

1. Purpose

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) relies heavily on volunteers for the implementation of its programs to reduce crime and increase safety in the community.

It is important for the reputation of NHW and its programs that members have been checked appropriately for the role they are to perform within the organisation.

This policy describes the forms of membership within NHW in Victoria and the process by which applicants for membership of NHW are to be accredited.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members and volunteers of Neighbourhood Watch in Victoria.

3. Definitions

In this policy:

- **"Affiliated NHW group"** means a group affiliated with Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Incorporated (NHWV) under the rules and charter of NHWV.
- **"Local NHW group"** means a group which operates at a subordinate level within an affiliated NHW group.
- **"Accredited member"** is a volunteer holding an office bearer role in NHWV, an affiliated NHW group or a local NHW group and has obtained a National Criminal History Check.
- **"Community member"** is a volunteer who works under the direction of an accredited member (office bearer) but is not an accredited member.

4. General

To join NHW, each prospective volunteer submits their application to the relevant local affiliated NHW group and, on acceptance of their application, they are included as a voting member of that group.

The accreditation process and the need for a criminal history check are based on a risk management approach.

5. Accredited member

5.1 Volunteers holding any of the following positions in NHWV, an affiliated NHW group or a local NHW group must be accredited, which involves obtaining a National Criminal History Check (often called a National Police Check or NPC):

- members of the NHWV Board
- nominated representative of an affiliated NHW Group — (for which they in turn must be an office bearer at a local level)
- office bearers of an affiliated NHW group or a local NHW group, including:

- the chair, secretary and treasurer (or similar roles) of the group
- the membership coordinator (or similar role) of the group
- the administrator of an NHW social media page/account or website of the group
- the project or event coordinator or spokesperson of the group
- a volunteer engaged in any other activity for which the Board of NHWV or the affiliated NHW group determines that an NPC is required.

5.2. Volunteers who had successfully completed a Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) check prior to 18 August 2016 do not require any further check and are classified as accredited members.

5.3. National Police Check

5.3.1. A person who provides evidence of having obtained a successful NPC in the 12 months immediately prior to taking up a position that requires accreditation will not need a further check.

5.3.2. The affiliated NHW group or local NHW group is to arrange for the NPC to be carried out on the volunteer to be accredited. The cost of the check will be funded locally. Details of the NPC process are in the “new volunteers’ section of the operations manual.

5.3.3. The affiliated NHW group or local NHW group is to hold evidence of the check being successfully completed. In accordance with privacy regulations, all copies of the NPC Certificate (both electronic and printed) **must** be destroyed within 12 months of issue. Therefore, the local group should only hold the certificate number and date of issue as evidence of the check.

5.3.4. Names, contact details and membership status of the accredited member is to be recorded in an identifiable way on the member register held by the affiliated NHW group.

6. Community member

6.1. This is a volunteer who undertakes newsletter or similar delivery roles, works at NHW events, assists with promotion, campaigns and digital marketing under the direction of an accredited member but is not an accredited member (office bearer).

6.2. An NPC is not required unless the volunteer wishes to become an accredited member.

6.3. Names, contact details and membership status of the community member is to be recorded in an identifiable way on the member register held by the affiliated NHW group.

7. Volunteer insurance

It is recommended that accredited and community members are insured under the volunteer accident insurance policy arranged by NHWV. However, this decision is to be made by the affiliated NHW group or local NHW group and any premiums funded by the local group.

8. Application to join NHW

An application to join is available on the NHWV website at www.nhw.com.au

9. Maintenance of the NHW member/volunteer database

A database of NHW members is to be established and maintained by the affiliated NHW group. This database is also the member register of the relevant incorporated affiliated NHW group.

Names, contact details and membership details of the members are to be kept current by the affiliated NHW group. Current listings of the member database for the group are to be forwarded to NHW Victoria at specified regular intervals.

10. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the chair of the relevant affiliated NHW group to ensure compliance with this policy.

11. Policy Management

This policy is to be reviewed every 12 months.

The Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Neighbourhood Watch Victoria are responsible for reviewing or making modifications to the policy and publishing exemptions.

12. Breaches

Any breach of this policy must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer, Neighbourhood Watch Victoria

13. Authorisation

This policy has been authorised and issued by the Board of Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Inc.

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