

Municipal Volunteer Services Summary

Prepared by Katrina Wei for Seniors Serving Seniors, Victoria BC

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Capital City Volunteers

<https://capitalcityvolunteers.org/>

Summary

Capital City Volunteers offer programs and services that support low-income seniors, 65 years of age and older, who live in the City of Victoria to remain living independently in their own homes, rented or owned.

Certainly! Here's the revised table with the **Location** column removed and relevant details moved into the **Eligibility / Notes** column:

Service Name	Description	Eligibility / Notes
The Coffee Club	Weekly social for adults aged 65 and older.	Currently full. Occasionally, spaces may open; contact the office to sign up. Must be registered for a CCV/JBCP program or service to attend.
Outreach (Services for Seniors)	Information about community resources - Info on JBCP programs - Referrals to volunteer services and Better at Home	Available to seniors in Victoria and James Bay seeking guidance on resources and programs.
Volunteer-delivered Services (Services for Seniors)	- In-home friendly visits - Walking - Light gardening - Reading/writing help - Computer support - Income tax prep - Organizing help - Minor home repairs - Dog walking - Medical and errand drives	For seniors in Victoria and James Bay needing practical, non-medical support from trained volunteers.
Better At Home Light Housekeeping (Services for Seniors)	Monthly 2-hour housekeeping service including: - Full bathroom cleaning - Basic kitchen cleaning - Change of bed linens - Garbage/recycling - Floor cleaning - No laundry service is provided	For seniors aged 65+ in Victoria, James Bay, and Oak Bay (must first become a participant with either Capital City Volunteers, James Bay Community Project or Oak Bay Volunteer Services). A fee is charged on a sliding scale; subsidy may be available.

How to become a client & qualifications

- Referral and registration: seniors may self-refer. If living anywhere in the Municipality of Victoria, fill out the referral form: <https://capitalcityvolunteers.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/0.-CCV-Referral-Form-with-Eligibility.pdf>. If living in James Bay, fill out the referral info at the JBCP website: <https://jbcp.bc.ca/seniors/services/>. For Oak Bay, see the Oak Bay section.
- Must register for the program. If unsure, the easiest way would be to call or email the office to get started.
- Services are for low-income seniors (\$35,000 or less for an individual, \$45,000 or less for a couple) age 65+ to live independently in their own home.
- Mainly for those living in the Municipality of Victoria. For certain services, clients can be living in James Bay and/or Oak Bay.

Staff and links/numbers

Address: 547 Michigan Street, Victoria BC V8V 1S5, Canada

Phone: 250.388.7844, Ext. 310

Staff: Joelle Rempel, Capital City Volunteers Outreach Worker

Email: info@capitalcityvolunteers.org

At Capacity? Wait Times?

For volunteer-delivered services, people can be registered quite quickly and use the program as needed. For the ones where clients are matched with volunteers, it does take some time to find the right volunteer as we match based on preferences, interests, etc.

It can vary how long it takes for Joelle (the staff) to reach out to a new referral, as it depends how many are in the queue at any given time. For example, with 8 new referrals, it will take some time to work through all of them, and it might be a couple of weeks before they are all responded to.

The Better at Home Light Housekeeping Program has a lengthy waitlist at present, which could be upwards of a year's wait at this point. The office at CCV is still putting applicants on the waitlist, so once a completed referral comes, Joelle conducts a home visit with that person before placing their name on the waitlist for the Housekeeping Program.

Esquimalt Neighbourhood House

<https://www.enh.bc.ca/seniors/>

Summary

Esquimalt Neighbourhood House Society exists to improve well-being, education, and social change for the community. They help seniors live healthy and active lives by strengthening their support networks, offering support to remain self-sufficient and encouraging involvement within the community.

Services

Service	Description
Non-Medical Support Services	Provides grocery shopping, transportation, light home repairs, and housekeeping for seniors living in Esquimalt, regardless of income.
Free Group Activities	Offers a variety of no-cost group activities designed to encourage creativity, physical activity, and social interaction. For more, see their Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/EsquimaltNeighbourhoodHouseSociety/
Support with Government Programs	Assists seniors with applications for Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) and offers other support to help reduce daily living costs — all free of charge.
Better At Home (Fee-for-Service)	Offers housekeeping and transportation services for Esquimalt seniors. Fees are income-based, with subsidies available depending on financial need.

How to become a client & qualifications

- Referral and registration: call or email the office to get started. There is no referral form or application. Information and referrals to other community resources are available as well.
- Better At Home: the office conducts a mini-assessment on the phone during our first conversation. Guidelines are based on:
 - Age: 65+
 - Area: Esquimalt residents only.
 - Low – Modest Income: Although ENH will consider all income levels as the service is based on a sliding scale, priority is given to people who are in the lower income brackets. During the initial consult, the staff will look at the Notice of Assessment from CRA Line 150000.

- Frailty: ENH considers overall physical and mental well-being and abilities when they assess the need for housekeeping and transportation services.
- Services (excluding Better At Home) are offered to seniors in Esquimalt regardless of income. Services directly provided by the ENH are completely free.
- Other services for seniors: while guidelines similar to those of Better At Home apply, the ENH does not concern itself greatly with this, since the programs are designed to reach all ages and reach lonely and isolated people.
- Social groups are mostly advertised on our website and Facebook, and are first-come-first-served or drop-in.

Staff and links/numbers

(250) 385-2635 ext. 201

Jennifer Lucas

jlucas@enh.bc.ca

At Capacity? Wait Times?

Better at Home:

The Better at Home services currently take 2-3 weeks before an in-home intake is provided.

That intake is a necessary process of onboarding a person into the program and must happen before any housekeeping or drives are provided. The ENH doesn't have a waitlist at this time, but do expect to have one by September. If this happens, the office will be able to explain to any enquirers what the wait time looks like. ENH will not be taking applicants from other catchment areas even though there may already be waitlists in those areas.

Non-medical Services through ENH (individual, group and SAFER services):

They are provided on an as-needed basis and don't require anything other than a phone call to make an appointment at a mutually agreeable time. In terms of SAFER, Jennifer, the program coordinator, can usually find time in under two weeks to sit down and help someone with this type of inquiry.

Oak Bay Volunteers

<https://oakbayvolunteers.org/>

Summary

Oak Bay Volunteer Services (OBVS) provides non-medical support services to Oak Bay residents on a one-to-one basis. They aim to enable Oak Bay residents to maintain or improve their independence and connection to the community through the provision of support services that also engender strong relationships and lasting human connections.

Services

Service	Description
Drives	Transportation assistance to the destination, then back home. Vehicles can often accommodate walkers and wheelchairs.
Destination walks	A volunteer can walk with clients to and from their destination.
Visits	Provides regular home visits to clients.
Social phone calls	Weekly, ongoing phone calls that allow clients to connect with a volunteer from the comfort of their home.
Walks in the community	Weekly, ongoing social walks, or wheelchair push, with a volunteer.
Reassurance phone calls	Scheduled wellness check phone calls that ensure the health and safety of a client who lives alone.
Document assistance	Provides writing support by filling out forms and other documents.
Cultural companion	Enjoy a performance or visit a local gallery or museum together with a volunteer. The volunteer will provide the ride to and back.

Income tax program	As a CRA-designated agency, Oak Bay Volunteer Services provides tax reporting services for clients having a financial status within the lowest tax bracket and, in general, having a simple tax return.
Minor home repairs	Addresses simple household issues should a client not have the financial means for a paid handyperson.
Technology support	Offers minor technology support for clients who need assurance and guidance with using and maintaining technology.
Packing and sorting	Volunteers can assist clients with a minor organizing job.
Gardening	Provides one-time or short-term jobs to help maintain a client's garden and grass (weeding, pruning and mowing), should the individual not have financial means for a paid gardener.

How to become a client & qualifications

- Only for those residing in the municipality of Oak Bay.
- Phone the office, and the Outreach and Services Coordinator will ask a few preliminary qualifying questions and discuss the services and programs with you. After an interview/assessment, the applicant will be in the system at OBV.
- The income tax program: to qualify, you must be a resident of Oak Bay and identify as a senior, a newcomer to Canada or a person living with a disability.
- Certain services are only for those who do not have the financial means to pay for the services at another organization.

Staff and links/numbers

Address: 1442 Monterey Avenue, Victoria, BC V8S 4W1

Email: info@oakbayvolunteers.org

Phone: (250) 595-1034

At Capacity? Wait Times?

For general volunteer-provided services: OBV has enough volunteers to take on new clients, and there isn't a waitlist. For the most part, the OBV has no issue pairing volunteers with new clients/client requests.

An issue for the summer time is that many drivers are on holidays - difficulty filling in requests for drives.

- Once a client gets through the registration and screening process, driving requests require at least a week's notice. It is not guaranteed that a driver can be matched, based on client needs and volunteer availabilities, but the OBV will try their best.
- Some drivers accommodate clients with walkers and wheelchairs, while others may not be.

The Better at Home Light Housekeeping Program has a lengthy waitlist at present, which could be upwards of a year's wait at this point. The office is still putting applicants on the waitlist, so people are still welcome to apply (for more details, refer back to the CCV section).

Saanich Volunteers

<https://www.saanichvolunteers.org/>

Summary

Saanich Volunteer Services Society (SVSS) promotes independent living and enhances the quality of life for Saanich residents by providing coordinated volunteer services and connections to community resources.

Services

Service	Type	Description
Appointment Drives	Volunteer service	Drives to medical and other appointments in the Greater Victoria area. Can accommodate walkers.
Income Tax Filing	Volunteer service	Simple tax filing given that clients fulfill the eligibility requirements outlined in https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/community-volunteer-income-tax-program/lend-a-hand-individuals/about.html
Friendship Calls and Visits	Volunteer service	Provides telephone calls and/or visits to play games or chat with clients.
Food Bank Hamper & Delivery	Volunteer service	Volunteer drivers pick up food hampers from local food banks and deliver to clients weekly.
Minor Home Repair	Volunteer service	Accepts minor, small repairs and refer clients if a professional is required.
Garden & Yard Work	Volunteer service	Pulling weeds, doing minor pruning, or tidying up the yard are all ways Saanich Volunteers help their neighbours. Clients provide the gardening tools when possible.

Shopping Bus	Community program	Coordinated in partnership with The Wellesley, a retirement community in the Victoria area. Clients shop at a local mall and may develop friendships with other participants. If interested, call Sharon at 250-853-2667.
Better At Home	Community program	In partnership with United Way BC, SVSS helps clients access non-medical support through Better At Home, a program that provides adults over 65 years with non-medical needs such as light housekeeping and other volunteer services. There may be a waitlist depending on the time of application.
Tea & Talk	Community program	The second and fourth Wednesday of each month, from 2 until 3:30pm, SVSS hosts an event for those who choose to attend. You do not have to be a Saanich resident, but those who require a volunteer driver must be Saanich residents and call the office a week in advance to coordinate a pick-up. Attendance must be notified at least a week in advance.
Men's Group	Community program	On the first Tuesday of each month, from 10 am to 12 pm at 1445 Ocean View Road, men connect. Drop-ins welcome.

How to become a client & qualifications

- Must be adults living independently within the Municipality of Saanich.
- Phone or email the office for Client Services Coordinator, Sharon Parker, to begin the application process. Following the phone call, an in-home visit will also be conducted.
- The program runs with self-referral, health care referral, or community referral by phone, fax, or e-mail.

Staff and links/numbers

Address: 1445 Ocean View Road, Victoria, BC V8P 1J8

Client Services Coordinator, Sharon Parker

P: (250) 853-2667 or (250) 595-8008 Ext. 126 - for registration

E: sharon@saanichvolunteers.org

General phone: 250-595-8008

General email: contactus@saanichvolunteers.org

At Capacity? Wait Times?

June 26, 2025. Executive Director advises that SVSS has capacity for more referrals. Wait time is about 2 weeks for assessment. Wait time for Light Housekeeping may be longer.

Better At Home - Pacific Centre Family Services

<https://pacificcentrefamilyservices.org/counselling/better-at-home-seniors-services-65/>

Summary

Better At Home supports seniors to remain independent in their homes for as long as possible and stay connected to their community. Services offered in each Better at Home catchment area(s) vary between all programs.

Better At Home works in partnership with municipal organizations to provide services. To become a client, you are generally required to be registered with your community's volunteering organization (eg. The James Bay Community Project, Capital City Volunteers and Oak Bay Volunteer Services). To contact your community, you can use the map search function on their website: <https://betterathome.ca/map-search/>

Services

Better at Home services vary from community to community. They are designed to complement existing services and are based on the unique needs of local seniors. Examples include:

- Friendly visiting
- Transportation
- Light yard work
- Minor home repairs
- Light housekeeping
- Grocery shopping
- Snow shoveling

Services by municipality

Region	Organization	Contact (Person & Info)
Victoria (James Bay & Oak Bay)	- James Bay Community Project - Capital City Volunteers - Oak Bay Volunteer Services	- Zoe Little, betterathome@jbcp.bc.ca, 250-388-7844 Ext. 334 - Joelle Rempel, info@capitalcityvolunteers.org, 250-388-7844 Ext. 310 - info@oakbayvolunteers.org, 250-595-1034
Esquimalt	Esquimalt Neighbourhood House Society	Jennifer Lucas, jlucas@enh.bc.ca, 250-385-2635 Ext. 201

Saanich & Peninsula	Beacon Community Services https://beaconcs.ca/services-programs/health-care-support/better-at-home-services/	Linda Lightbody, llightbody@beaconcs.ca, 250-656-5537
Colwood & Langford	Pacific Centre Family Services Association	Dori Sinclair, dsinclair@pcfsa.org, 778-677-3540
Metchosin	Metchosin Seniors Resource Centre https://metchosinseniors.ca/	Yvonne Cottrell, info@metchosinseniors.ca, 250-478-5150

How to become a client & qualifications

- Pre-registration is required, generally, clients must be registered with their community's organization.
- Please note that a friendly phone visit, home visit and application are part of the registration process to determine if the BAH program would suit the applicant's presenting needs.
- Some services may be completely free of charge, while others are offered on a sliding scale.
- Services vary depending on your location of residence.
- In some areas, they ask that the senior must be able to get in/out of car with minimal assistance. The BAH may also not be able to transport wheelchairs, as this may require specialized assistance.

At Capacity? Wait Times?

Please find the wait times in the specific sections outlining each organization. Wait times are subject to change, so it is always a good idea to call and inquire when you register. Due to the intake process as well as the potential waitlists, you should not expect to receive BAH services as soon as you call our community organization.