



## **Position Description**

### **CHILD WITNESS SUPPORT VOLUNTEER**

**Protect All Children Today Inc. (PACT)**

#### **Organisational Environment:**

Protect All Children Today Inc. (PACT) is a not-for-profit community organisation established in 1986 as a service provider of court support as well as advocating for children/young people and their families.

PACT's Child Witness Support Program provides support for children and young people who are required to give evidence in the courts, either as victims of, or witnesses to, a crime.

#### **Position Objectives:**

- To adequately prepare and support children and young people to give best evidence in criminal court proceedings.
- To provide information and emotional support to child witnesses throughout the criminal justice process.
- To liaise with representatives from government and non-government organisations, such as Officers from the Queensland Police Service, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Victim Assist Queensland, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, and various community agencies.
- To prepare and submit accurate and timely case paperwork to enable PACT to provide statistical information to the Government Funding Body.

#### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Adhere to the requirements of Child Witness Support Volunteer Protocols, Duties, Code of Conduct and reasonable guidance from PACT staff.
- Provide factual information to child witnesses and their carers about the Court process to adequately prepare child witnesses for giving evidence.
- Maintain appropriate contact with carers and older child witnesses from time of referral until the court matter is finalised.
- Conduct face-to-face visit/s with PACT clients (generally in their home).
- Accompany child witnesses whilst they meet with the Prosecutor (Pre-recording Conference) and view their original Police Statement (93A).
- Support and reassure child witnesses during their waiting time in the Court building.
- Accompany the child while they give their evidence (generally by video).
- Prepare and submit case paperwork within 7 days of the completion of each court matter.
- Liaise appropriately with a range of individuals such as: PACT clients, Queensland Police Service Officers, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Victim Assist Queensland, Child Safety Officers, Court staff, members of the legal profession, fellow PACT Volunteers, Team Leaders, Volunteer Coordinators and other PACT staff.
- Participate in continual learning/professional development through PACT CWSV Conference attendance, ongoing training, meetings and newsletters to ensure that current and accurate information is being provided to PACT clients.

### **Mandatory Requirements of the Job:**

- Blue Card/Working with Children screening check. A positive notice is a mandatory requirement of this role.
- Flexible daytime availability to accommodate the erratic court process.
- Willingness to attend induction and ongoing in-service training, attend regular team meetings and ability to acquire knowledge of the Criminal Justice System as it relates to child witnesses.
- Willingness to make a long-term commitment to the role (minimum 18-24 months) given the lengthy court process and need to build rapport with vulnerable children.
- Ability to prepare and support clients and families from diverse backgrounds with empathy, confidentiality and respect.
- Ability to access and monitor emails (each Volunteer will be provided with a PACT email address).
- Ability and commitment to maintain impartiality, demonstrate non-judgmental attitudes and maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries when representing PACT.
- Ability to communicate appropriately with a range of professional stakeholders and peers.
- Awareness and ability to implement and maintain self-care strategies to manage potential stress.
- Drivers' license and access to own vehicle to facilitate face-to-face client visits.
- Commitment to complete and submit appropriate case paperwork regarding all client contact.
- Patience, this role often involves lengthy delays and levels of frustration throughout the entire court process.

<b>Things PACT Volunteers should ALWAYS do</b>	<b>Things PACT Volunteers should NEVER do</b>
Always remain impartial and non-judgmental.	Never discuss the case or the child's evidence.
Always advise PACT staff of a potential conflict of interest or upcoming criminal court proceeding.	Never transport children or young people.
Always attend regular team meetings, participate in debriefing (case discussion) and ongoing Volunteer Training/Conferences.	Never initiate physical contact with a child or young person.
Monitor their PACT email account and submit all case paperwork within 7 days of the matter being finalised.	Never share their personal history with a child or family being supported by PACT.
Always make initial contact with the family within two weeks of receiving an allocation and maintain regular contact with PACT clients.	Never receive, print or serve a Police Subpoena or transport or dispose of court exhibits or evidence.
Maintain appropriate client and legal boundaries.	Never make comparisons between cases and child witnesses.
Respect all personnel involved in the court matter and follow their instructions.	Never do a face-to-face visit without prior arrangements being made with the carer.
Advise PACT of any sickness, upcoming leave.	Never tell a child what to say while giving evidence.
Always be responsible for own self-care	Never make comments to the media.

### **Recruitment and Selection**

The identification and selection of Volunteers will be based on the applicant's ability to successfully demonstrate the following personal characteristics and experience throughout the Screening and Induction Process which includes:

- Written Application.
- Interview.
- Referee Check.
- Comprehensive Induction Training.
- Post-training Interview.
- A probationary period of 3-6 months where a Trainee's activities will be monitored to ensure they are meeting the requirements outlined in the Code of Conduct and this Position Description

**Please Note:** You do not need to respond to the above Mandatory CWSV Role Requirements in your initial application as selection for training will be assessed on your Application Form, Interview and Referee Checks.

This is a particularly challenging and specialised Volunteer role which may not be suitable for all applicants. PACT has a duty of care to the vulnerable children we support and reserves the right to make a final determination on the suitability of all PACT Child Witness Support Volunteers.