



Proposal to State Government: Paid Coordinators in CISVic member agencies

March 2023

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Background

For over 50 years, CISVic member agencies have been the first port of call for people needing help with personal and cost of living matters. They are generalist and place-based, offering information, advocacy, referrals, and support services, including emergency relief. CISVic's service model offers holistic assessment - playing a role in both crisis intervention and prevention – and doing more than just providing a food voucher/parcel. We have evolved to meet the needs of our communities and address service gaps.

We have contact with over 500,000 Victorians every year. As our member agencies operate under face-to-face service delivery models, vulnerable, homeless, linguistically diverse, or elderly clients can drop in and access supports. We assist people who otherwise have nowhere else to turn and are falling through the gaps. Very often they are either not eligible for specialist services, or return to us when specialist services are unable to assist them (e.g. housing and family violence services).

Many of our agencies offer a range of auxiliary services including financial counselling, personal counselling, family supports, tax Help, budgeting advice and No Interest Loans.

Our members agencies deliver services across 31 Local Government Areas (LGAs) – 16 in metropolitan Melbourne and 15 in regional Victoria. We have three specialist members who provide a state-wide service. CISVic member agencies are diverse, with some being small, volunteer-only services, while others are larger, with both paid staff and volunteers. Most are in the Melbourne metropolitan area, and some are in regional areas such as Bendigo, and Shepparton.

Before COVID, the ratio of volunteers to paid staff was 11 to 1. Nearly a third of member agencies are entirely volunteer run.

The crisis

Agencies are currently struggling to meet growing community demand, especially since COVID, and in the context of skyrocketing costs of living. In addition, the volunteer base of agencies has become severely depleted, and the problems people are presenting with are increasingly severe and complex.

While CISVic agencies evidently provide an essential service for community members, most agencies receive no funding for the coordination of volunteers, including for recruitment, induction, support, ongoing training, mentoring, and debriefing. Thus, agencies are struggling to continue their vital support, and many staff and volunteers are close to burning out.

We need to ensure we can continue to deliver a quality service to people in need, and to do this, our volunteer workforce needs to be adequately resourced and supported.

The solution

We are seeking recurrent state government funding for 55 coordinators across 64 sites of \$5.7 million annually.

This will ensure the continuation of vital supports to the community and appropriate guidance and support to the volunteer workforce.

Funding could be directed to CISVic, as the state government funded peak body, for dissemination to individual member agencies (in line with existing emergency relief consortium arrangements).

Costings

Table 1: Paid Coordinator Costings – Per member agency:

Coordinator	Hourly R	On-Costs	Total hrly	Hours pw	Total pw	Total annually
SACS Level 8.1	\$ 57.58	\$ 8.06	\$ 65.64	30	\$ 1,969.24	\$ 102,400.27
Social, Community, Home Care & Disability Services Industry Award 2010 - as of pay table July 2022						

Table 2: Paid Coordinator Costings – Total for all members:

Member Agencies	Total cost per agency	Total for all agencies
55	\$ 102,400.27	\$ 5,632,014.85

Contact

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