



St Vincent de Paul Society

CANBERRA/GOULBURN

good works

CONFERENCE PRESIDENT ROLE DESCRIPTION

September 2021

Position title	Conference President
Reports to	Regional Council President
Positions reporting to this position	Conference Members
Primary position objective	Following Christ's example, the Presidents at all levels of The Society endeavour to be servant leaders. They provide an encouraging atmosphere in which the talents, capacities and the spiritual charisms of the members are identified, developed and put to the service of the poor or to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The President of the Conference or Council will have special responsibility for promoting Vincentian spirituality (The Rule, 2012, Part 1, 3.11)
Length of Term	Up to 4 years

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation operating in 153 countries and has 800,000 members worldwide. The Society is one of the largest charitable providers in Australia today, helping people in many areas of need. The Society's work is carried out by members and volunteers and is supported by a small number of professional staff. In Australia there are 1,063 conferences and 14,448 members. The St Vincent de Paul Society operates several Special Works including youth programs, homelessness services and accommodation, retail, refugee and migrant support, mental health and food services, with support from over 36,000 volunteers across Australia.

MISSION

The Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope, and joy, by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.

VISION

The St Vincent de Paul Society aspires to be recognised as a caring Catholic charity offering 'a hand up' to people in need. We do this by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging people to take control of their own destiny.

OUR ASPIRATION

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

OUR VALUES

Commitment: Loyalty in service to our mission, vision, and values

Respect: Recognising our own value and the value of others

Compassionate: Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement

Respect: Service to all regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender, or political opinions

Integrity: Promoting, maintaining, and adhering to our mission, vision, and values

Empathy: Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship, and perception

Advocacy: Working to transform the causes of poverty and challenging the cause of human injustice

Courage: Encouraging spiritual growth, welcoming innovation, and giving hope for the future.

CONFERENCE AS A COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LOVE

“The members meet as brothers and sisters with Christ in the midst of them, in conferences that are genuine communities of faith and love, of prayer and action, spiritual bonds and friendships between members are essential, as is the common mission to help the poor and marginalized. The entire Society is a true and unique worldwide community of Vincentian friends”. (The Rule: 2012 Edition: Part 1: 3.3)

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary duty of the Conference President is to lead the conference in fulfilling the Society’s Mission, Vision and Aspiration. The Conference President is encouraged to do this by:

Conference Leadership and Management

- Being familiar with The Rule and nurturing conference members discussions about The Rule in all meetings and activities.
- Consulting with the conference to appoint office bearers to share in the leadership roles of the conference.
- Appointing a Spiritual Facilitator in accordance with The Rule.
- Ensuring that the conference complies with all higher council policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Providing support to the Conference Secretary to maintain accurate and complete minutes for all conference meetings.
- Maintaining relevant records of the people assisted by the conference as required by Territory Council Policy and Emergency Relief funding requirements.
- Encouraging participation in training and spiritual formation activities to deepen conference members spirituality, foster their Vincentian vocation and support them in their work.
- Providing monthly/quarterly reports to the Regional President in a timely manner.
- Implementing all actions for the safety of persons being assisted, members, volunteers and any other person affected by the actions of the Society and its members as required by WHS legislation, policy and guidelines.
- Promoting and sharing communication from all relevant Society Councils to conference members without delay.
- Supporting the Regional Council President and all Regional Council members in their endeavours and decisions of the Regional, Territory and National Councils.

Representation

- Being an active member of the Regional Council and representing local issues, needs and concerns at the Regional Council meetings.
- Considering the needs of the Society across their Regional Council, the Territory Council and/or the Society in Australia more broadly.
- Communicating regularly to the parish and local community about conference activities, needs and concerns; seeking ways to involve the parish and the local community in the work for the conference.

Recruitment, Formation and Training

- Actively recruiting new conference members and carefully considering the suitability of applicants.
- Maintaining an environment where new members are enthusiastically welcomed, trained, engaged, and respected.
- Ensuring new members complete all paperwork associated with the application process.
- Actively encouraging leadership development in conference members.
- Encouraging and monitoring participation by members in training, including mandatory training which has been developed to enhance their Vincentian vocation and support them in their work
- Developing succession plans for leadership roles within the conference and Regional Council.

Society Ethos, Values and Rule

- At all times conducting oneself in a manner which protects and enhances the reputation of the Society.
- Never accepting any private benefit and informing the Regional President of any perception of conflict of interest in writing prior to any decision.

SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

For the well-being and effectiveness of the Conference, the Conference President, according to Article 5 of Part III of The Rule of the Society will have the responsibility for:

- The Faith based nature of the Conference
- Encouraging reflection and faith development of the members
- Creating a welcoming and friendly environment
- Motivating and encouraging others
- Positive and effective communication
- Delegating to other members
- Engaging and working with a diverse group of people
- Responding to changing needs
- Ensuring ethical and accountable decisions are made on behalf of the Society
- Ensuring compliance regarding any legal or Society policies and procedures
- Encouraging communication with other internal networks and external agencies where required
- Seeking assistance and support from Society and members on human resources, financial, and administrative matters where required.

Please refer to Conference President Skills and Attributes Booklet for further detail.