

# Sydney Olympic Park Authority Policy

<b>Policy Name</b>	Homeless People Protocol
<b>Policy No.</b>	POL03/8
<b>Department File No.</b>	F03/424
<b>Business Unit</b>	Operations & Sustainability
<b>Office Responsible</b>	Executive Manager Events & Precinct Coordination
<b>Approving Officer</b>	General Manager Operations & Sustainability
<b>Date of Approval</b>	

Version	Review	Date	Approved By
1		26 March 2003	
2		May 2007	
3		1 November 2010	
	Reviewed	14 November 2012	GMOS
3.1	Reviewed by Executive Manager, Events & Precinct Coordination	11 February 2014	GMOS
3.2	Reviewed by Executive Manager, Events & Precinct Coordination	February 2015	AGMOS

# **NSW GOVERNMENT PROTOCOL FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE**

## **What is the Protocol**

The Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places (the Protocol) was introduced in 2000 to guide State Government officials about how to relate to homeless people in public places. The most recent version of the Protocol, as released by NSW Government's Family & Community Services, is dated May 2013.

The NSW Government introduced the Protocol to help ensure that homeless people are treated appropriately and receive services if they need, or request them. It is an important element in the Government's strategy for preventing homelessness and responding effectively when it occurs.

The Sydney Olympic Park Authority has been identified as one of the ten Government Agencies required to implement the Protocol.

## **The Protocol**

This Protocol states that a homeless person should be left alone unless:

- they request assistance;
- they appear to be distressed or in need of assistance;
- their behaviour threatens their safety or the safety and security of people around them;
- their behaviour is likely to result in damage to property or to the environment;
- they are sheltering in circumstances that place their or others' health and safety at risk (for example, staying in derelict buildings, high risk areas)
- they are a child who appears to be under the age of 16
- they are a young person who appears to be 16 to 17 years old who may be at risk of significant harm
- they are a child or young person who is in the care of the Director-General of the Department of Family and Community Services or the parental responsibility of the Minister for Family and Community Services.

If homeless people require assistance, you can where possible:

- involve services directly;
- provide advice or information on available services;
- provide a contact point that the homeless person can either call or go to for further advice or help.

## **Endorsing Agencies**

Agencies which have an operational presence in public places or which provide a service to assist homeless people have endorsed the Protocol. Current signatories include:

- Housing NSW;
- Community Services;
- Department of Premier & Cabinet;
- Office of Environment & Heritage;
- NSW Health;
- NSW Police Force;
- Rail Corp;
- State Transit Authority;
- Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority;
- Aboriginal Affairs;
- Ambulance Service of NSW;
- Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

Each agency covered by the Protocol is implementing it within its own business and will determine how it should be implemented by contract staff such as security officers.

Agencies will deal with complaints about the application of the Protocol through their existing complaints mechanism.

### **Underlying Principles of the Protocol**

This Protocol is based on the following principles:

- All people have the same entitlement as any member of the public to be in public places, at the same time respecting the right of local communities to live in a safe and peaceful environment; participate in public activities/events; and carry/store their own belongings.
- People who work in areas where their responsibilities are likely to bring them in to contact with homeless people will receive sufficient information to enable them to assist homeless people if required, or help homeless people make contact with appropriate services if needed.
- Homeless people have diverse backgrounds and needs and these should be considered in any response.;
- Homeless people have the same access to a right of reply and appeals/complaints mechanisms as all members of the public.

### **Where the Protocol Applies**

The Protocol applies only to public places such as parks and open spaces ordinarily accessible to the public. It does not apply to private property, or property which is not generally accessible to the public. It also does not prevent agencies from taking appropriate action where health or safety is at risk, or a breach of the peace, or unlawful behaviour has occurred.

## **Responsibility within Sydney Olympic Park Authority**

The Manager Operations will be responsible for ensuring that the protocol is implemented by operational staff, including security contractors.

### **Contact Officer**

Any enquiries relating to this Policy should be addressed to:

Michael Copping  
Manager, Operations  
Sydney Olympic Park Authority  
8 Australia Avenue  
SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK NSW 2127

Telephone: 9714 7300  
Email: [enquiries@sopa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@sopa.nsw.gov.au)

For further information on the NSW Government Protocol (as it applies other than at Sydney Olympic Park) contact:

Manager, Homelessness Policy and Programs  
Housing NSW  
Locked Bag 4001  
Ashfield NSW 1800

or go to:

[www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au)

## Useful Contact Numbers

Useful contact telephone numbers which can be given to homeless people or which can be contacted for further advice or assistance are listed below:

### **Homeless Persons Information Centre 1800 234 566**

9am to 10pm - 7 days a week.

This is a telephone information service for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

### **Housing NSW After Hours Temporary Accommodation Line 1800 152 152**

4:30pm-10pm Monday to Friday

10am to 1pm Weekends & Public Holidays

Telephone service that provides temporary accommodation for homeless people outside normal Housing NSW office hours.

### **Law Access NSW 1300 888 529**

9am to 5pm

Provides free legal information.

### **Aboriginal Legal Services Limited 02 8303 6600**

Assists Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people with representation in court, advice and information, and referral to further support services

## 24 Hour Services

### **Child Protection Helpline 133 627**

This service is available for reporting child abuse, neglect or risk of harm.

### **Domestic Violence Line 1800 656 463**

This statewide freecall line provides telephone counselling, information and referrals.

### **Lifeline 131 114**

This counselling service takes calls from people needing emotional support.

### **YConnect Line 9318 1531**

This is a recorded message and service helpline for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

### **Rape Crisis Centre 1800 424 017**

This is a statewide telephone and online crisis, support and referral service for anyone to has experienced sexual violence.

### **Salvo Crisis Centre 02 8736 3292**

Trained counsellors are available 24 hours a day for people facing a crisis in their lives.