

Do you work with young people who may come into contact with Police or PSO's?

Factsheet for Community workers on Victoria Police Receipting Proof of Concept

As part of their [three-year action plan](#) to address community concerns about racial profiling, Victoria Police have committed to implement a trial of 'stop & search' receipting in 2015, called the Receipting Proof of Concept (RPOC). It will be the first project of this type in Australia.

Police and PSO's from Moonee Valley and Greater Dandenong will issue Police Initiated Contact Receipts when they initiate contact with members of the public.

This includes where a police officer or PSO approaches a person and asks them to provide their details, but no law enforcement outcome is recorded (for example, when the person is not given a fine or summons or arrested).

The trial will run in Moonee Valley and Dandenong from April until the end of December 2015. It will also run in Boroondara and Mildura from June until December 2015.

The receipt will look like this.

A receipting trial was originally [proposed](#) by the Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre and law firm Arnold Bloch Leibler in 2010. The aim was to ensure that ethnicity data would be recorded during stops and that people stopped were given a receipt setting out the legal reasons for the stop or search. This was in order to increase transparency, prevent arbitrary and racially discriminatory stops and searches by police, and to track and document any racial disparities in stop and search patterns.

What can community workers do to help?

Community workers can play a vital role in ensuring clients and the wider community understand the aims of the trial and how it will work.

We are asking young people in particular to:

— Ask for a receipt when stopped in public

— Take a photo of the receipt and send it to us on 0476 922 361 along with details of what happened

— Contact us if they feel like they have been targeted or treated unfairly by police

We are asking youth and community workers to:

— Support young people to report to us

— Refer clients that have any complaints or issues

— Contact us if you need any advice regarding policing matters or the receipting trial

Why Receipting?

If undertaken properly, the issuing of a receipt can have four benefits.

Encouraging police to only stop those against whom reasonable grounds exists.

Providing people with clear reasons why they have been stopped.

Collection and public reporting of data about the ethnicity of those stopped would enable the public to track any racial or ethnic disparities, boost the transparency of police activities and help identify further reforms.

Saving police time. British and US research indicates police waste a lot of time stopping and searching people with no justification. If stops were judged in terms of legal outcomes such as prosecutions, the overall number of stops could be greatly reduced, thus lowering the number of innocent people caught up in police operations, as well as the risks of racial profiling.

If done correctly, receipting is an important step that Victoria Police can take to address discriminatory policing practices and perceptions of racial profiling. Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre, the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission and others have identified significant gaps in the RPOC project.

"The current receipting trial ... does not record on police receipts the ethnicity of those stopped by police. In order to answer community concerns around whether particular groups are being subjected to over-policing, we need to have an understanding of whether there are systemic trends. Without the collection and monitoring of data in this area, these questions will not be answered". (VEOHRC)

However, it's still important that people understand why they are being issued with a receipt and what they can do about it.

Education Sessions

We can facilitate education sessions about your rights with police and the receipting trial in Moonee Valley or Dandenong.

For more information, to tell us more about what's happening in your area, or if you have any comments about the system go to www.stopwatchvic.org.au

Victoria Police have multilingual brochures available online at: www.police.vic.gov.au

We run workshops for youth workers and legal practitioners around police powers, complaints and how to support young people whom are experiencing police brutality. Keep an eye out for upcoming events by going to www.policeaccountability.org.au/updateslatestnews

StopWatchVic provides legal education to young community members within the trial zones of the Victoria Police receipting Proof of Concept trials, to increase understanding of and engagement with the pilots, and to monitor and report upon the outcomes.

StopWatchVic is a joint project of:

