



Retired and Former Employees Peer Support Program

FAQs

What is the Retired and Former Employees (RAFE) Peer Support Program?

The RAFE Peer Support Program, a collaboration with the Retired Ambulance Association of Victoria (RAAV), is an extension of the existing Ambulance Victoria (AV) Peer Support Program. As such, the program works closely with the Peer Support Program Coordinator and is staffed by volunteers who are former employees.

Why has Ambulance Victoria developed a RAFE Peer Support Program?

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2019-2022 outlines AV's commitment to supporting individuals and their families throughout the life cycle of their career. While working for AV is a rewarding career, it also comes with a range of unique challenges. We no longer accept physical injury, psychological trauma and poor mental health are an expected outcome of our job. Workplace and personal stressors can impact anyone within our organisation, and as such, we provide assistance to all our retired and former operational, corporate staff and first responders beyond their careers with AV.

What is the purpose of Peer Support?

Peer Support recognises that individuals can experience times of emotional distress, work related or personal stress, and sometimes need the support of a peer who can relate to the challenges they experience during their transition to retirement or following their separation from AV.

Peers can provide early intervention reducing the stigma of seeking help and refer people to other internal or external referral pathways to assist them navigating the emotions and challenges they are experiencing.

The volunteer RAFE Peer Support Program is an extension of this support.

Who can access the RAFE Peer Support Program?

Any former employees, including operational, corporate and first responders, can access the RAFE program, as well as their immediate family members. The volunteer RAFE Peer Support Program is available state-wide.

All retired and former employees have access to peer support and referral pathways to other services as required and can access this service via the AV website or the Retired Ambulance Association.

What training have the volunteer RAFE Peer Support Team completed for their roles?

Wellbeing and Support Services (WSS) provides training to the RAFE Peer Support volunteers, identical to the training of all peers. It is important to note that Peer Support volunteers are NOT





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counsellors and DO NOT make psychological assessments. They are good communicators, with essential listening and referral skills.

How can I contact the volunteer RAFE Peer Support Coordinator?

Email the volunteer RAFE Peer Support Coordinator at RAFE.peersupport@ambulance.vic.gov.au and someone will contact you.

If you are in crisis – please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or beyondblue on 1300 224 636. If you or a friend are in urgent need of assistance, please dial 000.

What are the hours the RAFE Peer Support Program is accessible?

The volunteer RAFE Peer Support Program is available between 9am – 5pm, seven days a week. Access and support outside these hours are provided by AV's Peer Support Program.

What can former employees do if they need to speak with a volunteer RAFE Peer Support member after hours?

For all 'emergency' situations call 000. If it is not an emergency but cannot wait until the next day (i.e. after hours) – phone 1800 MANERS (1800 626 377) and select option 1 (Peer Support).

Can the volunteer RAFE Peer Support Volunteers visit past employees at home?

No. For safety reasons, it's preferable that volunteer RAFE Peer Support members meet former employees at a coffee shop, park or other publicly accessible location, if a face to face contact is warranted.

What Wellbeing and Support Services are available to retired and former employees?

The volunteer RAFE Peer Support Program provides a referral service for anyone seeking assistance.

Retired and former employees have access to the volunteer RAFE Peer Support members, and other services such as Chaplaincy, the 24-hour VACU counselling line and, if necessary, limited VACU (AV's contracted clinicians available across Victoria) access by prior agreement for 6 sessions in the 12 months following separation from AV. Referral to these services will be considered in conjunction with other services readily available in the community.



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I am approaching retirement, or will soon be leaving the organisation, and I am interested in being a volunteer RAFE Peer Support member – is this possible?

Currently all volunteer positions are filled. Please register your interest with the Peer Support Program Coordinator at Peer.Support@ambulance.vic.gov.au in the event positions become available or current positions are vacated.

Please contact the volunteer RAFE Peer Support Coordinator at RAFE.peersupport@ambulance.vic.gov.au should you have any other questions.

