



## Aboriginal Communities Liaison Officer

### Position Description

<b>Position Title</b>	Aboriginal Communities Liaison Officer	Email: <a href="mailto:vinnies@vinnies.org.au">vinnies@vinnies.org.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.vinnies.org.au">www.vinnies.org.au</a> Donation Hotline: 13 18 12
<b>Responsible Council</b>	NSW State Council, Support Services	
<b>Reports To</b>	Clinical Director – Treatment and Services Freeman House	
<b>Base Location</b>	Freeman House, Armidale	
<b>Primary position objective</b>	The Aboriginal Communities Liaison Officer is responsible for communication and liaison with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and individuals in Armidale and the New England Region to consult on their service needs, barriers to accessing support and issues negatively impacting on their access to alcohol and other drug services and to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals who are engaged with Freeman House and its associated programs.	

## St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a member and volunteer based organisation that has been assisting people experiencing disadvantage in NSW for more than 130 years.

The Society was founded by a 20 year old man named Frederic Ozanam in 1833, who with a group of friends, wanted to make a difference to the poverty and disadvantage that he saw around him in post-Revolution France. Leading by example and with boundless energy, Frederic started what is now a world-wide movement in just 20 short years. The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has around 16,000 members and volunteers and 1,400 staff. Our local member networks, referred to as Conferences, are present in over 420 communities across NSW.

Our members and volunteers provide assistance to people experiencing disadvantage including food parcels and vouchers, financial assistance, assistance with energy bills and other debt, budget counselling and the provision of other material items such as furniture, clothing and bedding and any other household items. Importantly, our members also provide vital emotional support and referral services as needed.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a leading provider of community support services and has close to 100 Special Works across the State in the areas of homelessness, mental health, disability, financial counselling, supported accommodation, food provision, refugees and migrants and addiction counselling. Our work is funded by all levels of government, the generous support we receive from the community and our 250 Retail Centres across NSW.

## Organisational Overview

SVDP NSW Support Services provides support for people experiencing need in NSW. It is a Special Work of the St Vincent de Paul Society of NSW and is comprised of more than 40 different programs across the state. SVDP NSW Support Services provides programs across areas including drug and alcohol, gambling, homelessness, disability, mental health, community development and refugee support.

## Program Overview

Freeman House and its associated programs are committed to minimising the harm related to homelessness, drug and alcohol use, mental health, cognitive impairment, contact with the criminal justice system and other associated issues and are part of the St Vincent de Paul NSW Specialist Drug and Alcohol Network, which includes the Freeman House Centre in Armidale, the New England Drug and Alcohol Outreach Program, the Maayu Mali centre in Moree, Rosalie House in Tamworth, Rendu House Day Program in Campbelltown and Rendu House AOD Services in South West Sydney. SVDP NSW is committed to providing high quality, innovative and flexible responses to drug and alcohol, homelessness and other areas of complex need in the New England region

The nature and level of support differs according to individual needs, with a range of services offered including drug and alcohol case management and counselling in the community and in residential rehabilitation, access to psychological and psychiatric care, education and therapeutic group work, harm minimisation, living skills, withdrawal management and holistic health care and homelessness case management.

## Duties and Responsibilities

The Aboriginal Communities Liaison Officer will work with Aboriginal communities to consult on their service needs, barriers to accessing support and issues negatively impacting on their access to alcohol and other drug (AOD) services.

The Aboriginal Communities Liaison Officer will additionally work with individuals, their families and their community to assist Aboriginal people to access Freeman House, its associated programs or other more suitable programs, to enter the program and to engage with the program whilst in treatment. The position has a strong communication focus that extends to understanding needs and priorities and developing opportunities for partnerships and mutually beneficial collaboration between Freeman House New England Outreach, and local Aboriginal communities and community organisations.

*Typical duties performed may include, but are not limited to:*

### Communication and Policy

- Review, develop, implement and co-ordinate activities, tasks, projects and actions aimed at increasing and sustaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation.
- Participate in the development of policies, procedures, and tools designed to increase internal and external awareness and assist Freeman House to provide a range of appropriate drug and alcohol services, support and programs to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Take a lead role in creating a culturally responsible work and client environment, educating staff and managers in a professional manner in relation to Freeman House working more effectively with the ATSI community in the Armidale area.
- Assist in guiding the overall cultural competence of the organisation in relation to engaging and meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Facilitate and maintain communication with Aboriginal services and relevant community organisations and attend local interagency meetings.

### Staff Education and Resources

- Assist in the development of documentation, materials, tools or resources that increase awareness and influence a culturally responsible work environment for Aboriginal clients, employees, and volunteers.
- Collaborate with Management where required to assist with communicating the needs of the Aboriginal community to raise awareness, educate, represent and contribute towards Freeman House improving services, support and programs.

### Networking & Stakeholder Liaison

- Represent Freeman House at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events in the Armidale area.
- Represent Freeman House at training, conferences, forums, and events where approved by management.
- Identify new or existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events which may be suitable for Freeman House to attend in order to increase its profile, raise awareness and partner within the communities where we are represented.
- Establishing and expanding links with Aboriginal communities in and around Armidale.

### Reporting, Procedures and Systems

- Adhere to and comply with Freeman House policies, procedures, and systems as required
- Identify, report, and assess WHS related risks and hazards.
- Provide written progress reports as required by management.

## Essential Criteria

*"The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW considers that being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent is a genuine occupational qualification for this position as authorised under section 14 (d) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)."*

- Demonstrated ability to network, liaise and/or develop collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal communities
- Minimum Certificate IV in a community services related course (e.g. Alcohol and Other Drug Work, Community Services, Aboriginal Health).
- Awareness of cultural protocols when consulting with Aboriginal people
- Ability to gather information, surveying needs and identify community concerns
- Ability to work with Aboriginal communities to deliver information in a culturally appropriate manner
- Ability to prioritise competing demands and work independently
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Skills using computers and relevant software
- Understanding and commitment to Social Justice and Access & Equity principles, Work Safety and Ethical Working Practices

## Desirable Criteria

- Experience working in the drug and alcohol sector
- LR driver licence

The successful applicant will be required to undergo a criminal record check and a Working with Children Check. All employment is subject to a 6 month probationary period.

*The St Vincent de Paul Society is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.*