

Doorways Philosophy

Example:- Phone Assessment Guide

The Phone Assessment Guide below is currently included in “Induction Sessions” for Volunteers and Student Placements at Doorways sites within TSA Tasmania Division

When answering the phone ensure that you do so in a polite manner and include your name in the opening greeting.

Example: “ Salvation Army – Jenny speaking – how can I help you”

Clients will usually want to book in for an appointment and many clients have specific requests regarding the support they would like.

Questions to ask:

“Can you tell me a little bit about your situation”

Listen carefully

Repeat what you have heard using your own words to ensure you are assessing the situation correctly.

Example: *“ What you are saying is that you have received a letter telling you that your power will be disconnected?”*

If still unclear as to why the client is seeking support you might ask :

“Did something happen recently that finds you short of money”

Keep any questions simple and ask only relevant questions. Many clients will give you a large amount of information since clients’ lives are often complex. Try and focus on the most urgent issue

Example: *“ I am sorry to hear that this has happened to you, would you mind going to back to telling me about your current need and what we might be able to do for you”*

Other clients are reluctant to disclose any additional information and we then just make an appointment where possible.

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Ensure that the client is aware we do not book in for specifics such as 'Food vouchers' 'Aurora' etc. Encourage the client to bring in any outstanding bills they feel support is needed with. Again – advise client that the assessment will look at how we can best support them at this time.

Example: “ *When you come in we would like to talk with you to see how we can best support you*”.

Remember that clients may not have much credit for their phone and offer that we return their call if you feel the conversation might take a little longer than a few minutes. With distressed clients it is often advisable to use this as a rule since clients in crisis often are unable to voice lack of credit.

Appointments with a specific worker are usually not made however workers often build trusting relationships with clients and it may be beneficial to the client to see the same worker. When this is requested please check with your coordinator.

Advise the client that this is a booking for an assessment to see how we can best support them, also advise this may take up to 45 minutes.

Make a suitable appointment and ensure to ask the client if they have sufficient for food until their appointment. If no, please invite them to come in to pick up food giving the days and times when this can be collected.

Some centres have pick up points on the grounds where food is left for clients who cant make it to the centre before closing time.

**REMEMBER TO ACKNOWLEDGE CLIENTS FEELINGS
i.e. possibly angry about not being able to be seen today.**

“ I understand that this is difficult for you, we try our best to see everyone as soon as possible”

“Is there anything else we can do for you to make it easier until we see you”

If the client is distressed or you feel this client has to be seen sooner please make contact with facilitator to re-assess the situation. Remember that quite often a solution can be found with the client on phone.

Where needed – take the client's name and phone number and advise that the facilitator will contact them shortly. Pass all details on to facilitator ensuring this is done in a timely manner.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE PERSON CALLING FOR SUPPORT IS LIKELY
TO BE IN CRISIS AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE CALM AND EMPATHETIC**



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Acknowledgement: This document was developed by TSA - AUS - Tasmania Division Doorways Personnel