

## WAM MENTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position:	Volunteer Mentor
Reports to:	Mentor / Program Coordinator

### The Program

Women and Mentoring – WAM Limited (WAM) is an early intervention, community-based crime prevention program for women, trans women and non-binary people who are facing criminal charges, at risk of offending or in contact with the legal system, and are identified as needing additional support to improve their outcomes. Our aim is to reduce incarceration and recidivism, and to promote social inclusion for women, trans women and non-binary people who are facing justice proceedings.

WAM was established in 2009 as a pilot project working with the Neighbourhood Justice Centre in Collingwood. Since then, WAM has become an independent organisation and secured philanthropic and government funding to grow across all Magistrates' Court precincts in metro Melbourne, and more recently Ballarat.

The program aims to support women, trans women and non-binary people at their own pace by providing a trusted mentoring relationship with a screened and trained community volunteer who also identifies as a woman. This relationship encourages self-determination and self-advocacy to assist participants to address the underlying issues behind their offending and meet their social and wellbeing goals.

Participants are referred to the program from various sources including Victoria Police, Corrections, Court Services, legal services and community organisations. Self-referrals are also welcome. Mentors use their own lived experience and are trained and resourced to provide appropriate support to the program participants and commit to meeting regularly with the participant. **Mentors do not have to have any additional qualifications or expertise in specialist areas.**

Our values are integrity, respect, belonging, empowerment, and social justice.

### Position Summary

WAM mentors are good listeners who trust that women are the experts of their own experiences. Mentors believe in a community that is safe and welcoming for all women.

WAM mentors are carefully selected, screened, and trained before working in the program. Each mentor is required to participate in regular supervision with program staff and other WAM mentors.

Key functions of the mentoring role are:

1. **Building rapport:** Mentors focus on listening carefully and attentively to their participant and to focus on hearing the strengths; feeding back about how utilising their strengths they may be able to manage issues and difficulties themselves (rather than fixing issues for them).

2. **Practical Assistance:** Mentors could write court support letters, assist participants to search out and access resources, send appointment reminders, and other tasks as required by the participant. Often this involves working with professional services such as court, police, and the social service sector.
3. **Boundaries:** The mentor is a voluntary representative of WAM and behaves professionally at all times. However, as the role is voluntary, the mentor is also required to consider when activities are beyond the scope of their role and access assistance and referrals with informed consent from the participant.
4. **Social connectedness:** Mentors work with participants on connecting with the community around them. Mentors are knowledgeable about opportunities for positive connections in volunteering, employment, social, activity groups.

### Responsibilities:

- To complete all required training modules for endorsement as a mentor.
- To participate in ongoing training and to attend at least 70% of monthly Peer Supervision sessions or advise the Program Coordinator of non-attendance.
- To conform to ethical standards of behaviour as outlined in the WAM Code of Conduct and Mentor Handbook.
- To engage regularly and consistently as a mentor with their matched participant.
- To abide by the policies and practices outlined in this and other related program documents.
- To report all concerns regarding the safety of participants or others to the Program Coordinator as soon as practically possible.
- To record information as required about contact with participants and provide Mentor Logs to the Coordinator in a timely manner.
- To inform the Program Coordinator if any of their circumstances change that may impact on their ability or eligibility to fulfill the mentor role.
- To provide written reports to the Program Coordinator as required.

### Limitations of Mentoring Role

Mentors do not provide legal advice. Mentors are not a replacement for counselling and other professional interventions. When faced with situations such as alcohol and other drug use, mental health issues, legal issues, family violence, or financial issues the mentor's role is to listen, encourage and support the participant to utilise appropriate services.

### Conditions of Appointment

All applicants will be required to disclose to the Program Coordinator any criminal offence history and undergo a criminal record check. A prior criminal record will not automatically disqualify a person from becoming a mentor, this will be treated confidentially and worked through on a case-by-case basis.

A Working with Children Check (volunteer) is also required. If you already have a WWCC WAM will need to be added as an organisation. Being unable to obtain a WWCC will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Officer.

The names of two character referees must also be provided, who are not related and have known the applicant for more than two years.

### Key Selection Criteria

#### ESSENTIAL

Successful applicants will identify as women or non-binary and will have:

- The ability to demonstrate effective active listening skills and exercise self-awareness.
- An alignment to WAM values (integrity, empowerment, respect, belonging, social justice).
- Regular availability to meet face-to-face during the week, and also receive phone calls.
- The ability to exhibit a non-judgmental attitude to alternate life choices / lifestyles.
- A warm and practical approach, as well as the capacity to be assertive and set firm boundaries.
- The capacity to commit to the program for at least twelve months.

#### DESIRABLE

Some existing knowledge of local community services and/or the criminal justice system would be a great advantage.

Lived experience of the criminal justice system or challenges faced by people who may access this program would also be welcome.

We encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people of varying abilities and non-binary people.

For more information contact:

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