



Have spare time and want to do something interesting?

Why not volunteer for the ambulance service in your local community

Ambulance Tasmania is always looking for new volunteers in rural communities. If you have spare time in your day to day life and are looking for something interesting and rewarding to do, why not consider becoming a Volunteer Ambulance Officer?

What do I need to become an Ambulance Volunteer?

You must be at least 18 years of age, be in good health and reasonably fit so you can perform the required duties which include lifting and carrying. You must also hold a current Driver's Licence ("C" class standard car license).

You will be asked to complete an application form including your personal details, background and information on your general health and fitness. You will also be asked to authorise a criminal convictions check through Tasmania Police.

If we are recruiting in your community and your application shows you may be suitable, you may be invited to attend an interview.

Approval to undertake Ambulance Volunteer responsibilities is at the discretion of Ambulance Tasmania.

What types of volunteers are there?

Ambulance Tasmania has three "levels" for volunteers:

- VAO-1 volunteers support more qualified staff by assisting with scene management, stretcher handling, equipment and driving;
- VAO-2 volunteers are first-responders to medical emergencies who manage scenes and provide basic life support until more qualified crews arrive
- VAO-3 volunteers provide a broader range of clinical interventions; they treat and monitor patients until backup arrives if required or transport less seriously ill patients to hospital.

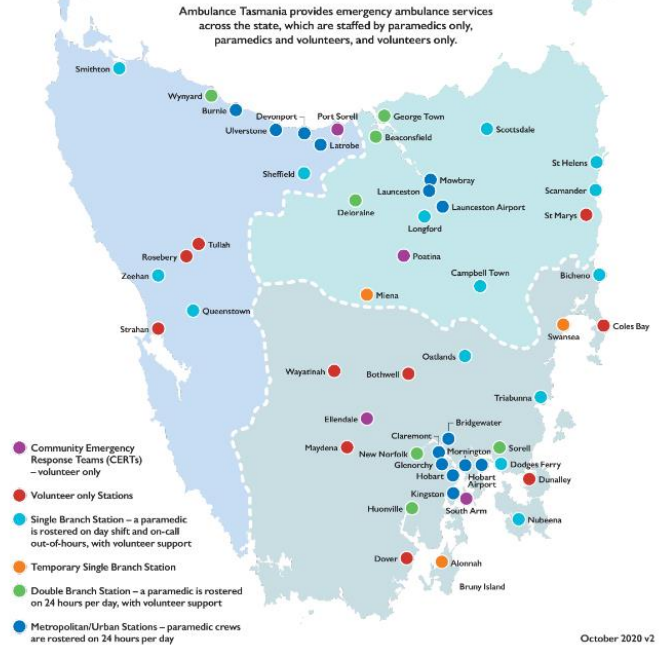
If you just want to assist your local ambulance service without treating patients, you can stay as a non-clinical VAO-1 and help more senior volunteers and paramedics with scene management, stretcher handling, equipment and driving.

How much time is involved?

This is determined by your other employment, family and life commitments and what type of volunteer role you choose.

- As a **clinical** volunteer (VAO-2, VAO-3) you will need to be rostered on duty for a minimum of 240 hours each year, which is the same as 20 hours each month. You will also need to attend at least 10 structured training sessions each year
- If you are a **non-clinical** VAO-1, we ask you to commit to 100 hours each year, which is one shift a month. You will need to attend four compulsory training session yearly.

Statewide Ambulance Services



| NORTH WEST Regional Office Burnie | NORTH Regional Office Launceston | SOUTH Regional Office & State HQ Hobart |
|---|---|---|
| King Island Port Sorell Queenstown* Rosebery Sheffield* Smithton* Strahan Tullah Waratah Wynyard* Zeehan* | Beaconsfield* Campbell Town* Deloraine* Flinders Island Georgetown* Longford* Miena Poatina Scottsdale* St Helens* St Marys | Bicheno Bothwell Bruny Island Coles Bay Dodges Ferry Dover Dunalley Ellendale Huonville* Maydena New Norfolk* Nubeena* Oatlands Sorell* South Arm Swansea Triabunna* Wayatinah |
| * Locations where volunteers work with a salaried paramedic to make a 2-person crew | | |

Do I need to know first aid?

Clinical volunteers then learn more advanced skills during ongoing training and working on-road with more experienced officers.

* If you are planning to remain in the non-clinical VAO-1 role, you may occasionally be required to assist with CPR, you are still required to have a current Advanced First Aid qualification. We will support you in obtaining your First Aid qualifications.





Who is suitable to be a volunteer?

There is no specific profile to determine your suitability, but certain characteristics, personal skills and physical capabilities are valuable attributes. These include keeping a level head, empathy, ability to communicate, common sense, enthusiasm and a desire to want to help other people.

Can I volunteer from home?

It depends to which group you belong. In rural stations, when “on call” you are free to stay at home or be out and about in the local area, but if your pager is activated you must be able to respond immediately. In stations where volunteers work with paramedics, usually you must attend the station while on duty.

What is involved in the training sessions?

Initial training is offered over 2 consecutive days, generally a Saturday and Sunday. These sessions are normally held in Hobart, Launceston or Burnie.

After that, most groups train locally once a fortnight. Training sessions are conducted by a volunteer educator or paramedic, with assistance from senior volunteers who are accredited Volunteer Trainers.

Training is a combination of practical, tutorial and e-learning. Informal training sessions are conducted by consensus with fellow volunteers.

A lot of training also occurs while working on-road with more experienced volunteers. Volunteers are also given the opportunity to improve their knowledge by reading recommended publications.

What is a typical call out?

There is no typical scenario. Call outs range from attending motor vehicle or workplace accidents to providing medical assistance to someone who is sick or only has minor injuries. In most cases, patients are transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital or medical centre for further diagnosis and treatment.

What limitations are placed on volunteers when attending a patient?

There are protocols which must be observed. If a patient requires support beyond volunteer care limitations, Paramedic back up must be requested.

What happens if a volunteer is injured on duty?

All volunteers are covered under the Ambulance Tasmania workers compensation policy. Workers compensation benefits may also apply even if you are no longer employed, self-employed or only work casually part-time.

What support do volunteers receive?

As an Ambulance Volunteer you will receive:

- nationally recognised training courses
- uniforms
- pager for contact when on duty
- appropriate vaccinations
- workers compensation & legal indemnity cover
- back-up support from Paramedics when required
- critical incident stress management when required.

What other support is available?

The Volunteer Ambulance Officers Association of Tasmania (VAOAT) actively supports volunteers and holds quarterly meetings as well as an Annual Gathering. The Association also publishes a quarterly newsletter “First Response”.

Do volunteers get paid?

No. Ambulance Volunteers are not paid for their services. However, you will be reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses.

Do other states use volunteers?

Most other states in Australia, as well as New Zealand, use volunteers in various front line roles to deliver ambulance services, especially in rural and remote areas.

What are the benefits of becoming a volunteer?

As a volunteer you can:

- connect with others in your community, make new friends and work as part of a close-knit team
- learn new skills useful in everyday life, including first-aid and how to manage stressful and demanding situations
- help care for people who are sick or injured, and provide reassurance to their immediate family
- contribute to a vital service for residents and visitors in rural communities
- share your experience, wisdom and skills with younger volunteers
- keep physically and mentally active
- get a real sense of achievement by contributing to social cohesion and community resilience.

