

Frequently Asked Questions

Residential Care Officer (Disability Support Worker): The Role, Recruitment and Training

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About the role

What does a Residential Care Officer do?

Adults with a disability are supported in their homes by staff of the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors.

In a typical household, two to four people sharing their home are supported by a team of Residential Care Officer (RCOs) who provide day-to-day assistance by ensuring the social, emotional and physical well-being needs of people are met. RCO's also can provide short stay respite support to children and adults with intellectual disability in Respite Centres located in regions. RCO's focus on providing support utilising person-centred approaches that reflect individual needs. A casual RCO provides support when a permanent RCO is not available.

What is personal care?

Personal care includes but is not limited to assisting with; personal hygiene and grooming, bathing and toileting; e.g. daily medication as prescribed by their treating medical practitioner; complete health care and mobility.

What is person-centred approach?

A person-centred approach involves knowing what is important to each person who is being supported, to help them to live a good life. This includes:

- Supporting each person to be involved in the running of their own home, friendships, family relationships, and to contribute to their community;
- Knowing how to support each person to be healthy, secure and safe; and
- Supporting each person to achieve personal goals and dreams towards a better life.

Are there mandatory requirements?

Yes. To become a RCO you are required to possess the following:

Australian Driver's Licence

RCO's **must hold** a current Australian Open 'C' class (C or CA) driver's licence. Learner's permits or provisional licences are not able to be considered. A copy of your current driver's licence **must** be submitted with your application.

Note: If you have relocated to Queensland, you will need to produce an Australian Open C Class Queensland driver's licence. **You must apply for a Queensland Open C Class driver's licence if you have lived in Queensland for three months or more.**

Current nationally recognised Provide First Aid and CPR certificates

Applicants **must hold** a current nationally recognised First Aid course and Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) component of the Provide First Aid certification.

Note: Your application will not be progressed if you do not produce copies of these certificate/s with your application or training must be attended and certificate of completion obtained prior to induction.

Can I work for Queensland Government?

You can work for the Queensland Government if you are:

1. an Australian citizen, or
2. a permanent Australian resident, or
3. a non-citizen who has a valid visa permitting you to work. In this case, any work offered cannot extend beyond the expiry date of the visa and you will need to provide evidence of the visa.

NOTE: Due to the nature of the role, applicants who have visas with working restrictions may be unable to meet the training requirements for the position and therefore will be deemed ineligible; for example, Student Visas with restricted hours of working.

Will I need to undergo Criminal History Screening?

Yes. It is a requirement of employment with the department that all employees undergo Criminal History Screening. Having a criminal history may not necessarily result in disqualification from selection, and will depend on the nature of the offence.

Applicants will be asked to complete Criminal History Screening documents at the interview stage of the recruitment process. Inductees may not be offered any support shifts without criminal history clearance.

If an applicant already possesses a current Blue or Yellow Card they are still required to complete documentation for verification and validity of the card.

*NOTE: You do not require a Yellow Card or Blue Card at the time of applying for the position. If you are successful in the casual Residential Care Officer role, your employing Service Centre **may** require you to obtain a Blue Card (this will be organised by the Service Centre).*

What are the working hours?

You will work a variety of shifts including awake night shifts.

Shifts worked can be a minimum of two to a maximum of twelve hours.

NOTE: There is no guarantee on the number of hours a casual RCO may be offered; this is determined by the needs of the service centre.

Accommodation Support and Respite Services Shift and Rostering guidelines state that the maximum number of hours a casual RCO can work in a fortnightly roster period is seventy-six.

Is the Residential Care Officer role for me?

A career as a RCO can be very rewarding but it is not for everyone as the role can be emotionally and physically challenging. The role of a RCO is to provide a direct and positive impact in the lives of people with a disability and their families.

If you're considering applying to become a RCO, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you willing to support people with a disability in a domestic setting?
- Are you physically able to perform domestic tasks, including cleaning?
- Do you have good verbal and written English communication skills?
- Are you a good team member but also can work well by yourself?

- Do you enjoy shift work?
- Do you have the ability to manage extreme situations with calmness and able to problem solve?
- Are you tolerant and non-judgemental and enjoy working with people from diverse backgrounds and needs?
- Are you willing to support people with their personal care requirements involving grooming, toileting, showering, bathing, dressing regardless of age, gender or disability?
- Are you available to attend mandatory training to maintain and develop your skills?
- Do you appreciate the importance to adhere to workplace procedures?
- Are you reliable with a well-regarded work ethic?

If you answered yes to all these questions and have a passion for making a positive difference in the community, perhaps this role is for you.

What are the training requirements?

Do I need a Certificate IV in Disability?

You do not need a Certificate IV to apply for the role. However, it is a requirement to achieve the Certificate IV in Disability within a prescribed timeframe. The department provides the required training and development to enable new RCO's to develop the skills and knowledge to achieve the Certificate IV in Disability within the first year of employment.

If you have a current Certificate III in Individual Support or Certificate IV in Disability and have been working in the disability industry for at least 2 years, you may be eligible to have an individual training plan developed to fast track your first year training program.

Where do I locate my Unique Student Identifier (USI)?

The USI is a commonwealth legislative requirement that stipulates that every student in a nationally recognised training program which includes Provide First Aid is required to have a USI. If you are successful in the recruitment process to attend induction it is important that you provide a USI. To locate your USI, follow the instructions provided in the Fact Sheet (see link below).

It is **essential** that you bring your USI with you on the first day of induction.

You can find information about USI on the website: www.usi.gov.au/documents/students-and-usi-factsheet-students

What is the training schedule?

The 3 week Induction program runs Monday to Friday from approximately 9.00am to 5.00pm (note some training days may finish before 5.00pm). The Induction program will be a mix of face to face training and support shifts in the workplace to orientate you to the role of a RCO.

Induction is **mandatory** and attendance is required every day.

Where are Inductions held?

Inductions are scheduled based on the numbers of new RCO's required and the location of their Service Centres. If successful you will be advised of the location and date of your induction.

For the South East and South West service areas inductions are conducted at the Workforce Capability (WC) training facility located at Wacol. Northern service area inductions are held locally. These locations are subject to changes.

Will I be paid while attending Induction?

While attending Induction you are considered as a paid employee of the department and you will be paid at the casual rate of pay for time spent at training. You are required to make your own travel arrangements unless advised otherwise.

If you are invited to participate in the Flexible Induction Program, you will be paid for both the face-to-face components that you attend and for the online training you undertake instead of the face-to-face. The online training payment will be at the same rate per hour as face-to-face training but will be determined by the nominal hours it will take you to complete the training. You will be able to complete the online training in a shorter timeframe than the equivalent face-to-face training.

Will I be required to attend any other training?

Yes. Once the induction is completed and if you progress to the casual pool you will be required to undertake additional training. The essential practices (EPT) and service centre (SCT) training specifically relates to developing the skills needed to support the people with disability in the houses where you will be rostered. This additional training will enable you to be rostered independently on shifts. All training days are held on weekdays and run from approximately 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Job Readiness First Year Training Program

Following successful completion of the Induction and EPT and SCT programs you will undertake a mandatory job readiness training program. This is the training required for the organisation to support you in your role as an RCO. **Successful completion of the training program includes working 120 hours (minimum) in the workplace**, and can lead to the award of the Certificate IV in Disability. If you possess a current Certificate IV in Disability you **will still** be required to complete the organisational topics within the job readiness training program.

RCO's must undertake and successfully complete compulsory training topics. This training includes various topics and is scheduled throughout the year. You will be expected to be available to attend for up to approximately 8 days of training.

Will I be paid to attend other training?

You will be rostered to attend any required training and paid at the appropriate rate for time spent in training.

If successful, when can I start work?

You will be required to attend and successfully complete the compulsory 3 week Induction program. If you successfully complete the 3 week Induction there **may** be an additional 3-7 days of training required that is specifically related to service users in the houses you will be working in. This additional training will provide you with the essential skills required to be able to be rostered independently on shifts. Your successful completion of induction and any additional days of training will determine the offer of working as a casual RCO.

What if my circumstances change?

If you find that your availability to complete the induction changes due to family or other work commitments, you will need to discuss this with the Service Centre Manager as successful completion of the Induction program is mandatory to commence in the RCO role.

Contact Details for the Workforce Capability Recruitment team

Human Resources and Ethical Standards

Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

Phone: (07) 3035 4643

Email: rcorecruitment@communities.qld.gov.au

Applicants are required to apply online at www.smartjobs.qld.gov.au, follow the prompts and provide

ALL of the required attachments as per the How to Apply section of the Role Profile.

For your application to be considered it **MUST** be complete.

Information provided is true and accurate at time of printing and is subject to change without prior notification.