

WAM Volunteer Mentor FAQs

What sort of a commitment is required?

- Orientation Training delivered over two full days
- Commitment of approximately 2-3 daytime hours per week for direct work with your participant, could be face-to-face catch-ups or phone calls/texts
- Administration tasks as required such as writing up a summary of your catch-ups
- Attendance at group supervision meetings currently every third Wednesday 6.00-7.30pm at a CBD location (RMIT)

Commitment to the mentoring role is crucial to a mentoring relationship's success. Mentoring can require flexibility in other areas of your life. If you are uncertain about your capacity to commit, discuss this in your interview.

What exactly do mentors do?

What individual mentors do will vary according to the needs of program participants. The relationship is voluntary, egalitarian, and is not a substitute for case management or other professional support. Women are supported by mentors to address the factors that might underlie their contact with the justice system and strengthen pathways to decrease the likelihood of future contact.

As a mentor, you might:

- Support a woman to keep her appointments at court.
- Help someone work towards setting and achieving their goals.
- Go and see a financial counsellor together.
- Assist in connecting with local activities and resources.
- Liaise with Centrelink or Office of Housing.
- Support someone who is experiencing family violence to find their voice.
- Spend quality time together, building up the woman's confidence and self-esteem.

Who participates in the program?

Referrals come from police, courts, legal services, and community organisations for adult women in contact with the criminal justice system, specifically the Neighbourhood Justice Centre in Collingwood, Melbourne, Sunshine, Heidelberg and Frankston Magistrates' Courts.

Participation is voluntarily and takes place at an early stage of contact with the criminal justice system - for example after being arrested, or first appearance at court.

What if I have a criminal record myself?

All volunteers will need to undergo a new criminal record check and are required to hold a current Working with Children Check. If something comes up on your check, we work through it on a case-by-case basis.

Do I need experience?

We value any knowledge or experience that you might bring to mentoring – whether that be through your work, studies, family responsibilities, or things you've just picked up along the way.

To ensure a high standard of accountability, all applicants will undergo a screening, training, and interview process before becoming WAM mentors.

