

# I have a community work condition on my court order

What now?

Community Correctional Services





## What happens if I do not report to my assigned CCS location or do not obey the conditions of my order?

You must report to your assigned CCS location within two working days of agreeing to undertake your Community Correction Order (CCO). If you do not and do not have a reasonable excuse, or you do not follow the conditions of your order, you are committing a crime and your matter may be referred to the Magistrates' Court. If you cannot follow your order or make it to your assigned CCS location in time, you must call the office and speak to someone for assistance (contact details are on page 10 of this brochure).

## What happens when I attend the assigned CCS location for the first time?

On your first visit, you will need to provide identification and have a photograph taken. You will receive a Justice Accused Identifier (JAID) number and meet with your case manager. You should allow one hour for this to be completed. Your case manager will also set up an induction session for you, either one-on-one or as part of a group. If you are required to attend a group session, it will take place within seven days of when you first report to your assigned CCS location.

## How will the type of community work I must complete be determined?

Your case manager will determine where you are placed and will consider your capacity and suitability to undertake different types of work. If you have physical limitations, you must provide your case manager with a recent medical report outlining what you **can** and **cannot** do.

You may need to have training to help you complete your community work safely.

Depending upon your current conviction or past criminal record, there may be some types of community work you are not allowed to do.

## What happens at the induction session?

Induction sessions usually take one hour. In the session, your obligations and responsibilities as well as the consequences of non-compliance will be explained.

Following your induction session, you will meet one-on-one with your case manager. This is where you will:

- be assessed for your suitability for particular community work
- discuss community work options and be placed at a suitable site
- provide emergency contact details to your case manager
- receive information about the CCS location (e.g. business hours and contact details).

## What if I don't know how to do the work I am asked to do?

No-one will ask you to carry out any work without first showing you how to do it. There is usually a discussion about the jobs to be performed and your knowledge of those jobs. Then, you will be shown how to carry out the tasks in the safest manner possible.

Communication is the key, so ensure that you understand what you have been shown and if you're not sure, ask to be shown again. Your safety is important. If you are still not comfortable, you have the right to request changes in the work you are given. On some projects you may even be given some formal training through a TAFE.

## What type of unpaid community work will I be required to do?

The type of work you will complete varies broadly and depends upon what is available and required in your area. If you are already involved with a community organisation it may be possible for you to do extra hours there as community work, so talk to your case manager about this option.

Most of the work is for not-for-profit organisations and it may include:

- preparing meals for homeless people
- maintaining/restoring walking tracks through parks
- sorting or recycling goods (e.g. food, clothes)
- removing weeds and/or rubbish
- building outdoor facilities (e.g. playgrounds, BBQ areas, fences)
- removing graffiti
- making toys for disadvantaged children
- planting trees
- beautifying a cemetery
- cleaning up after fire or flood
- painting, paving and building community gardens.

Each region has its own community work projects, teams and community partners. You will usually be placed in a work team with up to approximately 11 other people required to undertake community work, including people on Community Work Permits, Fine Default Orders, Court Orders or Parole Orders. The work teams are supervised by a CCS Field Officer.

In some cases you may be placed individually at a community agency, where you would be supervised by a volunteer or employee.





## What if I hurt myself doing community work?

If you injure yourself while performing community work, you should immediately notify the person in charge about your injury. The supervisor or the Field Officer, who is trained in first aid will assess and if required, treat the injury. They will assist you in obtaining other medical assistance if needed.

You will also need to report this to your case manager. Depending on the seriousness of the injury, your case manager may instruct you to obtain a medical clearance from your doctor, prior to completing your remaining hours of unpaid community work. You have the right to make a WorkCover claim if you are injured while performing community work.

## Will I be working in a group or by myself?

You will be working either on an individual placement or in a community work team of about 11 people. CCS takes a number of factors into consideration when determining your community work placement, including the safety of the community, as well as your own, your health, work skills and availability.

Generally, an individual placement will occur with a community partner of CCS, which could include any number of government and non-government organisations that develop and manage community work programs for offenders. Community partnerships can be beneficial to not-for-profit organisations that are having difficulty securing volunteers.





## How long do I have to complete my community work hours?

When you ordered to perform community work hours at a court, the length of the order period differs from one person to another, depending on your circumstances. The time you have to complete your community work hours is listed on the order and is usually the length of the order.

It is best to get started as soon as you can. It is important to inform your case manager of any changes in your circumstances during the order, such as employment, illness, or carer's responsibilities, as these may require you to change your community work arrangements, and could possibly delay the completion of your hours.

Failing to attend appointments or scheduled community work without a valid reason will result in you reappearing at court. It is important to consider all aspects of community work before agreeing to complete the hours.

## What happens if I do not show up for community work?

If you do not show up for your community work appointments, a CCS Officer will investigate this. You must have a reasonable excuse and be able to provide evidence to support your reasons (for example, a medical certificate if you have been sick).

If you have an unacceptable absence or you fail to attend the CCS office when required, you are committing a crime and your matter may be referred to the Magistrates' Court.

If your circumstances change after agreeing to undertake community work as part of your order, which affect your ability to complete community work (for example, your paid work commitments change), you must immediately tell a CCS Officer and discuss the options available to you.





## Am I still able to use my medication on community work days?

If you have been prescribed medication, you should continue to take this as directed by your doctor. You should not stop taking your prescription medication because you have to do community work.

If you are taking any prescription medication (including methadone, buprenorphine or other opiate substitute), you should advise your case manager during your first appointment and let them know of any side effects (e.g. drowsiness). This will ensure that you are placed at a community work site that is suitable for you.

If you are concerned about the dosage or side effects of your medication, you should speak to your doctor.

## Can I bring my children to community work?

Community work sites are generally not a safe environment for children. You will need to pay full attention to your allocated tasks, so the appropriate level of care cannot be guaranteed for children at a community work site.

Your carer commitments will be considered prior to your placement for community work. The Childcare and Transport Subsidies Program (CCaTS) is a statewide project established to assist women on community correctional orders to balance their order obligations with primary carer responsibilities.

A few community work sites have registered childcare facilities or playgroups for children, however such sites are very limited. It would be at the discretion of the CCS regional community work team as to your potential placement at such a site and this is something that you should discuss with your case manager during induction.



## What if I am employed full-time?

You are obliged to make yourself available for community work at least one day per week. The Community Work Program operates seven days a week, usually between 9am and 5pm, and there are occasionally options to do community work in the evening. In rural locations, the opportunity for weekend work may be limited and you should check this if uncertain.

Every effort will be made to accommodate your employment, although this is difficult if you have a revolving roster. Please be aware that if, in addition to your employment, there are other factors that need to be taken into account, the choice of community work placement available to you may be reduced.

## What if I am a full-time carer?

Make sure you discuss your carer status with your case manager straight away and provide evidence such as Centrelink Parenting Payments Documentation, Health Care Card, Custody Documentation or Registered Carers' Status.

You need to be available at least one day per week, so you will be asked to organise alternative care arrangements to allow that to happen. There are some flexible community work options available based on individual needs and risk factors.

Depending upon your circumstances, you may be eligible for assistance with transport and childcare however, you will need to meet the eligibility criteria (see 'Can I bring my children to community work?').



Contact your nearest CCS community work office for assistance:

Location	Phone
Ballarat	4301 7000
Bendigo	5440 6100
Box Hill	9896 8211
Carlton	9094 2200
Dandenong	8765 5222
Geelong	5226 4444
Mildura	5021 6100
Morwell	5116 5800
Ringwood	9871 5900
Shepparton	5858 7600
Sunshine	9300 6300
Warrnambool	5564 1000
Wodonga	(02) 6043 7077





## Glossary

**CCO** Community Correction Order – Community Work can be a condition attached to this order.

**CCS** Community Correctional Services – a branch of Corrections Victoria and is responsible for people who are undertaking community work.

**CCS Location** – You are assigned the office nearest to your place of residence.

**CCS Officer** – monitors and supervises your compliance with the conditions of your order.

**CCS Field Officer** – Supervises you in a team at community work sites.

**Case Manager** – Assigns you to appropriate community work sites and monitors your compliance with the conditions of your order.

## Do you require assistance in interpreting this information?

**Victoria Legal Aid (VLA)** 350 Queen St, Melbourne, VIC 3000 or call 9269 0120 or 1800 677 402 (country callers)

**Victorian Community Legal Centres (CLC)** To locate your closest CLC call 9652 1500 or visit [www.communitylaw.org.au](http://www.communitylaw.org.au)

**Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service** call 9418 5999 or toll free 1800 064 865, or visit [www.vals.org.au](http://www.vals.org.au)

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