

# Take the plunge



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Hardship Officer.

Full Time

Position Description



**WESTERNPORT**  
**WATER**

# Position Description

Title	Hardship Officer
Band	3
Location	Newhaven Head Office, Phillip Island
Department	Customer Relations
Division	Customer and Community
Reports To	Revenue Coordinator
Direct Reports	Nil

**The Hardship Officer is responsible for managing and responding to vulnerable customers experiencing financial or personal hardship in accordance with our policies and procedures in a fair and equitable manner, consistent with the requirements of applicable policies and procedures. The Hardship Officer is required to work closely with the Revenue Coordinator in relation to debt recovery matters and contribute to the development of supporting strategies.**

## Key Responsibility Areas

- Respond to customer enquiries regarding payment arrangements and process applications for flexible payment plans.
- Coordinate government funded assistance programs such as the Utility Relief Grant scheme and the Community Rebate Program as well as the application of DHHS Concession Rebates to Customer accounts.
- Complete all actions required in a manner that meets or exceeds the organisation’s obligations under its Customer Charter and the Essential Services Commission’s Customer Service Code.
- Complete monthly reporting and audit of vulnerable customers’ accounts such as direct debit review and broken payment plans.
- Respond to requests for hardship and vulnerable customer data and information from across the business.
- Maintain customers’ direct debit payments, while ensuring integrity and confidentiality is maintained at all times when dealing with personal financial information.
- Manage customer accounts that may have been affected by family violence in accordance with relevant internal and external policies.
- Ensure that work processes and procedures are well documented and updated.
- Support Revenue Coordinator in actioning debt recovery tasks, restriction of water supply & legal action due to non-payment.
- Undertake other duties and functions that may be required from time to time by the Revenue Coordinator and broader Customer Relations Team. Provide Change Leadership to direct work teams and the organisation as a whole as part of the WPW Leadership Team.

- Support the strategy of the organisation as described in the annual Corporate Plan and lead the delivery of Corporate Initiatives as relevant to the work team and/or larger Leadership Team.
- Support and deliver on Corporate KPI's as prescribed annually.
- Provide high level service and assistance to both internal and external customers.
- Other duties as directed within the skills and abilities of a position at this level.

## Qualifications and Experience

- Tertiary qualifications in a relevant field will be highly regarded but not mandatory.
  - Completed Year 10 or equivalent
  - Well-developed administrative and computer skills
- Experience working with customers or clients experiencing financial or personal hardship will be highly regarded.

## Management Skills

- These positions require skills in managing time, setting priorities and planning and organising one's own work and in appropriate circumstances that of other Employees so as to achieve specific and set objectives in the most efficient way possible within the resources available and within a set timetable.
- Where supervision is part of the job, the position requires an understanding of and ability to implement personnel practices including those related to equal employment opportunity, occupational health and safety and Employees training and development.

## Inter-personal Skills

- These positions require the ability to gain co-operation and assistance from clients, members of the public and other employees in the administration of well-defined activities and in the supervision of other employees where appropriate.
- Employees in this band will be expected to write reports in their field of expertise and/or to prepare external correspondence.

## Accountability and Extent of Authority

- Positions in this band may supervise resources, other employees or groups of employees and/or provide advice to or regulate clients and/or give support to more senior employees.
- In positions where the prime responsibility is for resource supervision, the freedom to act is governed by clear objectives and/or budgets, frequent prior consultation with more senior staff and a regular reporting mechanism to ensure adherence to plans.
- In positions where the prime responsibility is to provide specialist advice to clients or to regulate clients, the freedom to act is subject to close supervision or to clear guidelines. The effect of decisions and actions taken on individual clients may be significant but the decisions and actions are always subject to appeal or review by more senior employees.
- In positions where the prime responsibility is to provide direct support and assistance to more senior employees, the freedom to act is not limited simply by standards and procedures, and the quality of decisions and actions taken will often have an impact upon the performance of the employees being supported.

## Judgement and Decision Making

- In these positions, the objectives of the work are usually well defined but the particular method, technology, process or equipment to be used must be selected from a range of available alternatives.
- The work may involve solving problems, using procedures and guidelines and the application of professional or technical knowledge, or knowledge acquired through relevant experience. Problems are occasionally of a complex or technical nature with solutions not related to previously encountered situations and some creativity and originality is required.
- Guidance and advice would usually be available within the time required to make a choice

## Specialist Knowledge and Skills

- Supervisors in this band require an understanding of the relevant technology, procedures and processes used within their operating unit.
- Specialists and employees involved in interpreting regulations require an understanding of the underlying principles involved as distinct from the practices.
- Support employees also require an understanding of the role and function of the senior employees to whom they provide support, an understanding of the long term goals of the unit in which they work, and an appreciation of the goals of the wider organisation.
- All employees in this band require an understanding of the function of the position within its organisational context, including relevant policies, regulations and precedents.

## Organisational Relationships

Internal: Finance Team Customer Relations Team	External: Vulnerable Customers Government Agencies Debt Collection Agencies Financial Councillors
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## Key Selection Criteria

- Demonstrated experience in customer service and administrative processes;
- Demonstrated capability and experience in using computer applications to collect and maintain complete and accurate customer data;
- Sound communication and interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to work as part of an effective team;
- Demonstrated capability to follow detailed procedures or instructions to meet compliance obligations; and
- Demonstrated capability in exercising sound judgement and initiative, while managing sensitive information.



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