



Merri-bek
City Council



Client Services Information

**Aged and Community
Support Services**

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Contact us

To speak to us about any of our support services you can contact us on **9240 2302** or email **homecare@merri-bek.vic.gov.au**

If you would rather speak in a language other than English, we can arrange an interpreter for you.

Welcome to Aged and Community Support

Welcome to Merri-bek City Council's Aged and Community Support Services. We look forward to providing you with high quality care and support.

This booklet contains information on what services are available to you, how they work, and who you can contact if you have any questions.

We provide a fair and inclusive service to all members of the community. We welcome people of all ethnicities, faiths, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities.

Program Funding

Our Support Services are funded by the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) for people over 65 (50 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people), and by the Victorian Government Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) for people under 65 years of age who require some support with daily activities.

Statement of Rights

Your rights are at the heart of the aged care system. They are to make sure your care is safe, respectful, and focused on your needs and choices.

Your rights include:

- Making decisions about your own life.
- Having your decisions accepted and respected.
- Getting information and support to help you make decisions.
- Communicating your wishes, needs and preferences.
- Feeling safe, supported, and respected.
- Having your culture and identity respected.
- Staying connected with your community.

Registered supporters

You can choose to have a registered supporter. This is someone who speaks on your behalf with your permission.

Your registered supporter can be a trusted family member or friend. They can ask for, get and share information, help you understand and communicate your choices. Having a supporter does not stop you from making decisions yourself.

You might choose to have a supporter because you don't feel comfortable talking with Council staff on your own, or if you're not confident about explaining the reasons for your service request or complaint.

Supporters can:

- Give you information about your rights and responsibilities.
- Listen to your concerns.
- Help you solve problems with your service provider (including Council).
- Speak with your service provider if you want to make changes to your care.

A supporter is different from an emergency contact, who is only contacted in an emergency when we are concerned about your well-being.



How we work

Our Aged and Community Support services are designed to help you:

- Stay living safely in your home.
- Remain as independent as possible at home and in the community.

There are new **Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards** to ensure older people have access to safe and quality aged care services.

Council's support services take a 'person-centred' approach.

This means that we:

- Encourage you to do as much as you can for yourself.
- Help you do tasks you need support with.
- Do tasks for you when you are unable to.

Supporting people to stay active and involved is important for wellbeing and independence. This can look different to everyone.

It is normal to need different help at different times in your life. Our support services are designed to change with you.

You might need different help from week to week. Our staff will ask you what help is most important to you each time they visit. If there is something we can't do during one visit, we will plan to do it on the next visit.

If you want to change the support services you receive, we are happy to discuss different options with you. We also review our services regularly and get feedback from the staff who support you.



Code of Conduct

Element	Examples of expected behaviour	Examples of unacceptable behaviour
<p>Act with respect for people's rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking and listening to what consumers need and want. • Talking in a way that is easy to understand. • Helping consumers to make decisions when they need support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling a consumer to do something they do not want to. • Not including the consumer in decisions about their care and services. • Keeping a consumer away from places or activities they want to see or do.
<p>Act in a way that treats people with dignity and respect and values their diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting a consumer's social, cultural, religious and ethnic background. • Working in a way that helps consumers feel comfortable and safe. • Encouraging consumers to speak up about their likes and dislikes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making fun of a consumer's social, cultural, religious, ethnic or health background. • Talking down to a consumer and treating them in a disrespectful way. • Telling a consumer their beliefs are wrong or silly.
<p>Act with respect for the privacy of people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping personal information of consumers safe in line with providers policies. • Being aware of the personal privacy needs and preferences of consumers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not requesting permission of consumers when providing personal care and services. • Providing personal care to consumers in places that are not private.

Element	Examples of expected behaviour	Examples of unacceptable behaviour
<p>Provide care, supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using equipment safely. • Having the right skills, experience and qualifications for the job. • Following provider policies about safe and up to date work practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing care for services you do not have the skills or qualifications to provide. • Not reporting unsafe equipment, unsafe practices or near misses to your provider.
<p>Act with integrity, honesty and transparency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating consumers fairly and not taking advantage of them. • Being honest about your previous experience and training. • Helping consumers understand more about their care and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lying to your provider or to a consumer about what you know, or what you hear or see. • Not disclosing a conflict of interest. • Asking or encouraging a consumer to give you money or a gift.
<p>Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of care, supports and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing how and what to do if something happens. • Speaking up and reporting concerns to the provider to reduce risk of harm. • Making sure consumers feel safe to speak up or make a complaint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not taking action about safety or quality concern. • Failing to be open and honest about a safety or quality concern. • Threatening or telling a consumer not to complain or report a concerns.



Available support services

Personal care

We can help with daily personal tasks to support your wellbeing, safety and comfort.

This may include:

- body washing and showering
- dressing
- eating.

We can help you build your confidence by using equipment or aids, such as:

- a bath seat
- handheld shower
- kitchen aids
- handrails.

Council support staff cannot help with:

- medication
- compression stockings
- applying prescription or medicated creams (eg. sudo-cream), wound management, or collecting prescription medication.

If you need help with medication or other health care, we recommend that you talk to your doctor or My Aged Care.

We offer many different types of support. These include:

- personal care
- domestic assistance
- assisted shopping
- home maintenance
- home modifications
- respite
- delivered meals
- community transport
- social support
- access and support
- assisted activities

You can read more about these services throughout the booklet.

Domestic assistance

Our Support staff can help you around the home with basic household tasks, such as:

- washing clothes
- changing bed linen
- help with meal preparation
- vacuuming the floor, and
- doing your shopping from a list.

Staff will provide you with a list of equipment and products that we can use. This list helps make sure the products used are safe for you and our staff.

Assisted shopping

A Support Worker can take you to the local shops and help you with your basic household shopping. Our per kilometre rate will apply for travel.

Assisted activities

A Support Worker can help you engage with your community your way. Whether it's a shared stroll through a local park, a visit to a favourite cafe, or assistance attending a hobby group, our dedicated staff are here to provide the companionship and practical help you need to enjoy the things you love.

Home maintenance

Home Maintenance staff can do minor repairs and maintenance tasks to help keep your home safe.

We provide a wide range of handy man tasks, this includes:

- changing light globes
- replacing smoke alarm batteries, and
- tightening or replacing tap washers and more.

Home adjustments

Our Home Maintenance staff can install handrails, ramps and fittings in your home. To do this, we will need the technical drawings and instructions from an Occupational Therapist. They will do this as part of their home safety assessment. To arrange a home safety assessment, please contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422**.

Delivered meals

We can deliver tasty and nutritious three-course meals to your home.

When we drop the meals off, we will also come and say hello and check to see how you are. Frozen meals are available on request for weekends and public holidays.

Our menus are developed with the help of dietitians to suit a range of tastes and dietary needs. We have options for special diets such as diabetic, low fat and texture modified.



Community transport

We offer a safe and affordable transport service for eligible residents within Merri-bek.

Our friendly drivers can pick you up and drop you off at home. They can take you to:

- health care appointments
- exercise and rehabilitation programs (like allied health appointments or going to a leisure centre or swimming pool)
- shopping
- visiting friends and family members
- Senior Clubs or Social Support Groups.

All our community buses are accessible for people who use walking frames or wheelchairs.

How do I access the service?

If you are 65 years or older, please register and get a referral through My Aged Care by calling **1800 200 422**.

If you are under 65 years of age, talk to our intake team on **9240 2338** to see if you are eligible to access the service.

Social support

Our Social Support programs provide activities to help you live a socially connected life.

Our activities have been designed to support clients to build confidence, learn new skills, encourage social connection, empower and promote choice and help you remain socially and physically active.

For more information contact us on **9240 2302** or email **homecare@merri-bek.vic.gov.au**

Respite

Caring for someone can be rewarding but also tiring and challenging.

Our Respite service gives carers a chance to take a break or attend to other things. We support the person they care for in their home. Respite care is usually planned in advance but is also available in urgent situations.



Access and support

Our Access and Support officer can help you to connect with others and take part in community life.

Support may include:

- Support with appointments or connecting to local programs and activities
- Guidance on understanding and accessing services
- Help with hoarding and environmental neglect

We help you connect to the right services and remove barriers so you can stay safe, well, and independent.



Your responsibilities

Changing or cancelling your service

If you want to cancel, pause or end a service, please call **9240 2302** between 7.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. If your regular worker is unavailable or your time needs to change, we will notify you via SMS.

Cancelling services:

We require 24 hours' notice if you wish to cancel your next scheduled support service. If you don't give this notice, you will be charged the full scheduled fee.

If you are not home when we arrive for your scheduled service, we will call your emergency contact person to make sure you are safe and well. If we cannot confirm that you are okay by the end of the day, we'll ask the police to conduct a welfare check.

Putting services on hold:

Your service can be placed on hold (paused) for a maximum of 3 months, after which your services may be cancelled. A review will need to be completed to reinstate your services.

Transitioning to different services:

If you are transitioning to the Support at Home program, services provided by Merri-bek City Council will need to end immediately. We will notify you of your last service date, based on information from My Aged Care.

Pets

We understand that your pets are important to you. When we deliver services, your pets must be secured away from the area where we are working, to keep our staff safe.

Respect our staff

It's important to treat our staff with respect. We do not accept aggressive or inappropriate behaviour. Everyone has the right to be safe at work.

Home and equipment safety

Before we start services, we will check that your home and equipment are safe first. Please make sure we have safe entry to your home and that there are no trip hazards.

Our staff will only use products or equipment that are on our approved lists. Please refer to the:

- Approved cleaning products list
- Approved cleaning equipment list

When to expect your services

Service times

Morning service times

Your worker will arrive between 7:00am and 11:30am

Afternoon service times

Your worker will arrive between 11:30am – 5:00pm

Please contact us if you need to discuss the scheduled time or length of your support service.

Please note that we do not provide services on public holidays.

Support staff

We always try to provide a regular support worker for your service. If they are not available we will provide a replacement support worker.

All staff are professional, trained, and qualified to provide the service.



Service costs and how to pay

The support services provided by Merri-bek City Council are subsidised by Government and Council funding.

We will discuss this with you before you start receiving our services.

Council reviews these fees every 12 months.

You will receive one invoice (bill) every four weeks. This invoice will list all the services you have received from our Home Support and Social Support Programs. It will also show the payments you have made. You can choose to receive the invoice by email or in the post.

You are expected to pay your bill in full by the due date. If you do not pay for your services, they will be suspended (stopped). If you are experiencing financial difficulty, please call us to discuss payment options.

Merri-bek City Council may end service delivery if there is:

- A failure to make payment.
- No service use for longer than 3 months.
- An identified health or safety risk.

Feedback and complaints

We welcome your feedback.

Feedback helps us improve the quality of support we provide.

Providing negative feedback will not affect the service you receive.

We handle all complaints fairly and without discrimination. You have the right to make a complaint if you are unhappy with your service.

A supporter can help you make a complaint if you don't feel comfortable managing this on your own. You can choose a trusted family member or friend as your supporter or an independent professional advocate (see the Registered Supporters section in this booklet).

To make a complaint, please first contact Council and ask to speak with a team leader. If this does not fix the issue, or if you feel uncomfortable speaking to a Team Leader, you can ask to speak to a Manager.

If you are unable to resolve the issue directly with Council, please contact one of the following:

My Aged Care

Phone: **1800 200 422** or online
www.myagedcare.gov.au

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

Phone: **1800 951 822** or online
www.agedcarequality.gov.au

Victorian Health Complaints Commissioner

Phone: **1300 582 113** or
www.hcc.vic.gov.au

Victorian Ombudsman

Phone: **9613 6222**.

We have various internal policies that control how we deal with complaints and ensure that everyone has access to fair and equal procedures. You can find out about these by phoning Council on **9240 1111**.

If you are not satisfied with the resolution of your complaint, you can choose to use a registered supporter (see Page 11) to make a new complaint to the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner.



Other important information

Emergencies

All of our support staff know what to do if there is a medical or other emergency while they are with you. If you need CPR, staff will give it, even if you have a Do Not Resuscitate Order (DNR).

If required, we will ensure that an ambulance and/or family member is contacted quickly. Please make sure we have up-to-date contact details for your emergency contacts.

Infection control

All staff who come into your home are trained in infection control practices. This includes the use of personal protective equipment to ensure health and safety for both them and you.

To assist in keeping staff safe, please notify us prior to the shift commencing if you or someone at home is unwell.

Accidental damage

Merri-bek City Council is not responsible for any accidental damage or breakage of household items that occur while a Council officer is in your home. We suggest that you check your House and Contents Insurance for coverage.

Disability parking permits

If you have a disability parking permit, please take it with you when travelling with support staff as a part of your service.

Public holidays

Merri-bek City Council does not provide support services on public holidays.

Extreme weather

In extreme weather conditions, Council will still provide most support services, but some services may need to be changed. Staff will discuss all changes with you.

For example, on very hot days, we may move shopping to the cooler morning hours or do a hygiene clean instead of vacuuming and mopping.

You can learn about staying safe and healthy in extreme weather conditions in Council's newsletter.

Gifts

Staff are not allowed to accept gifts, money or favours from clients. This is to make sure we act ethically, treat everyone fairly, and maintain professional boundaries.



Available advocacy services

Elder Rights Advocacy

Independent and confidential advocacy service for residents who receive Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) funded support services through Council.

Phone: **9602 3066** or **1800 700 600**

Email: **era@era.asn.au**

Web: **www.era.asn.au**

Senior Rights Victoria

Provides information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse and safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people.

Phone: **1300 368 821**

E-mail: **info@seniorsrights.org.au**

Web: **www.seniorsrights.org.au**

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

Provides professional advocacy for residents who receive HACC-PYP-funded support services through Council.

Phone: **1300 292 153**

Email: **enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au**

Disability Justice Advocacy

Provides resources to people who have higher support needs associated with disability.

Phone: **1800 808 126** or **9474 0077**

Relay service: **1800 808 126**

Email: **info@dja.org.au**

Web: **dja.org.au**

Action on Disabilities within Ethnic Communities (ADEC)

Provides advocacy for people with disabilities from a non-English speaking background.

Phone: **9480 7000**

Email: **info@adec.org.au**

Web: **www.adec.org.au**

Association for Children with Disability

Phone: **1800 654 013** or **9880 7000**

Email: **mail@acd.org.au**

Web: **www.acd.org.au**

Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council

Phone: **9380 3900**

Email: **reception@vmiac.org.au**

Web: **www.vmiac.org.au**

The Office of the Public Advocate

Advocates for people who have no other advocacy options and are at risk of abuse, exploitation or neglect. They also provide information, advocacy and advice on the rights of people with disability.

Phone: **1300 309 337** (local call cost).

TTY: **1300 305 612**

Email: **opa_advice@justice.vic.gov.au**

Web: **www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au**

Your privacy

We are committed to protecting your personal information and right to privacy. We only collect personal and health information from you that is relevant to your service and/or which we are obliged to collect by our funding body. This information is collected, stored and used in compliance with the provisions of the Victorian Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014 and Health Records Act 2001 and the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. Council staff will only discuss your services with the people you have given consent for Council to contact. If you wish to access your personal information stored by Council, please phone Council's Privacy Officer on **9240 1111**.

Disclaimers

Although funding for this service has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.

The details are correct at the time of printing, but may change. While we hope this booklet is helpful, Merri-bek City Council cannot guarantee it is free from errors or suits your individual needs, and we are not responsible for any loss or damage resulting from its use.

Information contained in this publication is correct at the time of printing. Subsequent changes to information may occur.

Although this publication may be of assistance to you, Merri-bek City Council does not guarantee that it is without flaws of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes. It and its employees do not accept any responsibility, and indeed expressly disclaim any liability, for any loss or damage, whether direct or consequential, suffered by any person as the result of or arising from reliance on any information contained in the publication.

Contact information

Aged and Community Support services are open Monday to Friday 7:30am and 4:30pm. You can call after hours and leave a message if you need to cancel a service.



(03) 9240 2302



homecare@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Internet relay users:

Connect to National Relay Service.

TTY: 133 677

Speak and listen: 1300 555 727



www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Postal address

Lock Bag 10,
Merri-bek, VIC, 3058



Merri-bek Civic Centre

90 Bell Street,
Coburg, VIC 3058

Speak with us in your language

Per maggiori informazioni nella tua lingua, chiama il numero **9280 1911**

Kendi dilinizde daha fazla bilgi edinmek için **9280 1914**'ü arayın

तपाईंको भाषामा थप जान्नुको लागि,
9280 1910 मा कल गर्नुहोस्

अपनी भाषा में अधिक जानने के लिए, **9280 1918** पर कॉल करें

Para saber más en tu idioma llama al **9280 1916**

如需了解更多您语言版本的信息, 请致电 **9280 0750**

Για να μάθετε περισσότερα στη γλώσσα σας, καλέστε το **9280 1912**

Để tìm hiểu thêm bằng ngôn ngữ của bạn, hãy gọi **9280 1915**

لمعرفة المزيد بلغتك، اتصل
9280 1913 بالرقم

اپنی زبان میں مزید جاننے کے لیے،
9280 1917 پر کال کریں۔

To speak with us in a language not listed here, please call **9280 1919**
For more information visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/your-language