



Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated  
ABN 88 722 057 429 CFN: 15429  
Web: [www.partnerhousing.org](http://www.partnerhousing.org)  
Pro-bono professional services and funding for South Pacific  
village infrastructure, housing, water, sanitation and training.



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Partner Housing is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity.

## Safety and Security



Water safety – Solomon Islands

### Basis

These policies and procedures set out the means of complying with the requirements of the “Constitution, Policies & Code of Conduct” of Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated.

### Signed

Rod Johnston  
President / CEO / Public Officer  
Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated

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## Revisions

P2110107-1a 1 February 2022

Change of name throughout to “Partner Housing Australasia”

# Policies

## **89. Insurance Provided by Volunteers**

Partner Housing Australasia shall ensure that Volunteers have suitable insurance cover appropriate to their participation in the activities of the Organisation; and Volunteers indemnify the Organisation against personal injury or loss associated with work for the Organisation.

## **91. Risks to Health and Safety, Precautions and Emergency Procedures**

Volunteers, undertaking projects in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Philippines, Fiji, Vanuatu and other South Pacific or South-East Asia, should be aware, prepare and take precautions for the following risks.

These include international air travel, air travel within the overseas country, motor vehicle travel, sea travel, violent attack, falls from heights, accidents involving power tools or other cutting tools, broken limbs resulting from slips and falls, Infection from coral cuts, malaria and dengue fever.

Partner Housing Australasia provides detailed precautions to avoid injury due to these sources.

## Procedures

Refer also to the Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

## Insurance Provided by Volunteers

### Policy

Partner Housing Australasia shall ensure that:

- Volunteers have suitable insurance cover appropriate to their participation in the activities of the Organisation;
- Volunteers indemnify the Organisation against personal injury or loss associated with work for the Organisation.

### Responsible Personnel

The personnel with specific tasks designated in the position descriptions, and/or most likely to be involved in implementation are Chief Executive Officer, Regional Managers and Project Managers.

### Travel Insurance

The Responsible Person shall implement the following:

1. Partner Housing Australasia requires Volunteers travelling overseas to take out travel insurance (including health cover).
2. Partner Housing Australasia shall to refund the cost of the travel insurance (including health cover), for volunteers who are travelling overseas on behalf of Partner Housing Australasia. Where the travel is a mixture of private and Partner Housing Australasia business, the travel insurance costs shall be met on a pro-rata basis.

### Indemnity

The Responsible Person shall implement the following:

1. Volunteers on assignments in Australia and overseas shall take adequate measures to ensure their own personal safety while carrying out work on behalf of Partner Housing Australasia and its Partner Organisations.
2. Regional Managers and Project Managers shall ensure that Volunteers are aware of the risks associated with the work.
3. Before embarking on volunteer assignments, volunteers shall indemnify Partner Housing Australasia and its consultants against injury, death, sickness, accident, misadventure or other damage to myself, others and property, associated with the voluntary activity, by completing and signing a form titled Volunteer Safety and Indemnity.

# Risks to Health and Safety, Precautions and Emergency Procedures

## Policy

Volunteers, undertaking projects in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Philippines and other South Pacific or South-East Asia, should be aware, prepare and take precautions for the following risks.

### International air travel

#### Risk

The Volunteer must travel by air to and from the foreign country.

#### Precaution

The Volunteer should:

- where practical, travel by reputable international airline; and
- take travel insurance. (The cost will be refunded by Partner Housing Australasia).

#### Emergency Procedure

The Volunteer should follow all directions by airline staff.

### Air travel within the overseas country

#### Risk

The Volunteer may be required travel within the country by air.

#### Precaution

The Volunteer should:

- where practical, travel by a reputable national airline; and
- be prepared to postpone or cancel the travel if this is recommended of the pilot or airline officials.

#### Emergency Procedure

The Volunteer should follow all directions by airline staff.

### Motor vehicle travel

#### Risk

The Volunteer may be required travel within the country by motor vehicle, some of which may be on poorly constructed, narrow and (at times) busy roads.

#### Precaution

The Volunteer should:

- refrain from driving unless it is essential to do so;
- wear a seat belt when this is fitted in the vehicle; and
- be prepared to postpone or cancel the travel if this is recommended by the driver.

#### Emergency Procedure

The Volunteer should follow all directions by the driver.

## Sea travel

### Risk

The Volunteer may be required travel by motor boat or canoe across unprotected waters and open sea. The most common risks are boats capsizing or being swamped in rough weather, or engine failure some considerable distance from land.

### Precaution

1. Partner Housing Australasia will:
  - Provide one life jacket for each volunteer for each trip undertaken in the Solomon Islands and in other locations involving boat travel across unprotected waters or open sea.
  - On completion of each assignment, the life jackets shall be donated to the local partner organisation, to be distributed at the discretion of the responsible contact person, for retention in boats and canoes that are in use in the community.
2. The Volunteer should ensure that the life jackets are accessible in the boat at all times during the trip.
3. In rough weather, the Volunteer should wear a life jacket.
4. The Volunteer check that the boats have emergency paddles.

### Emergency Procedure

1. The Volunteer should follow all directions by the boat operator.
2. In the case of boat capsizing or swamping, stay with the boat (while it remains afloat) or with any substantial floating wreckage, and await rescue.
3. In the case of engine failure, assist in emergency paddling if required.

## Violent attack

### Risk

The Volunteer may travel in some area where there is a possibility of violent attack.

This may be as a result of intertribal violence (such as in the PNG Highlands) or robbery (such as in Port Moresby).

### Precaution

The Volunteer should

1. Never go out after dark, particularly in areas where there is a possibility of attack;
2. Not travel alone in dangerous areas;
3. Travel with a trusted local contact;
4. Always dress and behave in an inconspicuous manner without jewelry and the like;
5. Ensure that passports and valuables are either deposited in a secure safe, or, if carried on the person, should be hidden in an inconspicuous money belt or the like.

### Emergency Procedure

In the event of a violent attack, seek a safe refuge immediately and report the incident to the police.

## **Falls from heights**

### Risk

The Volunteer may be required install or inspect roof structures and the like.

### Precaution

1. The Volunteer should be aware that workmanship and scaffolding in the overseas countries are generally to a very low standard, and must always be treated as unsafe.
2. Do not climb ladders without first:
  - checking that all of the rungs for weight bearing
  - ensuring the top is secure, and preferably tied in position..
3. Do not lean on railings.
4. When walking on roofs, stand only over purlins, as indicated by the lines of roofing screws.

### Emergency Procedure

1. If a person falls from a significant height, they should lie perfectly still until it is clear that no major injuries (such as back injury, neck injury, broken bones or internal injury) have been sustained. Only then should an injured person move.
2. Immobilise any injured limbs.
3. Except in the case of very minor injury, an injured person should seek medical assistance.

## **Accidents involving power tools or other cutting tools**

### Risk

The Volunteer may be required use power tools or other cutting tools.

### Precaution

1. The Volunteer should have up-to-date tetanus immunization.
2. The Volunteer should observe all manufacturer's safety precautions associated with tools.

### Emergency Procedure

1. Clean cuts and abrasions, apply antiseptic gel and cover with a clean dressing.
2. Except in the case of very minor injury, an injured person should seek medical assistance.

## **Broken limbs resulting from slips and falls**

### Risk

The Volunteer may need to walk or climb on slippery wet slopes (such as steep wet grassy clay surfaces) where there is increased risk of slip and broken limbs.

### Precaution

1. On such surfaces, the Volunteer should move slowly and deliberately, if necessary, use a stout walking stick; and wear spiked boots.
2. If a slip occurs, hold arms close to the body to avoid wrist or arm injury.

### Emergency Procedure

1. Immobilize any broken limbs.
2. Except in the case of very minor injury, an injured person should seek medical assistance.

## Infection from coral cuts

### Risk

The Volunteer may be exposed to the risk of coral cuts when walking in the water or close to the shore. Coral cuts can become infected, resulting in very severe inflammation and cellulites.

### Precaution

The Volunteer should always wear strong shoes and clothing that protect the legs.

### Emergency Procedure

Carry out the first-aid procedure below.

If there is any infection, **seek medical advice as soon as possible**.

1. Scrub with soap and water and then flush with fresh water as soon as possible after contact with the coral.
2. If the wound stings, rinse it with acetic acid (vinegar) or isopropyl alcohol (this action may reduce the effect of any irritating toxins such as those produced by fire coral).
3. Flush the wound or abrasion with a mixture of 1/2 water and 1/2 hydrogen peroxide to remove coral dust and then flush with fresh water for most non-stinging coral cuts or abrasions.
4. Rinse daily and apply an antibiotic such as bacitracin (Baci-IM) or similar topical ointment 3-4 times per day.
5. Oral antibiotics are usually recommended to prevent infection. If an infection develops, continue taking the antibiotic for at least five days after all signs of the infection has resolved. Notify the doctor of any medication allergies the patient has prior to starting an antibiotic. Some antibiotics (for example, tetracyclines) can cause increased sensitivity to the sun (photosensitivity), thus it is recommended to use a sunscreen of at least SPF 15 if the area is going to be exposed to sunlight. If a wound develops pus, seek medical treatment.
6. If no evidence of infection or open wound is present, an over-the-counter steroid ointment may be used to relieve itching for a short period of time (a few days).
7. Pain may be relieved with one to two acetaminophen (Tylenol) every four hours and/or one to two ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) every 6-8 hours. Do not exceed 3 grams of acetaminophen over a 24 hour time period. Some health care professionals prefer to use naproxen (Aleve) for pain relief.
8. Patients that are alcoholics have a tendency to develop bacterial infections by *Vibrio* spp that can be very aggressive and dangerous (life-threatening) in a short time-span. Any redness of skin that progresses rapidly with blisters moving up an extremity (arms or legs) toward the body should be considered a medical emergency, and will require IV antibiotics.

Source: [http://www.emedicinehealth.com/wilderness\\_coral\\_cuts/page3\\_em.htm](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/wilderness_coral_cuts/page3_em.htm)



## Malaria

### Risk

In some areas, the Volunteer may be exposed to the risk of mosquito-borne malaria.

### Precaution

The Volunteer should seek medical advice regarding risk minimisation and any appropriate drugs before leaving Australia.

The following general advice, which must be confirmed by a qualified medical practitioner, is from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaria\\_prophylaxis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaria_prophylaxis)

- *Risk management*
- *Bite prevention—clothes that cover as much skin as possible, insect repellent, insecticide-impregnated bed nets and [indoor residual spraying](#)*
- *Chemoprophylaxis*
- *Rapid diagnosis and treatment*

*Additional bite prevention measures include mosquito and insect repellents that can be directly applied to skin. This form of mosquito repellent is slowly replacing [indoor residual spraying](#), which is considered to have high levels of toxicity by WHO (World Health Organization). Further additions to preventive care are sanctions on blood transfusions. Once the malaria parasite enters the erythrocytic stage, it can adversely affect blood cells, making it possible to contract the parasite through infected blood.*

*[Chloroquine](#) may be used where the parasite is still sensitive.<sup>[1]</sup> However due to resistance one of three medications: [mefloquine](#) (Lariam), [doxycycline](#) (available generically), and the combination of [atovaquone](#) and [proguanil](#) hydrochloride (Malarone) is frequently needed.<sup>[1]</sup> Doxycycline and the atovaquone and proguanil combination are the best tolerated with mefloquine associated with higher rates of neurological and psychiatric symptoms.*

Jacquieroz FA, Croft AM (2009). Jacquieroz, Frederique A, ed. "Drugs for preventing malaria in travellers". Cochrane Database Syst Rev (4): CD006491.

### Emergency Procedure

If there are any symptoms of malaria fever **seek medical advice as soon as possible**.

A malaria infection is generally characterized by recurrent attacks with the following signs and symptoms:

- Moderate to severe shaking chills
- High fever
- Profuse sweating as body temperature falls

Other signs and symptoms may include:

- Headache
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Malaria signs and symptoms typically begin within a few weeks after being bitten by an infected mosquito. However, some types of malaria parasites can lie dormant in your body for months, or even years.

Source: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/malaria/basics/symptoms/CON-20013734>

## Dengue fever

### Risk

In some areas, the Volunteer may be exposed to the risk of mosquito-borne dengue fever.

### Precaution

The Volunteer should seek medical advice regarding risk minimisation before leaving Australia.

The following general advice, which must be confirmed by a qualified medical practitioner, is from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dengue\\_fever](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dengue_fever) .

*Typically, people infected with dengue virus are [asymptomatic](#) (80%) or only have mild symptoms such as an uncomplicated fever.<sup>[2][4][5]</sup> Others have more severe illness (5%), and in a small proportion it is life-threatening.<sup>[2][5]</sup> The [incubation period](#) (time between exposure and onset of symptoms) ranges from 3 to 14 days, but most often it is 4 to 7 days.<sup>[6]</sup> Therefore, travelers returning from endemic areas are unlikely to have dengue if fever or other symptoms start more than 14 days after arriving home.<sup>[7]</sup> Children often experience symptoms similar to those of the [common cold](#) and [gastroenteritis](#) (vomiting and diarrhea)<sup>[8]</sup> and have a greater risk of severe complications,<sup>[7][9]</sup> though initial symptoms are generally mild but include high fever.<sup>[9]</sup>*

### Emergency Procedure

If there are any symptoms of dengue fever **seek medical advice as soon as possible**.

Symptoms, which usually begin four to six days after infection and last for up to 10 days, may include

- Sudden, high fever
- Severe headaches
- Pain behind the eyes
- Severe joint and muscle pain
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting
  - Skin rash, which appears three to four days after the onset of fever
- Mild bleeding (such a nose bleed, bleeding gums, or easy bruising)

Sometimes symptoms are mild and can be mistaken for those of the flu or another viral infection. Younger children and people who have never had the infection before tend to have milder cases than older children and adults. However, serious problems can develop. These include dengue hemorrhagic fever, a rare complication characterized by high fever, damage to lymph and blood vessels, bleeding from the nose and gums, enlargement of the liver, and failure of the circulatory system. The symptoms may progress to massive bleeding, shock, and death. This is called dengue shock syndrome (DSS).

People with weakened immune systems as well as those with a second or subsequent dengue infection are believed to be at greater risk for developing dengue hemorrhagic fever.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/dengue-fever-reference>

## COVID19 and Similar Pandemics

### Risk

The world-wide COVID19 pandemic broke out in early 2020, and has led rapid spread of this highly infectious disease throughout the world, causing widespread illness and death.

Although in Australia, the public health measures to control the spread of COVID19 have been moderately effective (to date), this is not the case overseas.

Strict travel restrictions and quarantine requirements have been imposed throughout the world.

The principal risk to Partner Housing Australasia volunteers will be manifested as the travel restrictions are relaxed, perhaps too soon in some cases.

Similar risks could exist in the future due to further outbreaks of similar diseases.

### Precaution – During the COVID19 Pandemic

- Until further notice, do not travel overseas for any reason (including on behalf of Partner Housing Australasia).
- Adhere strictly to all Australian government regulations and guidelines.
- Consult the DFAT website and DFAT Smart Traveller internet service. [smartraveller@smartraveller.gov.au](mailto:smartraveller@smartraveller.gov.au) Do not travel contrary to the DFAT Smart Traveller advice. Where appropriate register travel with DFAT.

### Precaution – After the declared subsidence of the COVID19 Pandemic

When regulated travel restrictions are relaxed (and when deemed safe to do so), ensure that all appropriate safety precautions are still observed.

These include (but are not limited to) –

- Adhere strictly to all Australian and (when appropriate) overseas government regulations and guidelines.
- Consult the DFAT website and DFAT Smart Traveller internet service. [smartraveller@smartraveller.gov.au](mailto:smartraveller@smartraveller.gov.au) Do not travel contrary to the DFAT Smart Traveller advice. Where appropriate register travel with DFAT.
- observe at least 1.5 m social distance,
- refrain from personal touch and shaking hands,
- do not share rooms,
- do not share food or eating utensils,
- avoid crowds,
- wear a mask when in crowded situations, and
- adhere strictly to all quarantine regulations.

# Overseas Assignments

## Policy

- (1) The Organisation encourages Volunteers to extend their pro-bono services to include activities overseas, such as supervising, mentoring, training, auditing or assessing projects.
- (2) The Organisation recognises the significant cost involved in such overseas activities; and will reimburse the Volunteer's reasonable travel, accommodation and sustenance costs under the circumstances and procedures approved by the Board.

## Responsible Personnel

The personnel most likely to be involved in implementation are Chief Executive Officer, Resource Development Manager, Finance Manager, Regional Managers and Project Managers.

## Procedures

1. The overseas assignment shall be approved by the Board in advance, before the travel is undertaken.
2. A significant part of the overseas assignment should relate directly to an approved Partner Housing Australasia project, which has been under way for at least six months. Volunteers are encouraged to undertake multiple projects during any overseas assignment.
3. Approval for the overseas assignment's expenditure budget (including the refundable costs of the assignment) shall be obtained from the Board before commencing the assignment. If a proposal is received for expenditure between Board meetings, then the views of the Directors shall be sought by email for tentative approval to be communicated by the responsible Director.
4. The overhead costs of an overseas assignment shall not exceed 15% of the total approved value for the project(s) covered by the assignment.
5. A volunteer performing an overseas assignment on behalf of Partner Housing Australasia shall not be prevented from engaging in incidental recreational activity while on assignment, but the extent of such recreational activity shall be minor in the context of the extent of the assignment; and shall not interfere in any way with the execution of the assignment. Costs associated with recreational or tourist activities shall not be reimbursed by Partner Housing Australasia.
6. When Partner Housing Australasia requests a Partner Organisation to assist them with scoping of Professional Services projects, it will be on the understanding that the Partner Organisation will meet its own costs. The assumption is that the regional communities are the beneficiaries, and any work that undertaken will be in consultation and association with the Partner Organisation. This will lift their profile throughout the region and assist them in obtaining further work in their region.
7. Partner Housing Australasia will refund any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by Volunteers for that part of their visit commissioned by Partner Housing Australasia. (This is because sometimes volunteers also combine a trip with a holiday). Notwithstanding the comments above, any donation of time, travel costs and accommodation costs by Volunteers (and some regularly do) is greatly appreciated
8. The reimbursement of costs shall only be approved if clear objectives, which can only be fulfilled by a site visit, have been identified and documented.
9. As much as is practical, travel shall be economy class, accommodation shall be approximately three-star, and subsistence shall be modest.
10. A comprehensive project report shall be prepared and forwarded to the Board within one month of completing the travel.
11. An itemised account, together with all tickets, dockets, and other relevant receipts shall be presented to the Finance Manager for reimbursement.
12. Payments for such travel shall be made from the general Fund, not the Overseas Tax Deductible Fund.
13. It must be clearly understood by volunteers and the organisation, that the "Constitution, Policies & Code of Conduct" and "Procedures" (and the DFAT requirements) prevent members from profiting by their involvement in the organisation, including overseas assignments. There are occasions when Partner Housing Australasia directors, members and/or volunteers, in the course of their normal business activities, undertake paid work for other commercial organisations, NGOs, governments and/or statutory bodies in the regions in which Partner Housing Australasia operates e.g. Philippines, Solomon Islands, PNG, Vanuatu,

Fiji, Tonga, Cook Islands etc. In these circumstances, they shall declare an interest. The Partner Housing Australasia Board may resolve that such interest is not in breach of the "Constitution, Policies & Code of Conduct" or "Procedures" and is not a conflict of interest., provided it was acquired through the person's professional skill, reputation or own professional network.

14. Conduct during any overseas assignment shall be in accordance with the "Constitution, Policies & Code of Conduct" and "Procedures" including those relating to the Child Protection Policy and Anti-terrorism Policy, and the relevant DFAT requirements.
15. Should any of the Procedures not be met for a particular assignment, Partner Housing Australasia shall consider the particular circumstances and, if appropriate, agree a relaxation or amendment of those conditions for that assignment.
16. Volunteers shall arrange appropriate travel insurance, the cost of which shall be reimbursed by Partner Housing Australasia, and shall indemnify Partner Housing Australasia against any litigation arising from the assignment. Volunteers shall complete the appropriate forms.