood Watch program

**Signed on behalf of and with the authority of (name of affiliated group)**

**on the            day of            201**

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Office held in affiliated group

**Signed on behalf of and with the authority of Neighbourhood Watch**

**Victoria Incorporated on the            day of            201**

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Office held in Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Incorporated