

SOLIDARITY GUIDE



Five ways you can support others in the cost-of-living crisis





Thank you for downloading The Salvation Army Solidarity Guide.

With the cost of living in Australia currently at the highest it's been in decades, families and vulnerable households – particularly elderly people and single-parents – are under enormous pressure. In fact, 84% said they had found it difficult to meet necessary living expenses, such as housing, food, utilities, and healthcare.

It's especially important we care for our fellow Australians right now. The needs are big – every 17 seconds someone reaches out to the Salvos for help. But we believe that together we can do something even bigger. Whether it is sharing a word of encouragement with someone doing it tough right now, providing a food hamper to someone who cannot afford groceries, or starting your very own fundraiser in your community, we all have the power to do something.

In this guide, we've shared five ways you can care for those around you.

We're grateful for people like you who are eager to support others in times like this. Thank you for helping ensure no one struggles alone.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rodney Walters'.

**Rodney Walters (Colonel)
for The Salvation Army team**

Learn more about domestic poverty



While we are all affected by the cost of living increase, we are not all impacted in the same ways.

1 in 8 Australians live in poverty. Some are only days away from homelessness. Others are skipping meals. With the cost of living rising, those already vulnerable are being pushed to the brink.

For someone living close to the poverty line, an increase in rent, a large electricity bill, or rising costs of essentials and food at the grocery store can become the breaking point. Add to that a missed loan repayment – and the spiral of financial difficulties can become overwhelming.

When we recognise that hard times can come to anyone, and fight against the stigma of seeking assistance, we can help create better paths forward for Australians facing hardship.

Actions you can take today:

- You can learn more about what causes financial hardship or poverty in Australia and its impact on people [on our website](#).
- Go deeper by reading the Australian Council of Social Services' 2022 report "[Poverty in Australia: A Snapshot](#)" to understand the prevalence of and contributors to poverty in Australia.
- Another meaningful way you can learn more is by getting to know people affected by poverty. We have a number of [real-life stories](#) on our website that can help you deepen your understanding.

ACTION TWO

Send a thoughtful gift to someone in need

Along with emotional support, physical support is incredibly helpful in hard times. When money is so tight that you have to make impossible choices like buying food for your family or petrol so you can get to work, a thoughtful gift can bring some much-needed relief.

If you're not sure where to start, we've created a helpful catalogue to take out the guesswork. Each gift in the catalogue meets a real, tangible need and brings hope to someone facing hardship.



[A Hamper of Hope - \\$45](#)

With this thoughtful gift, you will give a struggling family a hamper filled with much needed food and staples to ensure they don't go hungry.



[Street Survival Pack - \\$10](#)

A hygiene street pack with essentials like socks and undies can bring a bit of normality and hope back into the life of someone experiencing homelessness.



[Safe and Sound - \\$125](#)

Your kind gift could provide a night of emergency accommodation for someone escaping violence.

Browse all life-changing gifts in this year's Red Shield Appeal Gift Catalogue by visiting: salvationarmy.org.au/gifts





“People are often overwhelmed when they receive a hamper because it shows that someone is thinking about them.”

— Melanie Cop, Officer, The Salvation Army

ACTION THREE

Volunteer in your local community

Volunteering is a wonderful way to give back to your community, and it offers a multitude of benefits. Volunteering can help you develop new skills, meet new people, gain a sense of fulfilment, and even improve your physical and mental health.

You can help by giving a few hours of your time doorknocking to collect funds for people facing hardship, helping at your local collection point, or by fundraising online. With the cost-of-living crisis placing unprecedented pressure on people across the country, your time is a precious gift.

Ways to get started volunteering today:



[Sign up](#) to join others in your community for a bucket collection or go doorknocking in your local area.



Many people like to get their school, workplace or community groups together to make a difference. [Get in touch with us](#) and we'll help find the best opportunity for you and your community.



For more volunteer opportunities, check out [Volunteering Australia](#).



Organise a fundraiser

Organising a fundraiser for The Salvation Army is a chance to help ensure nobody struggles alone.

Get together with your community group, friends and family and raise funds in person or online. Together you'll be helping provide critical resources and support to people in need. Whether you choose a physical activity, a morning tea, or family sleep out, every dollar raised can make a significant impact on someone's life.

It's easy to create a fundraising page, click here to start: www.fundraise.salvationarmy.org.au



Three ideas for your fundraiser:



Challenge yourself — Take on a physical challenge and use it as an opportunity to make a real impact for the Salvos! Whether it's a walk or a marathon, a long ride or a trek, a big swim or even a fun run, you can push your limits and inspire others while raising money and awareness for those in need in our community. So, lace up your sneakers or shine those wheels and let's make a difference!



Do an event — Fundraising is a wonderful way to bring people together and build new connections. Put together a team at work, school, or your local social or sports group, and host an event to support Australians facing hardship. Here are a few event ideas to consider: morning tea, BBQ or potluck, trivia event, or bake sale. Remember to always seek relevant permissions before hosting a fundraiser at work, school, in your neighbourhood, or at your local community centre/club.



Do a sleep out — Why not dust off your camping gear and sleep rough for one night? You could sleep out solo or invite friends, family, colleagues, or your social groups to join in. Host a sleep out on your couch, in your backyard, at your local sports club or church, or even at a nearby camping ground. Whatever works best! Prefer to keep it low-key? Consider hosting a "pyjama day" or bonfire night instead.

Check-in with your neighbours

Sometimes we have no idea what hardships people are going through behind closed doors.

It can be hard to ask for help when we need it. How well do you know the people around you? What hardships might they be facing at this time?

With the cost of living dramatically rising, many people who might have been financially stable are now struggling to make ends meet. In fact, 75% of people told us that managing financial stress and difficulties has been one of their greatest challenges in the last year.

That's why it's so important we check-in on one another. Checking in can be as simple as starting a friendly conversation with a neighbour, and letting them know they can reach out to you if they need a hand. If someone asks for more specific help than you can offer, or if they're experiencing financial hardship, you could help connect them to a more specialised service.

Actions you can take today:

- Instead of the friendly wave hello, why not take a moment more to strike up a conversation with your neighbour and ask how they are doing?
- Take special notice of the more vulnerable households around you – including single-parents and elderly people who are often hit the hardest in tough times – and ask how you might be of help.
- If someone in your life shares a particular need or could use more specialised support, you might connect them with [The Salvation Army](#) or [a crisis support service](#).



To explore all the ways The Salvation Army assists Aussies in need, visit salvationarmy.org.au or call us at **13 SALVOS (13 72 58)**.



salvationarmy.org.au
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