

<b>Procedure No.</b> 1.2.82	<b>Volunteer Program</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	To ensure that volunteering remains a mutually beneficial and safe activity by providing clear guidelines to volunteers and Council staff on their roles, rights and responsibilities
<b>Link to community vision/Council service:</b>	An inclusive and aware community / community participation in decision making
<b>Program Manager:</b>	Integrated Planning
<b>ExCom authorised date:</b> 21.09.2015	<b>ExCom reviewed date:</b> 21.09.2016
<b>Staff validation date:</b> Review Due 21.09.2016	<b>TRIM Ref:</b> ED15/17630

## INTRODUCTION

The Volunteer Program strives to guarantee that the assistance of volunteers is recognised by Council and the greater community, and that volunteers feel personally rewarded by participation in the program. Additionally, the program seeks to ensure that volunteers have access to high standards of work health and safety, risk management, training, supervision, and development opportunities. Additionally, that the ideas of volunteers are regularly sought and they are made to feel part of a collective approach to enhancing the services of Council.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

This Procedure replaces:

Corporate Procedure *1.2.55 Voluntary Workers*.

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

- Volunteer Program Policy (ED15/14699)
- Handbook for Volunteers (ED15/29265)
- Corporate Procedure 1.2.77 Grievance and Complaint Handling (On Informer)
- WHS Volunteer Program Protocol (ED13/24860)
- Electronic Volunteers Register (EF15/303)
- 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

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Please refer to the Volunteer Policy (ED15/14699) for legal documents that were consulted in the development of this Procedure.

This Procedure complies with the eight *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* sanctioned by Volunteering Australia which includes:

1. Leadership and management.
2. Commitment to volunteer involvement.
3. Volunteer roles.
4. Recruitment and selection.
5. Support and development.
6. Workplace safety and wellbeing.
7. Volunteer recognition.
8. Quality management and continuous improvement.

Council adheres to these standards in the following way:

## PLANNING (STANDARDS 2 & 3)

Prior to engaging volunteers, Council will:

- Identify appropriate positions for volunteering.
- Write position descriptions. General position descriptions will be provided to volunteers who are involved in community working bees. Council staff who regularly utilise volunteers for similar duties will provide volunteers with more specific position descriptions clearly outlining their duties.
- Allow volunteers to match their experiences and skills to their role in the volunteer program.
- Identify requirements for positions e.g. training, police checks.
- Prepare a volunteer handbook, and appropriate forms.
- Include in the annual budget a provision to cover payment of expenses incurred by volunteers and any training and development needs.
- Commit cross-functional resources when required to support the Volunteer Program.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION (STANDARDS 1, 3 & 4)**

Council will:

- Recruit volunteers in accordance with Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination legislation.
- Ask volunteers to register their interests through the Community Panels developed by the Partnering and Community Engagement Team.
- Ensure that volunteers complete an application form and register as a volunteer with Council in order to be covered by insurance.
- Ensure that volunteers complete all forms as required by Council. Forms will remain current on file for a period of five years. Volunteers will be asked if personal details have changed before each period of engagement. If any information has changed, volunteers will be asked to complete new forms.
- Interview volunteers or seek a referral through the Community Panels.
- Conduct appropriate screening of volunteers to meet legislative requirements e.g. Working with Children Checks.

## **INDUCTION (STANDARDS 5 & 6)**

Council will:

- Ensure that all supervisors of volunteers will provide volunteers with an induction that is relevant and meets the requirements of the position. In the case where external organisations supervise volunteers, Council staff must induct a member of this external organisation before they can supervise volunteers on Council owned land.
- Ensure that volunteers are provided with and have read and understood Council's Code of Conduct and Values Statement.
- Utilise an induction checklist to induct volunteers and ensure that a signed induction record is kept in TRIM.
- Ensure that new volunteers receive a volunteer handbook which contains relevant information in plain English, so that volunteers have an understanding of their rights and the requirements of their engagement.

## **VOLUNTEER SUPPORT / TRAINING (STANDARD 5)**

Council will:

- Notify volunteers who will be their supervisor.
- Seek agreement from the volunteer on their required duties.
- Ensure that the volunteer has regular contact with their supervisor to discuss their performance, seek support and express concerns. This can be an on-site supervisor.
- Ensure that all supervisors of volunteers provide appropriate training to enable the volunteer to perform the agreed duties and role to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- Ensure that volunteers that are required to operate plant and equipment during the course of their engagement have a current licence or ticket of competency retained in TRIM.
- Be culturally sensitive to volunteers.
- Provide access to a grievance/complaints process.
- Advise volunteers not to incur out-of-pocket expenses unless prior approval is given by Council staff and provide a valid receipt for reimbursement should this approval be given.

## **WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY (STANDARD 6)**

Council will:

- Take necessary steps to ensure that the volunteer's workplace is compliant with Work Health and Safety Standards.
- Advise the volunteer of the risks associated with the tasks that they are required to perform.
- Ensure that volunteers wear standard personal protective equipment and clothing and if they do not own this equipment loan it to volunteers.
- Provide access to shade, sun protection and a supply of water for volunteers.
- Request that volunteers sign a form declaring that they are fit to carry out their duties. Volunteers are required to alert their supervisor during the course of an activity if they become unwell or believe that they are no longer fit to continue with the task. Council staff reserve the right to remove a volunteer from an activity should a supervisor deem that they are no longer fit for duty.
- Provide instruction in safe manual handling in the workplace to all volunteers.
- Advise volunteers of how to evacuate a site or building and where to assemble. Volunteers should also be advised not to leave the assembly area until instructed to do so by their supervisor.
- Provide a first aid kit in a central location and posters that provide basic instructions for common injuries.
- Provide emergency contact numbers in the case of an accident or injury.

## **VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION (STANDARD 7)**

Council will:

- Value the support and efforts of all volunteers.
- Recognise and value the input and ideas of volunteers and incorporate them into Council's systems and process when deemed to hold merit.
- Regularly survey volunteers seeking feedback on all aspects of the Volunteer Program.
- Hold an annual function to formally recognise the work of volunteers.

## **RESIGNATION AND DISMISSAL (STANDARDS 1, 4 & 6)**

Council:

- Reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer after a breach of the Code of Conduct or if an individual does not wish to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- Reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer if they have not obeyed a reasonable request and/or safety instruction of Council staff.
- Will conduct an exit interview to allow volunteers to provide valuable feedback on all aspects of the Volunteer Program.

## **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (STANDARD 8)**

Along with continuous improvement, a yearly audit of the Volunteer Program will incorporate applicable legislation and documentation from relevant authorities and will be conducted by the Coordinator, People Services and involve the Partnering and Community Engagement Coordinator with recommendations for improvement submitted to the supervisors of volunteers and the Executive Committee.

An annual survey of volunteers engaged across Council is also recommended.

## RISK MANAGEMENT / INSURANCE (STANDARDS 1 & 6)

Council will:

- Identify risks associated with positions and develop strategies for minimisation.
- Conduct a risk assessment on all work sites prior to volunteers commencing duties and highlight the risks associated with the duties to volunteers. Special attention should be given to:
  - Confined spaces;
  - Heights;
  - Road reserves;
  - Hot work;
  - Major plant items;
  - Construction or renovation work;
  - Close proximity to power lines;
  - Hazardous chemicals;
  - Welding; and
  - Asbestos removal.
- Maintain appropriate Public Liability, Personal Accident and Workers Compensation insurance to cover people engaged as volunteers with Council.
- Advise volunteers that personal items are not covered by Council's insurance.
- Ensure that all volunteers are registered as volunteers with Council prior to commencing their activities and that attendance sheets have been signed. Volunteers will also be required to sign-out before leaving the site. Friends and family of volunteers who wish to assist the volunteer in their activities are not covered unless they are also registered as a volunteer with Council.
- Advise volunteers that its motor vehicle insurance policy only applies to vehicles owned or leased by Council. If volunteers are using their own vehicle they will be required to arrange their own comprehensive insurance cover. Council has no liability in this instance.

## PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY (STANDARD 1)

Council will:

- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of personal information supplied by volunteers and must not disclose unlawfully to any third parties.
- Advise volunteers that they must not disclose to any third parties confidential information gained through their engagement in a volunteer capacity with Council.

## GRIEVANCES / COMPLAINTS (STANDARDS 1 & 6)

Council will:

- Provide volunteers with Corporate Procedure *1.2.77 Grievance and Complaint Handling*.
- Apply Corporate Procedure *1.2.77 Grievance and Complaint Handling* to volunteers in the same way that is applied to Council staff.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of personal information supplied by volunteers during this process.
- Deal with all grievances and complaints as soon as possible in a confidential, impartial and sensitive manner.