



Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Inc

Role of the Public Officer

To avoid the potential for conflict of interest and observe best practice in governance, it is preferable if the Public Officer does not hold any other office with the House. This may be unavoidable in smaller communities where the number of volunteers is limited. Where it does become necessary to combine the position of Public Officer with other roles, avoid combining the roles of Treasurer and Public Officer or Co-ordinator and Public Officer because of the potential for obvious conflicts of interest.

The *Associations Incorporation Act* does not restrict a Public Officer from holding any other office, unless the Constitution of the House says so. The Act, however, expressly prohibits a Public Officer also holding the office of auditor.

Here is a summary of the role of the Public Officer of a Neighbourhood House.

- Act as the House's official on whom notices are served in a legal sense. For example, a summons to appear in a court has to be served on the Public Officer.
- Maintain custody of the seal or "signature" of the House.
- Convene meetings of any sub-committee.
- Maintain an updated membership register with contact details of all current financial members of the House.
- Receive correspondence from the Business Affairs Office and presents it to the committee for action.
- Make available documentation required by the auditor for purpose of preparing annual financial statements.
- Submit an audited financial statement and list of committee members for the reporting period to the Business Affairs Office.
- Ensure that the process for making changes to the Constitution is followed.
- Notify the Business Affairs Office of any amendments to the Constitution.
- Ensure the House is acting within the rules of its Constitution.
- Refer nominations for membership to the Management Committee.
- Advise nominees of the result of their application for membership.
- Receive notices of resignation from membership of the House.
- Be responsible, in some Constitutions, for signing contracts and agreements on behalf of the House. May also be required to sign cheques and financial documents.
- Arrange for the appropriate documents to be submitted to the Business Affairs Office when a change occurs to the holder of the office of Public Officer.