

Volunteer Policy

Policy type	Administration
Function	Organisation
Policy Owner	Community Services
Effective date	28 November 2013

1. Purpose

Council is committed to supporting individual members of the public and community groups who choose to volunteer their time to enhance the provision of services to the community.

The Purpose of this Policy is to acknowledge the importance of volunteering to the delivery of Council services and programs, and to establish a consistent approach to the engagement and management of volunteers within Council.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council staff involved in the engagement of volunteer workers, and to all members of the public and community groups who perform voluntary work for council.

This policy does not include:

- Any volunteering activities undertaken by Council employees or contractors.
- Councillors and people who volunteer for Councillors.
- Mutual Obligations for payments from Services Australia, Work Experience, Student Placement, or other labour workplace/funded arrangements
- Other volunteer organisations such as local Progress Associations, and any volunteering on behalf of State Emergency Services as specified under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*

3. Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer, Directors and Managers are responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to by all councillors and staff. Department Managers are responsible for the authorisation of the engagement of volunteer workers.

Supervisors of Volunteers are responsible for:

- Recruitment, selection and task site specific induction of volunteer workers;
- Forwarding electronic copies of Volunteer Worker Agreements to the People and Safety department for retention in the Register of Volunteers;
- Retaining all documentation relevant to the volunteer workers; and
- Providing ongoing supervision and, where necessary, training of volunteer workers in their respective areas.

The People and Safety department is responsible for maintaining the Register of Volunteers.

4. Definitions

Volunteer – is someone who does work for the main purpose of benefiting someone else; the organisation and individual do not intend to create a legally binding employment relationship; and the volunteer is under no obligation to attend the workplace or perform the work and does not expect to be paid for their work (The Fair Work Ombudsman).

Short Term Volunteer - for the purpose of this policy, is defined as a person who volunteers on a once off, short term or ad hoc basis, often as part of a community event.

Volunteering – is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. (Volunteering Australia)

Working With Children Check (Blue Card) - the working with children checking system regulates activities that are essential to children's lives and include childcare, education, sport, cultural activities and foster care. The system checks and monitors people who work in these sectors and helps organisations create safe environments for children (Queensland Government).

5. Principles

The local government principles prescribed in the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) apply to this Policy.

s4(2) The local government principles are—

- (a) transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest; and*
- (b) sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services; and*
- (c) democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement; and*
- (d) good governance of, and by, local government; and*
- (e) ethical and legal behaviour of councillors, local government employees and councillor advisors*

6. Policy

Voluntary positions are not to be created as an alternative to the appointment of paid employees, and, as such, work undertaken by a volunteer is not to replace work which would normally be completed by a paid employee. Volunteer workers are obligated to observe the same standards of conduct as are expected of paid council staff.

Department Managers may consider the use of volunteer positions to enhance service delivery to customers of council.

The following conditions apply prior to engaging a volunteer worker:

- Volunteers under 15 years of age will only undertake work suitable to their age and will be required to provide a consent form signed by their parents or guardian. The consent form must include details as to the nature of the volunteer work to be undertaken; and
- Background checks must be conducted to confirm academic qualifications / licences, criminal history, and currency of Blue Card (working with children) where specified in a volunteer position description or otherwise directed or required by law.



Council will:

- Ensure that volunteering is embedded in leadership, governance and culture
- Ensure that volunteer participation is championed and modelled
- Ensure that volunteer roles are meaningful and tailored
- Ensure that recruitment for volunteer roles are equitable and diversity is valued
- Ensure that volunteers are supported and developed
- Ensure that volunteer Safety and wellbeing is protected
- Ensure that volunteers are recognised
- Ensure that policies and practices are continuously improved

At all times when performing work on behalf of council, Volunteers:

- Must comply with all council policies and procedures including but not limited to the Workplace Health and Safety Policy Statement and Code of Conduct for Council Employees;
- Where required, must hold a valid Working With Children check and have this on person when undertaking volunteering duties for Council;
- May not be issued with council uniforms, unless otherwise required for compliance with workplace health and safety requirements or for promotional purposes associated with a specific event or program; and
- Must wear appropriate clothing when performing work on behalf of council.

Volunteers are permitted to use council fleet vehicles for the purposes of the Council activity being undertaken. The permitted travel cannot include travel to and from the volunteer's place of residence and the place of the Council volunteering activity.

Volunteer workers may withdraw their services, or a relevant departmental manager may terminate a volunteer worker's services at any time by notifying the other party of their intentions. This must be undertaken in an appropriate and respectful manner.

Related forms, policies and procedures	Volunteer Application Form and Agreement Code of Conduct for Employees Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy Anti-Discrimination Policy Workplace Health and Safety Policy Statement Other policies as relevant
Relevant legislation	<i>Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)</i> <i>Workplace Health & Safety Act 2011</i> <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 & Regulation 2020</i> Other legislation as may be relevant
Reference and resources	National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2024

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