

# Management of an Opportunity Shop



## A recommended guide



Anglican Diocese of Melbourne  
209 Flinders Lane  
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# MANAGEMENT OF AN OPPORTUNITY SHOP

## A recommended guide

Many of our Churches offer second hand clothes and goods to the community through an Opportunity Shop. Some of these are small concerns; others are very developed with a commercial aspect. All of them are one of our 'public faces'. All of them resource our Church communities. All are ministry.

This is a working document. Your feedback and contributions can be incorporated as time goes on. If you do have any information on Opportunity Shops or can contribute your own stories of how you have developed your Op Shop ministry we'd love to hear from you.

### **What can we offer within our Op Shops?**

Op shops are not just about buying and selling and making money. The fundraising aspects of op shops are significant and there is always more to learn about sales and marketing. Op shops can provide some of the financial backing needed for mission, whether for local parish or community causes, our Diocesan community care organisations or overseas aid organisations.

Of equal, if not greater significance to fundraising is the reality that op shops are about people and are themselves places of purpose. Op shops offer more than goods for sale - they also offer hospitality, they build community and they practice social inclusion.

The best way we can do this is simply to be open. Keep the door open so people can come in and out. Keep the window open to the light so people can see in and out. Keep our ears and eyes, our hearts and minds open to the opportunity to be a good neighbour through the work of op shops.

We should never underestimate the simple and gentle power of op shops and the ministry of people who work in them. So -what are op shops about beyond buying and selling and making money?

### **Invitation**

Is the op shop welcoming and easy to get into? Create an open space at the entrance which says 'welcome' and invites a little journey of discovery and mystery.

### **Hospitality**

Be discretely attentive to customers and visitors and learn to read the cues they give you when they want to engage in conversation or ask for assistance.

### **Friendship**

People often visit op shops as a social outlet. Those of us who work in op shops also seek friendship through this work. It's a matter of extending this sense of friendliness further where we can. This can be as simple as passing the time of day or just listening.

### **Inclusion**

Different types of people visit op shops –we need to be ready for any eventuality and treat each person with dignity and respect.

### **Safety**

Op shops need to be safe places for ourselves and our customers – we need to be sure we have good safety procedures in case something goes wrong. Can we contact people outside the shop by phone and is there someone we can call on in an emergency? Can we offer a place of safety for customers and visitors – a milestone for the journey, part of their daily or weekly pilgrimage?

### **Story Telling**

Sometimes our work is to listen and talk. When we take the time to listen to others we recognise their value as people. They may share personal things with us and we need to treat these things with confidentiality. Our

listening may be of comfort to people without the need to offer advice or solutions. Sometimes we may share a story from our own life to offer empathy and support. There may be times in our listening, when we see the need for further assistance or professional help and we need to know how to help people find this.

### **Faith Sharing**

Part of our listening and speaking can involve the sharing of our faith stories and journeys. Yet this needs to be done with care and respect. In our conversation with customers or visitors they may sometimes want to talk about matters of faith. It may be that people share stories of how they have been hurt by the church; how they have been discouraged from asking questions; how they have been challenged in their beliefs by life's troubles. We need to be prepared to begin with listening, and to respond with understanding. Once again, we may be in a position to offer further support from others.

### **Information**

Providing information about community resources, services, activities and events can be an important role for op shops as places of community. Part of our role in op shops may be to ensure we know enough information about our community to be able to refer people on to a service, or inform them of different ways to get or give help. It is advisable to access or develop a list of community services available for people living in your area.

### **Volunteers**

Op shops provide a place of community for many people. To what extent are we open to volunteers from the wider community to work with us? Are there any customers who might be interested in becoming a volunteer as well? Are there volunteers who may specialise in a particular area such as books, linen or crockery? Volunteer opportunities can be a way of building community and practicing inclusion – and of course having fun.

### **Creativity and Recycling**

We may be tempted to class some donations as rubbish but sometimes a little creativity can go a long way. There is a revival of crafts using 'waste' materials to make useable and saleable items. This can provide a creative outlet for people who may not be op shop volunteers, but who have an interest in crafts they make at home. This can sometimes be a way of engaging younger people in op shops, by offering an outlet for the inventive re-making of items such as jewellery out of waste materials or jeans with special tears and blotches which can increase their value remarkably.

### **Enterprise**

Related to this is the concept of social enterprise. It may seem impossible, but it can and does work. The idea is that people on low incomes make things on consignment then get a share of the profits when sold. This could be organised in partnership with a local neighbourhood centre, youth program or employment network. For some people having items they have made displayed and sold in our op shop can be a great encouragement to them.

### **Goodwill and Generosity**

Donations and offers of help come our way – how well do we respond? How well do we say thanks?

### **Loss and Grief**

Some donations may be made as a result of the death of a loved one, or people moving house for reasons of work or family. Such situations can involve loss and grief for the people who donate items to our op shop. Once again, our response is to listen well, to show understanding, and offer further support we know is available.

### **Celebration**

Op Shops can be places of compassion, community and justice. It is good to have events to celebrate the work of op shops and the way they contribute to the life of local communities.

Some of our Op Shops are busy creating opportunities to connect with other community groups and individuals, along with working in partnership with other parishes or Anglican organisations.

Below are some ideas and suggestions for developing Op Shop networks.

### 1. Become a resource for community groups

**Special projects:** *There have been a number of appeals from Anglican agencies for a number of different resources. In the last year Anglican Churches have provided magazines for a school program teaching children about emotional resilience, toys for children's play therapists and fabric for a craft group for socially isolated people. Op Shops are great places to broaden these sorts of appeals to the public. Putting out a basket and asking for people to contribute to these special projects lets them know about the scope of our Anglican caring work and opens the door to conversations about what we as a Church are all about.*

**Musical instruments:** *Op Shops sometime find musical instruments among their donations. You could consider making an arrangement with a local community music program where the Op Shop manager contacts the leader of that group when an instrument is donated. A system like this has worked well in the Diocese of Perth - the program works with disadvantaged children through teaching music and is always desperate for instruments and is supported by their local Anglicans through this simple ministry.*

**Scarves:** *Perhaps your Op Shop is situated in an area where large numbers of Muslim refugees have settled, with many more arriving each month? Most refugees arrive with very little and you could consider developing a relationship with a Migrant Resource Centre to supply scarves for newly arrived women who need head coverings.*

**Towels:** *Are often hard to sell. Most often they are sent for rags or discarded. Why not approach your local Vet and offer these as a way of supporting their work, and building up a connection in your locality? These relationships are especially handy when the parish wants to hold a Creation / St Francis Day.*

**Craft materials:** *It is very simple for Churches with a ministry to local aged care facilities and schools to offer support through the Op Shop. For instance, Op Shops can be wonderful resources for materials used in craft activities, fabrics, bric a brac and so on.*

2. **Work experience:** There are a number of people who need practical experience when it comes to work. Young people wanting work experience and some on Centrelink payments have to accumulate a certain number of hours per week to meet various requirements. A supportive, informal environment is very important in these cases and could be offered by an Op Shop.

3. **Community information.** Libraries and local council offices are vital centres for information sharing in local communities. A very simple addition to an Op Shop's set up can make it also a very useful place for sharing important local information. Why not create a notice board, put in a pamphlet stand or table, contact the local library and shire office and offer to display pamphlets and posters? And if you do this, don't forget to put out information with all of this about what you are offering as a local Church.

4. **Vouchers** for your priest or pastoral team to use. Some Churches use their Op Shop to support their pastoral ministry team. They have developed a budget which includes a certain amount towards assistance to people in need. Then vouchers are made up to that money value and are given to the pastoral carers in the parish. When the Priest sees a need, they can give a voucher to that individual or family who can then use it in the Op Shop. A very practical way to support those God sends our way.

5. **Coffee gatherings.** If you have any space in or near to your Op Shop you could try this idea. Why not have a free morning tea scheduled to operate during one or more of the Op Shop's opening hours? This is a way for parishioners to meet and interact with local people, a way for locals to meet each other and for visitors to become more comfortable with Church surrounds.



### **Combining your Opportunity Shop with Other Ministry**

Op Shops are a great point of contact with the local community. In many cases they are the face of the Church and are ideal opportunities for us to engage with people from outside of our congregations and Parishes. They are perfect places to meet people, and share with them some of the prospects our Churches offer for social contact, to hear the Gospel, and to receive support and encouragement.

Op Shops are so much more than fundraisers to keep our Churches going. They are remarkable openings for ministry. One simple way to engage this opportunity is to think creatively about how this doorway into our Church community might lead to other ministries. How might we connect those who shop with us to our playgroup, our social group, the craft ladies, our Sunday worship, the Bible study? How do we offer our community a much greater experience?



### **Op Shop Network**

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*With thanks to:*

*Anglicare WA and the Diocese of Perth, Peter Burke, Richard Brooks.*

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## **1. Opportunity Shop operating procedures.**

These might serve as a guide for parishes considering opening a shop or for those who might like to review their operation. Not all of the headings included here will be relevant to your circumstances, but they do provide an interesting check list of issues that contribute to successful Shop management.

It is a useful practice to provide a written set of guidelines for how your Op Shop is to be managed. Procedures are a good resource for new volunteers, when leadership changes and to provide an overview to the Opportunity Shop Network.

You may consider having procedures dealing with the following:

- Opportunity Shop Operating Procedures
- Store Opening hours
- Opening and closing procedures
- Emergency Contact numbers
- Sorting of goods
- Goods not to be sold
- Pricing
- Reserving goods and purchasing
- Controlling stock
- Sale of goods by commission
- Delivery of large items into stores
- In-house purchases
- Cash handling and petty cash
- Banking
- Shoplifting
- Security
- First Aid
- Occupational health and safety

## **2. Store Opening Hours**

Decide on extent of trading hours.

### **Example:**

The Op Shop is open for full trading during the year:

- Monday to Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm,
- Saturdays, from 10:00am to 1:00pm.

The shop is closed on Sundays and public holidays.

During the traditional Christmas and New Year Holiday period, the shop is closed.

In the second week of January, the shop re-opens on a part-time basis (usually from 10:00am to 2:00pm weekdays) as determined by the number of volunteers available, until the end of January, when full trading resumes.

Volunteers are rostered one month in advance by the Coordinator to work mornings (10:00am to 1:00pm) and afternoons (1:00am to 4:00pm).

### 3. Opening and Closing Procedures

#### Opening:

- Check that there have been no break in's.
- Floor walk through - make sure walkways are clear and that emergency exits are not blocked.
- Float - makes sure that the correct amount of float is in the till and that the safe is locked. Staff working area - make sure the work area is not cluttered and if any hazards are identified, that they are dealt with immediately.
- Stock - shelves and rails to be stocked and checked throughout.
- Shop areas to be tidy.

#### Closing:

- Banking has been completed and float is securely locked in the safe.
- Ensure all bins are emptied at the end of the day.
- No unauthorised persons are remaining on the premises.
- All windows and doors are securely locked.

### 4. Emergency contact numbers

All stores are to display at a convenient place emergency numbers to consist of:

<b>POLICE, AMBULANCE AND FIRE SERVICES</b>	<b>000</b>
St. Somewhere Opportunity Shop	XXXX XXXX
Op Shop Coordinator – First name / Last name	XXXX XXXX
Vicar - St. Somewhere Anglican Parish	XXXX XXXX
Churchwardens	XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX
Somewhere Police Station	XXXX XXXX
Citizens' Advice Bureau	XXXX XXXX
City of Somewhere	XXXX XXXX
TAXI	XXXX XXXX
The Anglican Centre, Melbourne (Op Shop Network)	<b>9653 4220</b>
Glass Repairs	XXXX XXXX
Locksmith	XXXX XXXX

The list needs to be kept up to date and relevant names and numbers available to all staff. A current list of all volunteers needs to be recorded in store.

### 5. Sorting

Goods donated should be sorted and priced by people experienced in this work, and all sorting and pricing is to be organised by the Op Shop Coordinator.

Sorters will determine whether:

- items are to be scrapped because of poor quality,

- items require cleaning or checking for safety,
- old clothing may best be sold for use as rags, etc.,
- items are better sold on commission through another outlet.

*Some examples of the issues covered by this heading are:*

- Whilst sorting stock, protective gloves need to be worn at all times. Gloves are provided by Anglicare WA as part of personal protective equipment. Stress mats are also provided at sorting areas and must be utilised at all times. Sorting of goods need to be done at designated areas only.
- Any items that are to be discarded need to be authorised by a trained member of staff.
- All clothing that has been sorted and is appropriate for sale must be tagged, hung and placed ready for sale on the shop floor.

The sale of goods on commission should be handled by the Op Shop Coordinator. This may require independent valuation prior to sale.

## **6. Goods Not to be Sold (this is a Diocesan policy)**

The following items should **not** be sold by the Op Shop as they may be unsafe - thereby making the shop liable for any injuries, or have difficulty meeting the appropriate re-sale health and other regulations:

- Cots – children or baby
- Mattresses
- Electrical Goods of **any** description (unless in new or original packaging AND covered by the manufacturer's warranty)
- Helmets – cyclists or motor cyclists
- Baby capsules
- Car booster seats
- Prams and Strollers (Government Legislation)

## **7. Pricing**

It is important to have a general pricing guide for items. **See appendix A.**

Pricing of most goods sold in the shop should be in accordance with the prices on the pricelist.

Since the prices are so low, further reductions of prices are not possible, unless specified by the Op Shop Coordinator.

Valuables such as antiques will be independently valued by a reputable dealer prior to pricing or sale by commission.

## **8. Reserving goods and purchasing**

The shop does not provide for 'Lay-bys'.

For customers who do not or cannot pay for goods they wish to purchase, the Op Shop will reserve these goods on hold for two weeks (in storage) to allow the customers to return with payment. Goods going into storage for two weeks must have an "on hold" storage slip filled out and placed with the goods so that dates, prices etc. may be referred to later if necessary. The customer may pay for and collect reserved goods within two weeks of them being placed in storage.

If at the expiry of these two weeks - and after the customer has been telephoned and reminded of the items on hold, the goods will be returned to stock for sale if the customer has not paid for and collected them.

**It is vital that the slip is filled out in full:** When the goods on hold are collected and paid for, this should be recorded in the daily diary - that the money is from reserved goods. Payments or deposits for goods going into 'on-hold' storage should NOT be accepted. Instead, the customer should be advised that full payment is required when the goods are collected.

## **9. Controlling Stock**

Goods may only be removed from the shop for cleaning, repair or valuation.

**All** goods removed from the shop must be recorded in the Goods Removed book provided for this purpose, together with the name of the person taking the goods and the date.

When the goods are returned, the note in the book must be amended to indicate "goods returned" with the date of return.

## **10. Sale of Goods by Commission**

Offers may be made by third parties to sell Op Shop goods on a commission basis.

This may occur when goods of significant value (such as antiques) have been presented for valuation.

The justification for selling goods in this way may be

- size,
- a better price through a third party, or
- some other opportunity.

Those authorised to make arrangements for sale of Op Shop goods by commission will be nominated and a list will be held in the shop.

All goods put on sale in this way must be entered into the "Goods Removed Book". In addition, a receipt for the goods must be obtained from the third party and left in the book.

As a "rule of thumb", the Op Shop approves payment of 15% - 25% commissions to the third party for selling the goods, depending on standard practices employed in the sales trade.

Goods may only be left with and sold through bona fide organisations or individuals.

## **11. Delivery of large items into stores**

Some of the network Op Shops sell furniture and other large items. It is important to be clear about how donations like these are handled safely.

When unloading large items into the store there are steps that need to be taken to ensure the safety of all staff, volunteers and customers. These steps need to be followed to minimise the risk of injury:

- Ensure that the path you intend to take is clear of hazards
- Ensure all staff are aware of your presence and the need to stay out of the way
- Inspect the area where you intend to place the item to ensure adequate room
- Make sure customers are aware and out of the way
- Have a clear understanding with your coworker on the way you intend to move the item
- Make use of any tools provided
- Repeatedly converse with your coworker to ensure the process is going to plan
- Once the item is in place, check with the manager that they are satisfied with the position
- If you feel that an item cannot be moved safely, inform your manager immediately and together make alternative arrangements.

## **12. In-house purchases**

It is important to be clear about the way in which staff and volunteers can use the services of the Op Shop to avoid misunderstanding and even misappropriation. Here are some examples of guidelines dealing with the issue of items purchased by staff and volunteers from the Op Shop.

Staff members and volunteers can purchase goods from their store. A record needs to be kept in store for all staff and volunteer purchases. A receipt book must be allocated at each store for recording all in-house purchases. The manager must be notified of the sale and where possible a copy of the till receipt is to be kept in the receipt book.

## **13. Cash handling and Petty Cash**

Employees and volunteers are employed on the basis that they will be diligent and honest during the course of their work.

Cash may only be handled by a competent staff member. During business hours all cash should be securely stored. Outside of business hours cash should be stored in a safe.

Any losses, thefts and unexplained shortages over a set amount must be immediately reported to the store manager.

The Petty Cash Float from the Op Shop Operating Account is \$100.00 (Op Shops to decide the amount of their float) for purchasing requisites and consumables for the shop.

The Coordinator will keep a written record of purchases and balance of petty cash to report to the Parish Treasurer for the purposes of balancing and auditing accounts.

Petty Cash covers purchases of requisites such as:

- tea, coffee, milk, sugar
- cup-a-soup, biscuits
- stationery and hygiene supplies
- cleaning materials
- first aid supplies
- telephone calls for the Op Shop
- stamps

## **14. Banking**

Banking of cash from sales is carried out direct from the Op Shop at a local branch of the bank used by the Parish for its accounts.

At the end of each trading day, the takings for the day are tallied against the record of sales in the daily diary, and placed in an envelope in safe storage.

The till float (\$100.00 in a mix of notes and coins) is placed separately in safe storage. It is the Op Shop Coordinator's responsibility to coordinate cash deposits in such a way as to ensure minimal accumulation of cash in the shop. This means depositing cash daily or at least every two days. A monthly reconciliation and summary is also generated to compare with Op Shop figures in the Parish Accounts.

## **15. Shoplifting**

Make the store a less attractive target to shoplifters by:

- Placing more expensive merchandise under lock and key, or behind the counter.
- Post signs saying that shoplifters will be prosecuted

What should you do if you suspect someone of shoplifting? To prevent false arrest and establish probable cause for detaining a suspected shoplifter, there are six steps a manager or employee should follow:

- You must see the shoplifter approach the merchandise.

- You must see the shoplifter select the merchandise.
- You must see the shoplifter conceal, carry away or convert the merchandise.
- You must maintain continuous observation of the shoplifter.
- You must see the shoplifter fail to pay for the merchandise.
- You must approach the shoplifter outside of the store.

## 16. Security

Applying simple but sensible security measures benefits all involved and aids the smooth running of the Op Shop.

The first and best guideline to enhance shop security is for those working in the shop to be vigilant.

Guidelines to be observed in the shop are:

- keep the back door locked at all times, except when extra people are in the shop for cleaning, sorting etc. when the rear door can be supervised, i.e., not left open and unattended
- money is to be kept secure in the desk drawer
- large amounts of money are to be put away securely until collected for banking
- counting of money must be undertaken after the shop door is locked at the end of the day.

**POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBER      000   Ask for Police**

*The following is advice extracted from the Victoria Police website document: Preventing armed robbery. Release date: Wed 2 May 2007, last updated: Thu 5 January 2012.*

The majority of armed robberies are not thoroughly planned and a large number are drug or alcohol related making it a potentially dangerous situation. On the other hand, in a planned robbery the robber sometimes goes to great lengths to prepare, and looks over the premises extensively before the event.

### Planning for security

Do not wait until a robbery has occurred to update your security procedures and systems. Improve the safety of both your staff and your customers by adopting a security plan. The Crime Prevention Officer at your local police station can give you practical ideas and advice to suit your business security needs.

### Layout of the premises

An open, uncluttered environment providing a clear, well-lit view of the sales area from outside is a deterrent to armed robbers. Strong interior lighting used with an open glass shop front can make an offender highly visible and increase their chances of being identified.

### If a robbery occurs

During an armed robbery the overall aim should be to ensure the offender leaves the premises as soon as possible, without injuring or harming anyone.

**Do:**

- Remain calm.
- Do exactly as you are told.
- Try to picture a description of the offender.
- Remember where the offenders have been and which way they left the premises.
- Notify police on 000.

**Don't:**

- Confront the offender.
- Touch anything immediately after the event.

**17. First aid**

The Shop should have a standard, basic First Aid Kit - to be used for treating minor ailments and afflictions.

The Op Shop Coordinator must check the contents on a weekly basis to ensure that it has sufficient supplies and that the contents are in good condition. The cost of replenishments is to be borne by petty cash as required.

Whenever the kit is used, it is recommended that a note be left in the daily diary for the Coordinator (for re-ordering purposes).

**All staff and volunteers must know the following:**

- Who the designated first aid person is
- Location of Air conditioners
- Location of First aid box
- Location of Smoke alarms

All staff and volunteers need to know that any incident/accident or hazard needs to be reported to their manager straight away.

**18. Occupational Health and Safety**

All Op Shop staff, including volunteers, should be aware of safe working practices. Attention must always be directed to:

- Tidiness of work areas. (Is your floor clear of obstacles? The shop should be arranged so as to provide a safe environment for all employees, volunteers and customers. The correct placement of tables, shelving and racks will minimise the risk of a person injuring themselves. Routine checking of equipment is also recommended if using second-hand items.)
- Clear floor to avoid people tripping over
- Does your storage area have clutter on the floors?
- Do you have an up-to-date first aid kit? Is it accessible? Does someone know how to use the kit? Location of First Aid kit should be known by all staff
- Clear exits - Are all fire exits clear? I.e. nothing in front of the doorways.
- Careful stocking of shelves – ensure you have safety procedures for reaching high items.
- Correct stools for reaching such higher areas
- No stretching beyond the capacity of the person i.e. within easy reach
- Repetitive tasks
- Be aware of best practice for manual handling of goods.
- Correct placement of appropriate fire extinguishers. Are the extinguishers checked regularly by the CFA or fire brigade? Do the staff know how to use them? Do you have an evacuation plan? Do you know the emergency services number?
- Existence of smoke alarms.
- Preparation of an evacuation plan. Do the staff know about it?

- Ensure that your shop is a safe environment for your volunteers to work in. e.g. no dark corners in the shop.
- Insurance & Claims Procedure Manual For Parishes/Diocesan Entities 2010 Section 12 of the Churchwardens & Treasurers Manual distributed to parishes, is a valuable resource for all matters regarding Risk Management

#### *Tidiness of work areas*

- Walkways and exits to be clear of cords and other tripping hazards
- Work stations to be worker friendly to avoid over stretching
- Clean and hygienic
- All staff and volunteers must be aware of emergency procedures

#### *Evacuation plans*

- Where the exits and muster points are.
- What the process is after all staff have left the building.

#### *Fire*

- Where the appropriate fire extinguishers are held.
- Who the designated warden is.

## **19. Financial Management**

### **Accounts**

The parish churchwardens are responsible to the vestry for the financial accounting of the Op Shop's activities - with the banking and accounting for the Op Shop being included in the processes and accounts of the Parish.

It is however preferable to have a separate working bank account to the normal parish vestry operating bank account. The auditing of Op Shop activities is included in the auditing of parish accounts, which are reported to the Annual Parochial Meeting in October or November each year for the year (October to September).

### **Legal agreements (this is a Diocesan policy)**

The Management Committee is not an independent body and may not enter into employment, leasing/rental or other contracts, except under the authority of the Vestry. All leasing/rental agreements must be in the name of the **Melbourne Anglican Trust Corporation** and be executed (signed) **by the Diocese**. No individual is to sign a lease on behalf of the Op Shop.

## **20. Making a Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting workers, as well as complying with the law. It provides us with important information which can then be used to offer due care to volunteers, staff and those who visit us. It helps you focus on the risks that really matter in your Op Shop – the ones with the potential to cause real harm. In many instances, straightforward measures can readily control risks, for example ensuring spillages are cleaned up promptly so people do not slip, or cupboard drawers are kept closed to ensure people do not trip. For most, that means simple, cheap and effective measures to ensure your most valuable asset – your workforce – is protected.

You are not expected to eliminate all risk, but you are required to protect people as far as reasonably practicable. This section tells you how to achieve that with a minimum of fuss.

This is not the only way to do a risk assessment, there are other methods that work well, particularly for more complex risks and circumstances. However, we believe this method is the most straightforward for our Op Shops.

### **What is risk assessment?**

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. Workers and others have a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to take reasonable control measures.

Accidents and ill health can ruin lives and affect your business too if output is lost, machinery is damaged, insurance costs increase or you have to go to court. You are required to assess the risks in your Op Shop so that you put in place a plan to control the risks.

Follow the five steps:

- Step 1** Identify the hazards
- Step 2** Decide who might be harmed and how
- Step 3** Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Step 4** Record your findings and implement them
- Step 5** Review your assessment and update if necessary

Don't overcomplicate the process. In many organisations, the risks are well known and the necessary control measures are easy to apply. You probably already know whether, for example, you have employees who move heavy loads and so could harm their backs, or where people are most likely to slip or trip. If so, check that you have taken reasonable precautions to avoid injury.

If you are confident you understand what's involved, you can do the assessment yourself. You don't have to be a health and safety expert.

When thinking about your risk assessment, remember:

- a hazard is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer etc.;
- the risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be

### **Step 1**

#### **Identify the hazards**

First you need to work out how people could be harmed. When you work in a place every day it is easy to overlook some hazards, so here are some tips to help you identify the ones that matter:

Walk around your Op Shop and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ask your employees or their representatives what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious to you.

Check manufacturers' instructions or data sheets for chemicals and equipment as they can be very helpful in spelling out the hazards and putting them in their true perspective.

Have a look back at your accident and ill-health records – these often help to identify the less obvious hazards.

Remember to think about long-term hazards to health (e.g. high levels of noise or exposure to harmful substances) as well as safety hazards.

'Workplace hazards' include:

- environment (such as slippery floor surfaces)
- energy (such as electricity or heat)
- manual tasks (heavy lifting)
- noise (constant machinery noise, i.e. air conditioning)
- substance (such as chemicals)
- faulty machinery, equipment and systems

## Step 2

### Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard you need to be clear about who might be harmed; it will help you identify the best way of managing the risk. That doesn't mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of people (e.g. 'people working in the storeroom' or 'passers-by').

In each case, identify how they might be harmed, i.e. what type of injury or ill health might occur. For example, 'sorting staff may suffer back injury from repeated lifting of boxes'.

Remember:

- Some workers have particular requirements, e.g. new and young workers, new or expectant mothers and people with disabilities may be at particular risk.
- Elderly or infirm people who work or visit the Op Shop may be at higher risk
- Extra thought will be needed for some hazards;
- Cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance workers etc., who may not be in the Op Shop all the time;
- Members of the public; and
- ask your staff if they can think of anyone you may have missed.

## Step 3

### Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Having spotted the hazards, you then have to decide what to do about them. You are required to do everything reasonably practicable to protect people from harm. You can work this out for yourself, but the easiest way is to compare what you are doing with good practice.

So first, look at what you're already doing; think about what controls you have in place and how the work is organised. Then compare this with good practice and see if there's more you should be doing to bring yourself up to standard. In asking yourself this, consider:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

When controlling risks, apply the principles below, if possible in the following order:

- try a less risky option (e.g. switch to using a less hazardous chemical);
- prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding);
- organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard; and
- provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination).

Improving health and safety need not cost a lot. For instance, placing a mirror on a blind corner to help prevent accidents is a low-cost precaution considering the risks. Failure to take simple precautions can cost you a lot more if an accident does happen.

Involve staff, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice and won't introduce any new hazards.

#### **Step 4**

##### **Record your findings and implement them**

Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference when looking after people and your business.

Writing down the results of your risk assessment, and sharing them with your staff, encourages you to do this. When writing down your results, keep it simple, for example 'tripping over rubbish: bins provided, staff instructed, and weekly housekeeping checks'.

A risk assessment is not expected to be perfect, but it must be suitable and sufficient. You need to be able to show that:

- a proper check was made;
- you asked who might be affected;
- you dealt with all the significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved;
- the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low; and
- you involved your staff in the process.

If, like many businesses, you find that there are quite a lot of improvements that you could make, big and small, don't try to do everything at once. Make a plan of action to deal with the most important things first.

A good plan of action often includes a mixture of different things such as:

- a few cheap or easy improvements that can be done quickly, perhaps as a temporary solution until more reliable controls are in place;
- long-term solutions to those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health;
- long-term solutions to those risks with the worst potential consequences;
- arrangements for training staff / volunteers on the main risks that remain and how they are to be controlled;
- regular checks to make sure that the control measures stay in place; and
- clear responsibilities – who will lead on what action, and by when.

Remember, prioritise and tackle the most important things first. As you complete each action, tick it off your plan.

#### **Step 5**

##### **Review your risk assessment and update if necessary**

Few workplaces stay the same. Sooner or later, you will bring in new equipment, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense, therefore, to review what you are doing on an ongoing basis. Every year or so formally review where you are, to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back.

Look at your risk assessment again. Have there been any changes? Are there improvements you still need to make? Have your workers spotted a problem? Have you learnt anything from accidents or near misses? Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date.

During the year, if there is a significant change, don't wait. Check your risk assessment and, where necessary, amend it. If possible, it is best to think about the risk assessment when you're planning your change – that way you leave yourself more flexibility.

## **21. Insurance**

### **On Parish Property**

All workers (paid and volunteers) in Op Shops are covered under the Diocese's Public Liability insurances & also for injury under the Volunteers Personal Accident policy.

These insurances cover all volunteer Clergy & Lay volunteers between 7 & 95 years of age, whilst actually engaged in volunteer activity officially organised or authorised by the Parish/Diocesan Entity. Necessary direct travel to, from and during such volunteer activity is also covered.

Please Note: for volunteers over 75 years of age, benefits are limited to non-Medicare medical expenses, home help, additional travel expenses, home improvements/hire of equipment & funeral expenses only.)

The limit of cover for property of Employees & Volunteers whilst on Parish/Diocesan Entity duties & whilst such property is on Parish/Diocesan Entity property is \$5,000 per person, *provided not otherwise insured. A claim will be accepted only upon production of evidence that there is no other insurance, such as Home Contents, in force.*

### **Off Site**

When a Parish/Diocesan Entity conducts an activity, such as a Street Stall, on someone else's property there is usually a request for a Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance.

Please contact the Diocesan Insurance Office (**Tel. 9653 4220**) for further information.

### **Reports to Vestry**

The Management Committee will report to Vestry at least quarterly on the following:

- Trading results.
- Mission issues.
- Security concerns and incidents.
- Expenditure.
- Requests for special expenditure.
- Requests for events.
- Changes to significant Op Shop arrangements.

The Limit of Authority for the management committee of the Op Shop is \$500.00 per item. Expenditure in excess of this amount is to be approved by the Parish Vestry.

## 22. Constitution

The Diocese recommends that every Opportunity Shop should have a written constitution. This will clarify expectations and minimise misunderstandings.

It is important to recognise that the **Churchwardens and Vestry** are always responsible for the operation of the Opportunity shop, even with a Management Committee. Anyone who tries to operate outside this framework puts themselves at considerable personal risk.

An outline of what the Diocese believes to be the essential elements of a constitution is in **Appendix B**.

When developing or modifying your own constitution you should seek your own legal advice and send a draft copy to the Division of Diocesan Services - prior to the constitution being adopted.

**Please Note: The information included here should not be used as legal advice.**

## 23. Opportunity Shop Coordinator's responsibilities and duties

- Maintain a roster of volunteers for duties in the shop, including cover for absentee volunteers, and maintain volunteer morale and well being. The Op Shop Coordinator shall exercise informed judgment when deciding the number of volunteers to be rostered on together.
- Maintain the list of volunteers, including addresses and other contact details.
- Coordinate the volunteer training so that they understand and follow the shop procedures set out in the Op Shop Manual.
- Identify and maintain volunteers to undertake specific roles in the shop.
- Lead and coordinate the sorting of goods donated for sale in the shop, including the distribution of unwanted goods to other charities such as the Smith Family and The Brotherhood of St. Laurence, and the disposal of rubbish.
- Maintain the register of antique and collectable stock.
- Coordinate cleaning of the shop.
- Maintain the Op Shop Key Register.
- Organise and run regular "cut-price" sales.
- Maintain an up-to-date Op Shop Manual, including the standards and procedures recommended by the Melbourne Anglican Diocese for parishes operating Op Shops.
- Attend regular Op Shop Committee meetings.
- Meet regularly as necessary with the Op Shop Committee Convener and/or Vicar.
- Visit other Op Shops in the locale and compare displays, prices and other issues of interest to maintain the Op Shop's competitiveness.
- Maintain supplies of consumables such as tea coffee, milk, etc.
- Maintain First Aid Kit.
- Organise the distribution of Op Shop Newsletter and other forms of communications to volunteers.
- Record and report all incidents to the Op Shop Management Committee and Vestry.
- Ensure banking is carried out regularly each week - cash on the premises is to be kept to a minimum over weekends and other holiday periods.
- Maintain log of hours worked in this role.

## 24. Opportunity Shop Management Committee

The main role of the Op Shop Management Committee is to provide support to the Op Shop Coordinator and to the volunteers.

It does this by:

- reviewing Op Shop activities, to determine where improvements and changes are desirable or required,
- attending to matters of “due diligence” such as insurance, security, safety, council requirements, police matters, etc.,
- reviewing the opportunities for “sales”, and the trends in op shop business in the locale,
- attending to Op Shop needs, such as advertising, new shelving, equipment, etc.,
- reporting to the Vestry on a range of topics, including trading activity, Op Shop requirements, repairs etc., and organising collections of goods for sale, as well as disposal of unwanted or unsaleable items, and
- making recommendations to Vestry on distribution of mission funds.

## 25. Training New Volunteers

The Op Shop is founded on the basis of 'our care for others' - so it is crucial for new volunteers to grasp the importance of being helpful and pleasant to everyone in the shop.

New volunteers are to be given clear explanations to assist them in their duties - to become effective as soon as possible. Therefore, for the first two or three shifts, a new volunteer may be rostered on ideally as a third person, or at least with an experienced person - to allow such staff to understand shop procedures, generally familiarise themselves with the shop and to read this manual.

During these first few shifts, money should not be handled by the new volunteer, neither should they be informed of where the cash is kept overnight or prior to banking. This is intended to protect the staff and shop. It is not meant to be offensive to our new volunteers!!!

Staff with whom a new volunteer is working should inform the Op Shop Coordinator about the person's progress, including any relevant suggestions.

Once the new volunteers have read this manual thoroughly, and have become familiarised with the procedures, they should be rostered with someone who has worked for some time in the shop. At this stage they are permitted to accept payments for goods hand out change and write up the sales book (daily diary).

The Op Shop Coordinator will decide when it is appropriate to inform the volunteers about the fuller procedures regarding handling cash, tallying figures, storage etc. The Coordinator will make every effort to roster each volunteer into suitable shifts.

## 26. Minors and Volunteering

Within the Diocese we recommend the following guidelines for maintaining the safety of children who volunteer:

A supervisor who has obtained a Police check and a **Working with Children Check** *must* be in sight of the child at all times during their shift. If the child has a parent or legal guardian present they are responsible for the welfare of the child. The Supervisor must also have read and understood the **Duty of Care Handbook**, available from your Parish Priest.

There are also some general guidelines which apply to children who volunteer:

### **Minimum age**

The minimum age would generally be recommended as 13 years; however you can use your discretion on an individual basis.

### **Employment during school hours**

A child must not volunteer during school hours on a school day.

### **Hours of work**

It is recommended that a minor work no longer than 3 hours at a time, and has a rest break of at least 12 hours between shifts. We would also recommend that a minor works only during daylight hours.

*If you are unable to obtain a copy of the Duty of Care Handbook from your Parish Priest, you may request a copy to be sent to you from the Diocese. Contact Dorothy Hughes (Children's and Families Ministry Facilitator) on (03) 9653 4220*

You may find it useful to read over the document *Keeping Children Safe at Work* (Overview of Victoria's Child Employment Laws), available from Workforce Victoria. For more information and advice about the *Child Employment Act 2003* visit the Workforce Victoria website at:

**[www.workforce.vic.gov.au](http://www.workforce.vic.gov.au)** or contact a Child Employment Officer on tel. **1800 287 287**.

*Please note*—for volunteers the same legislation does not apply, but this may be useful as a guideline only.

## **27. Working with Children Check**

Volunteers who are working in an Opportunity Shop do not need a WWC Check as the activity is not child-related work within the meaning of the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act).

*If a minor volunteers at the shop they need to be within sight of a supervisor who has a **Working with Children Check** at all times. See above section.*

Under section 9 of the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act), child-related work is defined as work that usually involves, or is likely to usually involve, regular direct contact with a child that is connected with a service, body, place or activity specified in the Act, in circumstances where that contact is not directly supervised by another person.

## **28. Suggested Duties of Volunteers**

- Open shop at 10:00am. Check till float (\$100.00 in various notes and coins) and place in till.
- Close shop at 16:00pm.
- Sell items in the Op Shop at the prices marked or listed in the pricelist - and place cash in till.
- Write down goods sold into the daily diary, and tally up line sub-totals.
- Tally up goods sold each morning and afternoon.
- Place all donated goods in Storage Room for sorting.

- Remove all empty coat hangers from racks.
- Straighten and tidy shelves.
- Ensure that the rear door to the car park is locked, unless an Op Shop person is in attendance at the rear.
- Discard any unwanted goods or rubbish into council bin.
- Wash and or clean any “hard” goods.
- Most importantly, have a good time!!!

## **29. When people ask for money or other forms of help.**

Volunteers working for charities, including op shops, are sometimes approached by people with requests for cash to help them over a tide of bad luck, or to see them through an emergency. Often, they claim to be without food, or they need money to travel urgently to visit family members. There may be other reasons for the need to get some cash in a hurry. Experience shows that sometimes they may not be telling the truth.

In the past, churches have provided some cash to people who have been verified as having a genuine need. Very often a food parcel or clothing provided to the person proves to be of more assistance at the time.

We are obliged to account carefully for the money coming into the Op Shop by way of sales and donations, through the proper keeping of the books, banking, accounting and audits. Giving money from Op Shop proceeds runs the risk of “opening the flood gate”, as word spreads quickly that money is available at the shop. As hard as it may seem, money is NOT to be given out of Op Shop funds to people in need of assistance.

However, because we aim to be charitable, in keeping with our Christian ideals, we should continue to assist people who come to us with a request for help. The Parish supports various services, whose responsibility it is to assist such people in need. It is definitely best to refer these people on to such services, which will make sure the requests are genuine and work out the best form of assistance for them.

Service Groups in this area are on a list in the shop and should be used to refer requests.

## APPENDICES

A – Sample Price List

B – Suggestions/Guidelines for a Constitution

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### Appendix A Sample Price List

#### *LADIES WEAR*

BRAS		\$1
GIRDLES		\$3
SPENCERS	SINGLET	\$1
	LONG SLEEVE	\$2
NIGHTIES		\$2
PANTIES		50c
SLIPS	HALF	\$1
	FULL	\$2
SOCKS		30c
SINGLET		50c
VEST		\$3
DRESSES		\$5
PANTS/JEANS		\$4
SKIRTS		\$4
SHIRTS		\$4
JACKETS		\$5
SUITS		\$8

(Prices apply, unless otherwise marked.)

**Appendix B**  
**DIOCESAN GUIDELINES**  
**CONSTITUTION FOR OPPORTUNITY SHOPS**

The Diocese recommends that every Opportunity Shop should have a written constitution. This will clarify expectations and minimise misunderstandings.

It is important to recognise that the Churchwardens and Vestry are always responsible for the operation of the Opportunity shop, even with a Management Committee. Anyone who tries to operate outside this framework puts themselves at considerable personal risk.

Following is an outline of what the Diocese believes to be the essential elements of a constitution plus an example of a constitution.

When developing or modifying your own constitution you should seek your own legal advice and send a draft copy to the Division of Diocesan Services.

**Please Note: The information included here should not be used as legal advice.**

**GUIDELINES FOR A CONSTITUTION**

**Essential Elements**

Parishes adopting and/or modifying these guidelines are advised to forward a copy of their draft constitution to:

Ken Spackman **General Manager / Registrar**

The Anglican Centre,

209 Flinders Lane Melbourne 3000

Tel: 03 9653 4220

BEFORE being adopted

**AIMS**

- ❖ To benefit.....and its work.
- ❖ To provide a service to the community with cheap clothes and goods for sale.
- ❖ To provide funds for outreach in the community.
- ❖ To provide support for a specific project.

**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Management Committee of the shop shall comprise the following:

**Chairperson**, appointed with the approval of Vestry

**Secretary**

**Treasurer**

And up to **five** other members which may include an **Assistant Secretary** and **Assistant Treasurer**.

There must be at least **one member of Vestry, nominated by Vestry**, on the Management Committee.

A Quorum will consist of a majority (i.e. more than half) of committee members. The Management Committee has the right to appoint replacements as required, subject to **ratification by the Vestry**.

Meetings of Management Committee are to be held monthly/quarterly and Minutes should be kept and sent to Vestry for information.

It is preferable that the Annual General meeting of the Opportunity Shop be held between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November each year but before the AGM of the Parish. ***It is suggested that the annual general meeting of the Management Committee be chaired by the Vicar or a Churchwarden, and that elections of office bearers occur at each annual meeting.***

#### **DISPOSAL OF PROFIT**

An amount of money, determined by the Vestry, is to be retained in the bank for running costs of shop (to be determined annually). The remainder of profit to be assigned quarterly to Vestry for distribution. The Management Committee may make recommendations on the distribution.

Income and Expenditure of Opportunity Shop to be shown as a separate item in the monthly and annual accounts.

#### **POLICY AND OPERATION**

After consultation with Vestry, the Management Committee shall:

- ❖ Operate and manage the Opportunity Shop.
- ❖ Make recommendations to Vestry on rental/lease agreements concerning the Opportunity Shop. Such agreements must be consistent with Diocesan policy.
- ❖ Acquire stock, by donation, for sale in the Opportunity Shop or for distribution without charge to needy people.

#### **AGREEMENTS**

The Management Committee is not an independent body and **may not** enter into employment contracts or leasing contracts, except under the authority of the Churchwardens/Vestry and the Diocese. All lease/rental contracts **must** be in the name of the Melbourne Anglican Trust Corporation and be executed (signed) by the Diocese.

#### **FINANCE**

All monies should be banked at a bank designated by the Vestry. Withdrawals should be signed by any two of the following authorised signatories – President/Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, one other member PLUS 2 others who are authorised signatories of the parish's main operating bank account.

Proper accounts should be kept of all transactions in the Shop, and these accounts should be audited by the Parish auditors and an audited statement of account presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Opportunity Shop and the Parish.

It is the duty of the **Chairperson** and **Treasurer** to inform the **Parish Treasurer** if financial difficulties are foreseen.

#### **ALTERATIONS TO CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution may **only be amended by Vestry**; this should not be done without giving the Management Committee adequate opportunity to comment upon a written draft of the amendment(s).

#### **CESSATION OF OPERATIONS**

In the event of the Opportunity Shop ceasing operations all assets are to be returned to **Vestry** for disposal.

## **EXAMPLE ONLY**

### **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF 'SOMEWHERE' OPPORTUNITY SHOP**

1. The name of the organisation is **THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF *insert name of parish* OPPORTUNITY SHOP**, hereinafter referred to as the **OP SHOP**.
2. The **OBJECTIVES** of the Op Shop shall be:-
  - a. To operate staff and manage the aforesaid Op Shop of *insert name of parish* situated at the *insert location*.
  - b. To raise funds for the Parish.
  - c. To use such funds to benefit the parish and its work and for any future development of the Op Shop.
  - d. To provide a service to the community with cheap clothes and goods for sale.
  - e. To acquire stock by donation for sale or for distribution without charge to needy people.
3. **THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the Op Shop shall comprise the following:-
  - Chairperson, appointed with the approval of Parish Vestry
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer.
  - Up to five other members, one of whom must be a vestry member - and be nominated by the Vestry.

At least two-thirds of the Management Committee shall be enrolled on the Parish Roll.

A quorum will consist of a majority (ie. more than half) of committee members. The Management Committee can appoint replacements as required between annual meetings, subject to ratification by the Vestry.

Meetings of the Management Committee are to be held at least quarterly and minutes must be kept and sent to the Parish vestry for its information.

The annual general meeting of the Op Shop will be held in October or November of each year but before the annual general meeting of the Parish, for reporting and election of office bearers. The annual general meeting of the Management Committee is to be chaired by the Vicar or a Churchwarden who must not be a member of the Management Committee.

The Op Shop coordinator will be convener of the Op Shop and the duties will include keeping a register of all volunteer helpers, re-allocating dates for helpers as required and attending to any day to day enquiries. The coordinator must be a member of the Management Committee.

#### **4. FINANCE:**

All monies will be banked at a bank directed by the Parish Vestry. The Bank Account will be designated as the '**SOMEWHERE**' **ANGLICAN OP SHOP**.

The cheque signatories will be any two of the following signatories – Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, one other member of the Management Committee and two others nominated by Vestry who are also cheque signatories of the Parish's operating vestry account.

The Treasurer will check and balance the daily takings and bank such takings as required.

The profit shall be given at least quarterly to the Parish by the Treasurer of the Management committee - after retaining an amount of money determined by the Vestry for running costs of the Op Shop. The Management Committee may make recommendations on the distribution of this profit.

Income and Expenditure of the Op Shop will be shown in a Cash Book kept by the Treasurer. Proper accounts will be kept of all transactions in the Op Shop, and these accounts will be audited by the Parish Auditor and an audited statement of account presented to the Annual General Meetings of the Op Shop and also the Parish.

The financial year of the Op Shop shall end on 30th September.

It is the duty of the Chairperson and/or the Treasurer to inform the Parish Treasurer if financial difficulties are foreseen.

5. **THIS CONSTITUTION** may only be amended by the Vestry after giving the Management Committee adequate opportunity to comment upon a written draft of the amendment(s).

6. **AGREEMENTS**

The Management Committee is not an independent body and may not enter into employment, leasing/rental or other contracts, except under the authority of the Vestry. All leasing/rental agreements must be executed in the name of the Melbourne Anglican Trust Corporation and be signed by the diocese.

7. **CESSATION OF OPERATIONS** – In the event of the Op Shop ceasing operations all assets are to be returned to the Parish Vestry for disposal.

**DATED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ Two thousand and \_\_\_\_\_.