

Policy title:	VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICY
Policy number:	1.2.25
Objective:	To provide clear directives and guidelines to both volunteers and Council staff on their roles, responsibilities and expectations to the Volunteer Program
Link to community vision/service:	An inclusive and aware community/community participation in decision making; and Safety and wellbeing of the community
Program Area:	Integrated Planning
Policy created: 16/3/15	Council reviewed: 13/10/15
Last reviewed by staff: Review due 13/10/16	TRIM Ref: ED15/14699 &ED16/33353

Definition

Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. Volunteering is always a matter of choice and is never exploitative or used to replace paid employment. A volunteer seeks to enhance the services already delivered by Council. They do not seek to replace the core activities of Council staff, nor is it recruitment program for new employees however; volunteers who demonstrate exceptional standards of work may be encouraged to apply for an externally advertised position, should one arise. They will not however, be guaranteed a position or be considered an internal applicant.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is:

1. To provide the opportunity for community members to fully participate in community life and develop their skills, interests and expertise.
2. For Council to partner with the community so that a high quality and depth of programming and services can be provided to the community.
3. To ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.
4. To ensure that Council's financial interests are assured.

Scope

This Volunteer Program Policy applies to:

- Individuals aged 9-90 years who wish to volunteer with Council;
- All Councillors (including the Mayor) and all Council staff who wish to volunteer their time;
- Ongoing regular volunteering;
- Episodic or reactive volunteering, such as place making;
- Brokered volunteering, where Council partners with other agencies around the supply of volunteers; and
- Virtual volunteering, where volunteers work online.

This Policy does not apply to:

- Individuals under the age of 9 or over the age of 90 who wish to volunteer with Council;
- Individuals or community organisations conducting projects on Council owned land that have not been given permission by Council;
- Individuals that have not been officially appointed as a volunteer by Council or brokered through an agency by Council;
- Work experience placements; and
- Section 355 Management Committees.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Council has a firm commitment to establish and maintain a high quality system of managing volunteers and has consulted the following legal documents in the development of this Policy:

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012.*
- *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002.*
- *Local Government Act 1993.*
- *Pesticides Act 1999.*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.*
- *Public Interests Disclosures Act 1994.*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011.*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011.*

This Policy complies with the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* sanctioned by Volunteering Australia.

Related Documents

This Policy needs to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Volunteer Program Procedure (Our Ref: ED15/17630)
- Handbook for Volunteers (Our Ref: ED15/29265)
- Corporate Procedure 1.2.77 Grievance and Complaint Handling (Our Ref: Informer)
- WHS Volunteer Program Protocol (Our Ref: ED13/24860)
- Electronic Volunteers Register (Our Ref: EF15/303)
- WHS Procedure Alcohol and Other Drugs (ED13/21210)
- Forms / Templates as follows:

TITLE	OUR REF
Volunteer Program Approval for out-of-pocket expenses	ED15/30637
Volunteer Program Attendance (Sign In / Out) Register	ED15/30642
Volunteer Program Engagement Agreement	ED15/30629
Volunteer Program Evaluation Form	ED15/30656
Volunteer Program Exit Interview	ED15/30639
Volunteer Program Incident Report	ED14/22776
Volunteer Program Induction Checklist	ED15/30647
Volunteer Program Interview Questions	ED15/30643
Volunteer Program Job Description	ED15/30622
Volunteer Program Post Training Evaluation Form	ED15/30653
Volunteer Program Registration Form	ED15/30632
Volunteer Program Risk Assessment - Generic	ED15/27428

Implementation

The community will be made aware of this Policy via the applicable Council Business Paper, through the Community Panels and via Council's website. Councillors, Executive Committee and Program Managers will be notified of this Policy through internal communication systems and a Councillor briefing, and it will form part of Council's training for any staff who supervise volunteers.

Review

Any review of this Policy will incorporate relevant legislation, documentation released from relevant agencies and best practice guidelines.

The Coordinator People Services is responsible for future reviews of this Policy.

This Policy is to be reviewed on an annual basis from the date of endorsement by Council

A review of this Policy can be initiated at any time at the discretion of the General Manager.

Principles of volunteering

Council will uphold and work to the following principles of volunteering:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteer work is unpaid.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- Volunteering is not compulsorily work undertaken to receive government allowances.
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in community life and connect with each other.
- Volunteering is a way for individuals or groups to address environmental, community and social needs.
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the government or not-for-profit sector only.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work.
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others.
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

Volunteer Rights

Volunteers are not covered by an industry award or workplace agreement however, they do have rights. Council must do everything in its power to ensure that a volunteer's rights are not violated and act quickly to correct and manage any violations, or any perceived violations.

A volunteer has the right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment in accordance with relevant Work Health and Safety legislation.
- Be engaged in accordance with Equal Opportunity and Anti-discrimination legislation.
- Be adequately covered by insurance.
- Be given accurate and transparent information about Council.
- Be reimbursed for genuine out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation.
- Be provided a copy of Council's Volunteer Policy, Procedure, Code of Conduct and any other document that affects their engagement.
- Not undertake the work of Council staff during industrial disputes.
- Be clear of their volunteer role and duties.
- Be provided with an orientation, training and site induction.
- Have access to a grievance/complaints procedure.
- Have their confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.
- Be formally recognised that they make a valuable contribution to community life both socially and economically.

Volunteers Responsibilities

Volunteers are required to:

- Understand Council's Policies, Procedures and Code of Conduct relating to activities that they are engaged in.

- Understand the principles of volunteering and why they want to volunteer for Council.
- Understand the rules, guidelines and values of Council and be prepared to comply with them as outlined in Councils Volunteer Handbook and any other documentation provided by Council staff.
- Ask questions should they not understand any information or documentation provided by Council staff.
- Complete all forms required by Council, including attendance register (sign in / out sheets).
- Be dependable and reliable, arrive on time and notify the volunteer supervisor if unavailable to attend.
- Be willing to undertake training and development when offered.
- Fully understand the scope and limits to the activities being undertaken and seek clarification and support when it is required.
- Know and recognise personal limitations and notify supervisor of any medical condition or special needs that may prevent the performance of their duties.
- Work as member of a team and treat others with respect.
- Address any areas of conflict with the volunteer supervisor.
- Advise Council staff when they no longer want to volunteer with Council.
- Adhere to the values of Council and respect the confidentiality of any information they become aware of.
- Seek prior approval from a supervisor of any out-of-pocket expenditure related to activities.
- Never put their health and safety, or the health and safety of others at deliberate risk.
- Follow all reasonable instructions and directions from Council staff at all times, particularly in relation to Work Health and Safety.
- Wear personal protective clothing and equipment as instructed whilst undertaking their duties and never interfere with, deliberately tamper or destroy this equipment.
- As soon as practical report any incident, accident, illness or near misses to Council staff.
- Never be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol when performing their duties and to inform their supervisor of any legal medication they are taking that may affect performance of their duties.
- Return all items belonging to Council, including equipment, vehicles and clothing upon the cessation of volunteering.
- Not make any public statements to the media on behalf of Council.
- Never smoke in Council owned vehicles and buildings and only smoke on notified breaks / locations and away from others and flammable materials.
- Provide constant parental / guardian supervision of children under the age of 18.

Other Definitions

Place Making	The art of creating great spaces where people want to live, play and work. Place making uses the community's assets and inspiration to create good public spaces.
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