Residential rehabilitation at Windana

Information for future residents, their friends, family and support workers.

Residential rehabilitation is a structured program that helps people impacted by alcohol and other drugs make meaningful and lasting change in their lives. We have three residential rehabilitation programs, located in Maryknoll, Geelong and Ballarat. Each offers an initial 90-day (13-week) stay, with the option to extend your stay if more time would support recovery. In our residential programs the people around you – other residents alongside staff – play an important role in your recovery. You'll be in a safe, shared environment where people support each other and learn together.

> *"When I got to Windana I immediately sensed a completely different energy. It was healing, it was nurturing, it was forgiving, it was understanding."* - *Resident*

windana.org.au

WINDANA
Life. Changing.

How the program works

Recovery is not just about addressing your alcohol or other drug use. It's about understanding:

- how your experiences, thoughts and feelings connect to substance use
- how your relationships and environment influence your behaviour
- how to build new ways of coping and living

To support this, your clinician will work with you to create an Individual Care Plan that captures your unique needs and goals and the steps and strategies to achieve them, including any support you may need outside of Windana (e.g. housing support, legal support etc).

Program stages

The program is delivered in stages. As you progress, you'll learn about yourself and your patterns by reflecting on past behaviours, and develop practical skills and strategies to achieve your goals. You'll also take on more responsibility in the community and over time feel more confident and connected. Each stage includes:

- group therapy and education
- one-on-one support with a clinician
- daily routines and shared responsibilities
- learning to live as part of a community

Our sites have community rules that you'll learn in your first few weeks. These make sure the community is safe and supports fairness and shared responsibility. Living in the community gives you the opportunity to build life skills and structure and practice what you learn during your program in everyday situations.

Stage 1: Orientation

This stage is about landing safely in the program. You'll get to know the site, the routine, and the people around you.

You can expect to:

- Take time to settle, feel grounded, and get comfortable
- Ask questions and learn how the program works
- Begin groups and meet with your clinician
- Start thinking about what you want to work on while you're here
- Have your medications reviewed and make sure your health needs are supported

There's no pressure to have everything figured out - this stage is about finding your feet.

Stage 2: Foundations

In this stage, the focus is on building strong foundations for change.

You'll start to:

- Learn more about yourself and what's behind your substance use
- Understand how stress, emotions, and life experiences affect you
- Build a new daily routine with groups, work tasks, and case management
- Start working on your Individual Care Plan goals
- Practice communication and living as part of a community

This stage is about learning skills and understanding patterns so you can make different choices going forward.

Stage 3: Growth & responsibility

This stage is about growth and stepping into more responsibility.

You may:

- Explore deeper emotions and reflect on behaviour and relationships
- Practice new coping strategies and ways of responding to challenges
- Become more aware of how your actions affect yourself and others
- Take on leadership roles, such as mentoring

This is a time to practice what you've learned and build confidence in real life situations.

Stage 4: Readiness & transition

This stage focuses on preparing for life beyond the program, or planning an extended stay if that's right for you.

You will:

- Take on more responsibility and act as a role model in the therapeutic community
- Focus on practical life skills like budgeting, housing, employment, and study
- Work with your clinician to plan next steps that support your recovery

This stage is about feeling ready, supported, and prepared for what comes next.

Stage 5: Extended program

This stage focuses on further strengthening the skills you've developed in Stages 1–4, guided by the goals in your Individual Care Plan.

You'll continue to:

- Be a positive role model and take on leadership within the program
- Build on what you've learned by applying it to real-life situations and noticing what works best for you
- Work with external services, where needed, to support a smooth transition when you complete your program

Residents in this stage may have the option to live in an Integration House.

This stage is about consolidating your progress, building confidence, and preparing for the next step in your recovery journey.

Staff

Our staff includes:

- Alcohol and other drug workers
- Nurses
- Support workers
- Peer support workers
- Naturopaths (for personalised nutritional support)
- Community cook

Learning from and supporting your peers

We often learn best from people who have had similar experiences. Learning from other residents, often referred to as your peers, is a key part of the program. During your stay you will be an active member of the community and encouraged to talk things through with your peers, give and receive feedback and take part in shared decision making. This builds honesty, accountability and trust.

We know that recovery is challenging, but a community that understands what you're going through are always there to support you. We encourage you to ask questions, give yourself time to adjust and lean into the support around you.

Fees

A fixed, fortnightly fee applies during your stay. This is to contribute to rent, food and program costs, as well as any PBS medications.

Residents pay an accommodation contribution of **$770 per fortnight**, or **$517 per fortnight if you are on Youth Allowance.**

Special circumstances will always be considered. If you are unable to afford the fees, an assessment will be conducted to determine and approve a reduced fee.

When our Admissions Team talks to you, they will be able to answer any other questions about fees.

Frequently asked questions

What happens when I arrive?

When you are new you will have time to settle in and get your bearings during an Orientation Stage. This time will give you a chance to watch, listen and learn. You'll develop an understanding of how the community functions and what your role in it will be.

Will I get my own room?

Most people will stay in a double room. It is likely you will be sharing your room with another resident for some, if not all of your stay. It's also likely that you'll move rooms during your program. Single rooms are available for residents with certain accessibility needs.

Can I have visitors?

Yes. After you move out of Orientation and into Stage 1, visitors can be arranged. Before you request a visitor, you will need to discuss it with a clinician and peers so they can help you make sure your visitor is a safe person to have come into the community.

Are phone calls allowed?

You are allowed to call someone in the first 48 hours after you arrive. After Orientation is complete, you can request to make two personal phone calls per week of up to 15 minutes each. Incoming calls are not generally permitted, however if our staff are contacted with an emergency or important issue they will speak to you.

Am I allowed to go out?

After three weeks you can apply to leave with an approved escort. The escort can be another resident, a staff member, or a family member or friend who is currently sober.

Can I go to outside appointments?

This will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Access to external appointments is usually limited.

Can I work off-site during my stay?

No. Our structured programs requires full focus. Those in the extended program (Stage 5) may receive permission to work off-site on a case-by-case basis.

What do I bring?

After it is confirmed that you are coming, we will contact you to make sure you have everything you need. Usually this is simply your clothing, toiletries, prescribed medication and prescriptions. You can bring two bags in total.

You will be able to do some personal shopping for necessities, so you don't need to pack toiletries to last the duration of your stay.

What would I be eating?

There is a focus on whole foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, grains and lean meat. Trying to eat in season is also important.

As food is vital for physical and emotional health, Windana's Food as Medicine Program is in place. This helps educate residents on how food can support recovery, and guides the meals residents plan and prepare.

Can I smoke or vape?

Windana allows the use of therapeutic nicotine vapes supplied through our approved pharmacy. We will discuss this with you at intake.

Can I come if I am experiencing mental health challenges as well as alcohol and drug dependence?

Yes. However before coming our Intake Team will have a detailed look at your circumstances to make sure we are going to be the best fit. There are supports across Windana for residents who experience both mental health challenges and alcohol and drug dependence.

What happens when I finish the program?

You will leave with skills to manage alcohol and drug dependence. Before you leave you will work with your Case Manager for support. Those in the extended program (Stage 5) may also have the option to live in an Integration House.

We will work with you during your time to ensure you are connected with services from Windana and the wider community.

Do I need to do a withdrawal program before coming?

Yes. This can be through Windana or another organisation, either residential or home-based.

Referral

All admissions require a referral.

In Victoria, your local catchment-based Intake and Assessment service is your primary point of entry into alcohol and other drug treatment.

To find your local Intake and Assessment service, contact **DirectLine** on **1800 888 236** (available 24/7). You can also go to **www.directline.org.au**

When you get in touch with your local Intake and Assessment service, you can expect to speak with a clinician about your relationship with alcohol and other drugs. Together you will decide whether you need further assessment or treatment. Your clinician will help you find the most suitable services for you. You are welcome to suggest Windana's residential rehabilitation programs.

You can also reach out to Windana directly for more information by calling **03 9529 7955** Monday to Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm.

If you are already referred and are coming to stay a Windana staff member will be in touch to prepare you for arrival.

Find out more about our programs

windana.org.au

windana@windana.org.au

03 9529 7955

Our residential rehabilitation sites

Ballarat

Geelong

Maryknoll

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Life. Changing.

We celebrate and respect diversity in all its forms including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, sex, gender, sexuality, age, culture, language, disability and lived experience.

Alcohol and other drug counselling and referrals are also available 24/7 by calling DirectLine on 1800 888 236 or visiting directline.org.au
This program is supported by the Victorian Government.