

## **WORKFARE**

### **GENERAL**

1. **Workfare** is a program whereby able-bodied individuals currently receiving government assistance are required to perform unpaid community service in order to continue receiving financial assistance.

### **BENEFITS AND LOSSES**

2. There are both positive and negative aspects of introducing workfare into St. John Ambulance:
  - a. Volunteer agencies will be asked to enlist workfare people as volunteers. This will include recruitment, training, placement and monitoring (to ensure continued eligibility for financial assistance). Within St. John Ambulance, these tasks are carried out mostly by volunteers. We run the risk of burning out already overloaded volunteers.
  - b. There are many qualified people receiving assistance who may be beneficial to our organization.
  - c. There is a big investment made with each individual joining St. John Ambulance as a volunteer, and once they are trained, we strive to keep them as active members. People joining St. John Ambulance through workfare are unlikely to remain when they no longer qualify for government assistance.
  - d. Individuals now on benefits who want to volunteer will be allowed to do so without having their benefits cut.
  - e. The public now has an image of St. John Ambulance volunteers who are trained to meet national standards, and who are there to help because they care about their community. Will this perception be jeopardized?

### **POLICY**

3. St. John Ambulance agrees to collaborate on workfare under the following conditions:
  - a. St. John Ambulance does not exist to provide opportunities for workfare involvement. Rather, volunteer participation is valued because it helps St. John Ambulance accomplish its mission in the most cost-effective and compassionate manner possible.
  - b. Every individual applying for membership through the workfare program is subject to the same screening procedures as any other candidate.
  - c. St. John Ambulance has the right to deny membership or to dismiss any member of the workfare program according to policies and procedures followed for all other members.

- d. Workfare placements are at the sole discretion of each unit or Branch. Service agreements will be made at the local level.
- e. St. John Ambulance volunteers responsible for recruiting, training, placing and monitoring volunteers will not be subjected to a commitment of personal time or effort beyond the scope of normal responsibilities in the case of members coming through the workfare program.
- f. St John Ambulance may decide at any time to terminate participation in the program.