

Combined Churches of Eltham Op Shop Policies and Procedures 2025

Role of Volunteers

We aim to achieve a workplace culture where relationships and behaviour are based on cooperation, mutual respect, understanding and trust.

- Always wear your NAME BADGE and leave it at the shop at the end of your shift
- Make the shop welcoming and easy to get into.
- People often visit op shops as a social outlet. Extend a sense of friendliness when it seems appropriate. This can be as simple as passing the day or just listening.
- Offer hospitality such as a cup of tea when it seems appropriate.
- Be ready for any eventuality and treat each person with dignity and respect.
- Volunteers may need to be able to provide information about community services. Such information will be available in the folder.
- Show goodwill to donors and thank them.
- To present a positive image to the community, e.g. Do not hold personal conversations within hearing of customers, respect the privacy of customers and other volunteers.
- Respect the privacy of customers and other volunteers.
- Be accountable and punctual.

Opening:

Please do not open the Op Shop (or keep it open) unless there are at least 2 volunteers in the shop. Put an explanatory notice on the door (suitable notice included in the Volunteers Folder) if you have to close early.

- Remember that the volunteers on duty have the authority to close the shop at any time if they are concerned about the safety of volunteers or customers.
Reasons could include but are not limited to the following:
- Extreme temperatures
- Illness of a volunteer or customer
- Extreme bush fire danger/potential evacuation warning issued by authorities
- Unsavoury people in the area

Entry to building:

The only entry to be used by the general public will be via the new front doors of the building. This door should remain unlocked whilst the Op Shop is operating unless there is a perceived external danger. It should be locked when the Op Shop is closed unless there are other users in the building. After locking, test doors are secure by pulling gently to test the lock. If you need to use any other doors to access or exit the building, ensure they are locked again after you have used them.

Entry to Op Shop:

- For security reasons, only one set of doors should be used. Generally this will be the doors at the Main Road end of the shop. The other set should remain locked.
(The doors can always be opened from the inside without a key in an emergency).
- If the area between the Shop and Main Road is being used for other purposes, we will need to use the doors on the John Street side of the shop and lock the other doors. A sign should be put in the hallway pointing to the alternative entrance.
- Closing the Op Shop: When you close, please ensure:
 - There is nobody left behind (in particular, check the change room and the toilets)
 - Both double doors to the Op Shop are locked
 - All other exit doors from the building are locked
- Mobile phones: Please ensure that there is at least one mobile phone available for use at all times for emergency use (if none is available, the shop should be closed).
- Remember to ensure your "Working with Children" status is up to date.

- You must also have attended the required Safe Church training – you will be advised if updated training is required.
- Be aware and make a written note in the journal if you see anything or anyone of a suspicious nature.
- Do not lift heavy items. Always bend your knees when lifting and seek assistance.
- Have heavy items placed on a table or chair to minimise bending
- Avoid placing big items on the floor where people walk, to minimise trips and falls.
- Use steps, not chairs when reaching for goods. Do not stand on chairs.
- Enter request for repairs in shop daily journal.
- Be aware of what to do in an emergency (later in these procedures).

What To Do If You Get Covid

Close Contacts and Isolation:

If you have COVID-19, or you are a contact of someone who does, read the government's betterhealth website which has some useful advice as well as a checklist (<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-victoria>)

Remember that you will likely be working with volunteers or serving customers who may not be in good health so:

DO NOT COME TO WORK IF YOU HAVE COVID OR ANY COVID SYMPTOMS OR IF YOU ARE A CLOSE CONTACT OF ANYONE WHO HAS COVID. This is an Op Shop requirement as well as Government advice

If you test positive to COVID, and you have been working at the Op Shop in the previous 7 days, you should advise John Ward (0433 959544 or johndavidwardjd@gmail.com).

At End Of Day

- Two volunteers to count the money together and both sign. Place in safe.
- Always at least two people to lock up together and check locks.
- Turn off air conditioners and heaters. The lights should turn off automatically if there is no movement in the area (except in the chapel and the hall (parquetry floor)).
- Record any worrying incident or valuable donation in the journal.

Response to customers

- If people ask for money for food etc. they may be given contact information such as Food Share. See folder for local information.
- We do NOT give out cash from either the shop or our own cash unless one is threatened and then you are advised to give the cash in the CASH REGISTER to the person. Call then police on 000 when the person has departed and notify the President.
- Do not provide customers with financial or material assistance from your own resources.
- Loss and grief - Some donations are made as the result of a death of a loved one or people moving from a house. Such situations can involve a sense of loss for the donor. Our response is to express our thanks and to be sensitive to them.
- NO REFUNDS or returns. Instead you could suggest that the person may wish to donate the goods back.
- We have set a minimum payment using EFTPOS of \$5. Note that this minimum is not fixed and can be waived at the volunteer's discretion.
- Volunteers who purchase items from the op shop MUST PAY for the goods that day before taking the items home. Otherwise ask if the item could be put aside until the next opening day when it may be purchased.

Recognition Of Volunteers

- Training will be dealt with by placing a new volunteer on at least two shifts with preferably three experienced others.
- Regular morning or afternoon teas [bring a plate] will be held for the volunteers

- Minutes of committee are placed in a manual for perusal by volunteers.
- The President reports regularly to EMUC Council.
- In October each year shop volunteers will be invited to submit in writing suggestions about where our funds should be distributed in the following year. For more information speak to one of the committee or the secretary. It is not necessary to find new recipients but we have this option.

Recruitment Of Volunteers

- The recruitment process will be non-discriminatory and people from all demographics and cultural groups are encouraged to apply.
- We will promote volunteer vacancies by word of mouth and use of the local media as well as the church newsletter.
- Potential volunteers will be required to complete a volunteer registration form before commencing on the job training.
- New volunteers must obtain a Working with Children Check before they can volunteer and complete Safe Church training as required.
- Successful applicants will be given details of their position, negotiate shifts and undergo orientation to the shop's policies and procedures.
- Volunteers may request to alter their shifts.
- In the interests of safety, volunteers may be required to provide the following information (which will be held by the Secretary):
 - Name
 - Address and name of contact person in an emergency.

Volunteer insurance

Volunteer's personal accident insurance is maintained for all approved activities undertaken by volunteers. Accident insurance is maintained by The Uniting Church.

- Liability and accident insurance is provided for all volunteers at the op shop provided they are under the age of 90, however those between 80 and 90 years of age are insured at a reduced rate.
- Volunteers over 90 must sign a declaration saying that they understand that they are not covered by insurance and they are required to provide a doctor's letter stating that they are able to continue their duties.

Critical Incident Responses

Combined Churches Op Shop of Eltham acknowledges that a critical incident may occur during a volunteer's shift and outlines the appropriate responses to deal with these situations. It should be noted that serious incidents are very rare in Op Shops.

A critical incident may be an event that has significance for you. It may involve a threat to one's own physical integrity or the physical integrity of someone else, or it may involve a robbery.

A critical incident can also arise from;

- A medical emergency.
- An escalating difficult situation.
- A communication with a customer or colleague. A time when you feel confronted.
- An incident involving conflict, hostility, aggression or criticism.

Volunteers have responsibility for their own personal wellbeing first and then for the safety and wellbeing of others. Protection of property is the lowest priority.

Volunteers will have access to support in managing critical incident that occurs in the course of their work, for example, debriefing with a Committee member or referral for further debriefing with a Counsellor if necessary.

Critical incidents must be adequately documented in the daily journal and signed off by a member of the Executive.

Accident or Medical Emergency

- Decide who will be in charge
- If an ambulance is required ring 000. No land line phone is available at shop.
- State the address of the op shop-
810 Main Rd Eltham, 200 meters north of Eltham Hotel. Corner of John St and Main Rd Eltham.
- Do not leave the person alone and make sure s/he is comfortable, either sitting on a chair or lying on the floor with a head cushion and light cover.
- Ask the person for relevant health history if an ambulance has been called.
- No medication to be given unless self-administered.
- Send second volunteer to the street to guide ambulance to front door. Secure the person's belongings such as handbag, umbrella, stick, spectacles.
- Ask customers to leave unless one is needed to assist.
- Notify a member of the Committee Executive who will contact the next of kin
- Shut cash till and if needed, close the shop.
- There is a first aid box in the shop
- There is a defibrillator on the wall in the Narthex (to the right when you enter the church area from the Op Shop)

Fire Emergency

- Decide who will be in charge. Notify everyone to evacuate
- Phone 000 for Fire Brigade unless it is a small fire that can be contained at once. Give address as 810 Main Rd Eltham, 200 meters north of Eltham Hotel. Corner of John St and Main Rd Eltham.
- Check all rooms if safe to do so.
- Close all doors to minimize spread of fire.
- Access the shop's two fire extinguishers. Read label and if appropriate use to help extinguish the fire. One is near the kitchen and another on top of the white box above the computers on the left as you enter the Chapel area.
- Assemble at rallying point.
- If time, either lock cash box or take cash with you but remember that your personal safety as well as other volunteers and customers is more important than cash and property.
- Subsequently the building will be assessed for safety by Fire Brigade who will decide when people may re- enter the building.
- Notify a member of Committee Executive.
- Complete an incident form as soon as possible.

Violence Emergency

- If you sense that a person may become threatening it is wise to try to place yourself between that person and the exit door to facilitate your escape if needed.
- If the person demands money you are advised to give whatever is in the cash box. but try to avoid giving your personal money.
- Withdraw from a violent situation if possible.
- Evacuate everyone to safety at once if possible. Call 000 [police] and give shop address as –
810 Main Rd Eltham, 200 meters north of Eltham Hotel. Corner of John St and Main Rd Eltham.
- Try to get a description of the person.
- Sometimes an agitated [but not violent] person can be calmed by engaging in conversation and offering a warm drink.
- If you feel fearful, try not to show this, but leave the shop and call police on 000

Motor Vehicle Use

Volunteers are considered on duty when driving their car to undertake designated duties and will be reimbursed for pre-approved out of pocket expenses.

- Driver must have a current driver's licence.
- Driver must have current car registration.
- Driver's car must be insured.
- Parking fines and other traffic infringements are the responsibility of the driver.
- Drivers are to submit a signed out of pocket expenses claim form for petrol including odometer reading at start and finish of journey. Please include your car registration number.

You can find these procedures on the internet at <http://www.elthamptomorencyuca.org/outreach/op-shop/>

Please sign at the end of the Volunteer's Manual to indicate that you have read these procedures:

The Manual will be kept at the check out counter.