



City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters

NAME OF POLICY: Volunteer Services Policy

POLICY MANUAL: Human Resources

BACKGROUND

The City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters has been working with and hosting citizens in Volunteer roles since 1997. The Council hosts two hundred and forty (240) Volunteers across a diverse range of Council Programs and services.

The Council's Volunteering Service Programs aligns with the Council's Strategic Management Plan, *City Plan 2030: Shaping Our Future* and in particular:

'Outcome 1: Social Equity, A connected, accessible and pedestrian-friendly community.'

This Policy applies to all Volunteers who are registered with the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters, as well as staff who work in conjunction with the delivery of the Councils Volunteers Services Programs.

For the purpose of this Policy, the following are not considered Volunteers:

- people on work placement and work experience programs;
- Elected Members of the Council; and
- Council staff, contractors or consultants.

This Policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Volunteers, as well as staff members who are working with Volunteers and the principles which guide the management of the Councils Volunteer Services Program.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the following associated Council Policies and Procedures:

- Behaviour Standards Policy;
- Disciplinary and Under-Performance Management Policy;
- Work, Health & Safety 2021 Policy Statement;
- Social Media & Electronic Communications Policy;
- Fair Treatment & Equal Opportunity Policy;
- Safe Environment Policy;
- Grievance Policy;
- Role Statement;
- Pre-Placement Clearance Process; and
- Volunteer Agreement.

DISCUSSION

The Council recognises that Volunteering has mutual benefits for both the Volunteers, the Council and the community. The Council is committed to raising the profile of the benefits and opportunities of Volunteering. The Council actively encourages the involvement of Volunteers as their participation contributes to the wellbeing of the community and provides opportunities which meets the needs of the community.

The Council recognises that Volunteers are an important resource for our community as they support a range of services and programs. The contributions which are made by Volunteers play an important role in the delivery and sustainability of these Council services and programs. Volunteers bring expertise, life skills, knowledge and diverse cultural backgrounds, experiences, skills and values which reflect the community which we serve.

The Council also recognises that Volunteering also contributes to the well-being of the Volunteers themselves through:

- development of social networks;
- gaining skills, knowledge and confidence; and
- for personal satisfaction and contribution to their community.

The development of this Policy has taken into consideration the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*, developed by Volunteering Australia and *Covering All Bases, An Information Guide for Managing Volunteers in Local Government*, developed by the Local Government Association of South Australia Mutual Liability Scheme.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy:

Volunteering is defined as:

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

Volunteers are defined as:

registered citizens who provide their time and skills to undertake defined roles that complement and enhance established Council services and programs and that do not receive any monetary payment for their contribution.

Volunteer Management System is defined as:

the policies, procedures, resources and databases that facilitate the recruitment, support, management and retention of Volunteers.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Governance

The Council will ensure good governance of the Volunteering Services Program including appropriate management of records, effective policies and procedures for the management of Volunteers and communication and involvement of Volunteers in the delivery of the various services and Programs.

Volunteer Management

The Council will ensure that capable staff with the authority, skills and resources are assigned as Volunteer Program Coordinators for the various Volunteering Programs which are delivered by the Council.

Recruitment, Selection and Induction

The Council will recruit, select and induct Volunteers using documented processes and a fair appraisal that is consistent with non-discriminatory principles and practices.

Volunteer Support

The Council will ensure that Volunteers receive feedback on their performance, that they are provided with opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their responsibilities and are given the recognition which they deserve for the activities which they are undertaking.

Access, Equity and Participation

The Council will provide equal opportunities for citizens to participate in volunteering and will encourage the inclusion of all citizens, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexuality.

Community Capacity

The Council seeks to build capacity, knowledge, awareness and skills within the community, through the opportunities and programs provided to members of the community through the Volunteering Services Program.

Community Leadership

The Council has a leadership role in the community and will demonstrate 'best practice' in respect to community engagement and in particular, the engagement of Volunteers.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteer Services Coordinator

The Council's Volunteer Services Coordinator is responsible for the development, implementation, review and maintenance of policies and procedures associated with the Council's Volunteers. The Volunteer Services Coordinator will:

- ensure appropriate processes and procedures are developed and implemented to ensure the effective planning, management, recruitment, placement and review of all Volunteering related activities;
- be accountable for ensuring that all of the required documentation associated with Volunteers and Programs is completed and retained as required by the *State Records Act 1997*; and
- plan and continually review the Council's Volunteer Management System, with the aim of identifying and pursuing continuous improvement.

Program Coordinators

The respective Program Coordinators are responsible for the operational implementation and supervision of the Volunteer Programs and its Volunteers. The Program Coordinators will:

- participate, as required, in the recruitment of appropriate Volunteers for the various Programs;
- ensure that Volunteers who are assigned to a Program are provided with direction, induction, training, and the information required to complete the expectations of the Role Statement which is assigned to each Volunteer;
- assist the Volunteer Services Coordinator in the performance and management of issues associated with Volunteers or Volunteer Programs;
- communicate any changes associated with Volunteers' and the respective Programs to the Volunteer Services Coordinator in a timely and accurate manner; and
- ensure that all required documentation associated with their assigned Program and Volunteers is completed and retained as the required by the *State Records Act 1997*.

Volunteers

Volunteers are required to ensure that they:

- are informed of and comply with, the Council's expectations, policies and processes that are relevant to the respective Volunteer roles to which they are assigned;
- communicate any personal information, or changes in information and concerns to their respective Volunteer Program Coordinator;
- comply with any lawful direction and supervision from an appropriate staff member;
- are reliable and accountable for their actions while engaged in their Volunteering role; and
- work in a safe manner and do not put themselves or any other person at risk through their actions or behaviour as required by the Council's *Work Health & Safety Policy Statement*.

POLICY STATEMENT

Work Health & Safety

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, identifies Volunteers as 'workers' for the purpose of the Act. As such, Volunteers have the same rights and responsibilities as paid staff in respect to the provision of a safe working environment including the provision of safe work practices.

The Council is committed to providing a safe working environment for Volunteers and ensuring that Volunteers are not exploited.

The Council's *Work Health & Safety Policy Statement* will be explained to Volunteers in the induction process and made available to all Volunteers.

Safe Environment

The Council is committed to ensuring that all citizens are treated with respect, fairness and dignity, in a welcoming and supportive environment that is free from any and all forms of abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

Volunteers and staff who work in conjunction with the *Volunteers Services Program* must comply with the Council's *Safe Environment Policy*.

Volunteer Services Program

Where practicable, the Council will deliver the Volunteer Services Program in accordance with the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* (as amended from time-to-time) developed by Volunteering Australia as a best-practice guide for conducting Volunteer Programs. These Standards include:

Standard 1: Leadership and Management

The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards Volunteering and implement effective management systems to support Volunteer involvement.

Standard 2: Commitment to Volunteer Involvement

Commitment to Volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisations strategic direction.

Standard 3: Volunteer Roles

Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.

Standard 4: Recruitment and Selection

Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and Volunteers.

Standard 5: Support and Development

Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.

Standard 6: Workplace Safety and Wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of Volunteers is protected in the workplace.

Standard 7: Volunteer Recognition

Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.

Standard 8: Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

Effective Volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

The Council will conduct triennial internal audits against the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*.

The Council's *Volunteer Services Program* will be designed, implemented and evaluated such that it:

- enhances the provision of the Council's services, programs and activities;
- increases community awareness and participation in Council activities;
- provides opportunities for social interaction, particularly to those citizens who are socially or culturally isolated;
- improves the quality of life for citizens and the community;
- provides a link between the Council and the community; and
- assists citizens to develop skills, knowledge and awareness to build community resilience and capacity.

Volunteer Roles

All Volunteers who are involved in or with the various Council Programs, must register with the Council, sign a Volunteer Agreement and Role Statement and complete a Corporate and a Program Specific

Induction before undertaking any Volunteering activities on behalf of the Council. All Volunteer activities must be approved by the Council prior to a Volunteer commencing such activities and the Volunteer may only undertake the Volunteering activities that have been approved.

The Council will ensure that Volunteers are provided with the opportunity to be involved in meaningful roles and have an understanding of what their role is. Volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback regarding their role in the respective Program to ensure that the Program meets their expectations. The Council will not assign a role or task to a Volunteer that would otherwise be recognised as '*Paid Work*' under the *Fair Work Act SA 2009*, or is cited in an existing Person & Position Description for paid staff.

The Council will provide special consideration to a request from a Volunteer to undertake a role or task which may be considered paid work or is cited in an existing Person & Position Description for paid staff when:

- the Volunteer would like to participate and contribute to the community;
- the Volunteer can present a personal limitation to being able to participate in an existing Volunteering role;
- there is benefit provided to the Volunteer to do so; and
- the Volunteer agrees to undertake the role of their own free will without payment.

Each Volunteer will be provided with a Role Statement that clearly outlines the components of the role and its expectations.

Volunteers may undertake more than one (1) Volunteering role for the Council or in other Volunteer agencies at a time.

Volunteers may request to change roles or programs, or apply for an alternative role at any time.

ELIGIBILITY FOR VOLUNTEERING

The Council welcomes applications from citizens who are interested in Volunteering with the Council. Citizens interested in Volunteering and Volunteers must provide any relevant information which the Council may request from time to time in respect to their eligibility to be a Volunteer.

Citizens who are interested in Volunteering will be assessed for eligibility against the following criteria:

- availability of the desired Volunteering opportunity;
- the interests and skills of the Volunteer and their ability to fulfil the requirements of the volunteering role;
- their ability to demonstrate the organisations 'Our Values' and expected behaviours; and
- successful clearance of pre-placement checks including a *National Police Clearance* and *Department of Community & Social Inclusion Clearance*, and/or a reference and medical assessment, where required.

If a person is unsuccessful in their application to register as a Volunteer with the Council, the Volunteer Services Coordinator will provide an explanation and feedback to the person regarding their application.

In the event that the Council cannot find a suitable vacant volunteering role for an applicant, the Volunteer may request to be placed on a waiting list for the next available role.

Volunteers aged fifteen (15) years or younger, must be accompanied by an immediate family member or guardian who is an adult and will provide direct supervision to the minor at all times while they are engaged in Volunteering activities.

Volunteers who are over fifteen (15) years of age and under eighteen (18) years of age, must complete a specific *Volunteer Agreement Form* which is signed by the volunteer and an immediate family member or guardian, who is an adult, which confirms that they can volunteer without direct supervision.

All Volunteers must be registered with the Council and must be under the age of ninety (90), to be eligible to access full insurance coverage under the Council's Insurance Policy through Local Government Local Risk Services.

After the age of 90, the Volunteer can continue to Volunteer with the Council, however insurance coverage will be applied at a reduced capacity. This will be clearly explained to Volunteers at the time of induction and when they turn 90 years of age.

The Council has no obligation to place Volunteers who do not meet the required eligibility requirements. The Council may decline a Volunteer placement or end a placement if:

- there is a perceived risk to the health and welfare of the community, a recipient of the services or a Volunteer;
- suitable Volunteering duties are no longer available; or
- the Volunteer does not comply with the Council's expectations or cannot perform to a satisfactory standard in the assigned role.

Elected Members

Elected Members who volunteer with the Council are provided with the same rights and responsibilities as Council Volunteers.

During the times an Elected Member is Volunteering with a Council Program, they must not attempt to exercise any authority as an Elected Member.

Elected Members must observe the *Code of Conduct for Elected Members* at all times.

Staff

Staff who Volunteer with the Council are provided with the same rights and responsibilities as all Council Volunteers.

During the times a staff member is Volunteering with a Council Program, they must not attempt to exercise any authority as a staff member.

Staff Members must observe the *Behaviour Standards Policy* and the organisations *Our Values* at all times.

PRE-PLACEMENT CLEARANCES

The Council is committed to ensuring that the Council's public image, safety and well-being of any person involved in the Volunteering Services Program.

The Council may conduct Pre-Placement clearances prior to a Volunteer commencing Volunteering within the Council to ensure that the Volunteer is fit for duty, meets legislative requirements and demonstrates the expected behaviours.

These clearances may include but are not limited to:

- National Police Clearances;
- Department of Human Services Clearances;
- Referee Checks;
- Relevant licenses; and
- Physical and Medical Assessments.

A Volunteer is not required to complete the applicable clearance if they present a current *National Police Clearance* or *Department of Human Services Clearance*, which is less than three (3) years old, and a signed Statutory Declaration that they have not undertaken any activity that would compromise the status of the clearance.

A Volunteer is not required to undertake a *National Police Clearance* in the event they can present a current *Department of Human Services Clearance*, which is less than three (3) years old for Vulnerable Persons or Aged Care, or less than five (5) years old for a *Working with Children Check*.

Volunteers must have the required current clearances for their role at all times while they are Volunteering for the Council. As such, Volunteers are required to renew any Clearance at the request of the Council and in any event, every three (3) years upon the expiration date of clearance, or every five (5) years for a Working with Children clearance.

If the Volunteer was born in a country other than Australia and migrated to Australia at the age of 16 or over, or the Volunteer has spent six (6) months or more in a country other than Australia, they will be required to sign a Statutory Declaration stating that they have not committed certain offences in that country.

Volunteers who undertake an activity or suffer a physical or medical ailment that may compromise the status of any of the *Pre-Placement Clearances* at any time during their volunteering role with the Council are required to immediately notify the Council's Volunteer Services Coordinator.

When specified in legislation, Volunteers under eighteen (18) years of age, are not required to undertake Pre Placement Clearances.

Volunteers operating in isolation in their specific roles will be issued with a Volunteer Photo ID card assigned by the Council.

TRAINING

The Council is committed to providing information and training to Volunteers, which is relevant to their roles to ensure that they can complete their duties in a professional, informed and safe manner.

Training opportunities will be communicated to Volunteers through regular newsletters and emails.

Volunteers may make a request to their Program Coordinator to attend relevant training courses at any time.

REIMBURSEMENT

Volunteers are not expected to incur expenses related to their Volunteering role. However, where expenses cannot be avoided, the Volunteer Program Coordinator may agree to reimburse a Volunteer related expense, prior to the expense being incurred. As such, the Volunteer must discuss this expense for approval with the Volunteer Program Coordinator before making a purchase.

RECORD KEEPING

Volunteers must keep timely and accurate records in compliance with the requirements set out in the *State Records Act 1997* and/or as requested by the Volunteer Services Coordinator.

Volunteers are only covered by the Council's Insurance Policy when they are undertaking approved activities on behalf of the Council. Volunteers are required to keep accurate and timely records of their attendance and travel related to the Volunteering role to comply with insurance requirements.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

For the purpose of this Policy, a *Conflict of Interest* is considered to exist when:

A person would gain a benefit, or suffer a loss, (whether directly or indirectly and whether of a personal or pecuniary nature) from:

- undertaking a role;
- having access to information associated with the Council or a client; or
- being able to make a decision or influence an outcome;

as a result of their role as a Volunteer or Volunteer Program Coordinator.

A *Conflict of Interest* does not exist if the relevant benefit or loss would be enjoyed or suffered in common with any other person of the community, who is not in the role of a Volunteer or Volunteer Program Coordinator for the Council.

In the event that a Volunteer or a Volunteer Program Coordinator has a *Conflict of Interest* under this Policy they must:

- disclose the interest to the Council by reporting it to the Volunteer Services Coordinator; and
- not act in relation to the matter unless otherwise authorised to do so by the Volunteer Services Coordinator.

Recruit, Select, Induct

All Council staff are required to:

- declare any relationship or knowledge of any applicant for a position once the relationship or knowledge of that person is known to them and before conducting any business associated with the recruitment process;
- remove themselves from the recruitment process in the event that a conflict of interest is identified; and
- not give preferential treatment to any candidate or applicant for a position.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Volunteers and Volunteer Program Coordinators represent the Council in their roles under this Policy. Volunteers have the same responsibilities and expectations as Council staff.

Volunteers and Program Coordinators are expected to undertake their duties in a professional manner and in compliance with all relevant Policies, Role Statements and the organisation's 'Our Values' at all times.

In the event that a Program Coordinator does not meet the expectations of the organisation as set out in this Policy, the relevant General Manager may initiate Performance Management under the Council's *Performance Management Process* or *Disciplinary and Under-Performance Policy*.

In the event that a Volunteer does not meet the expectations of the Council in their role under this Policy, the Program Coordinator, in consultation with Volunteer Services Coordinator, will address the matter with the Volunteer.

In addition, the Volunteer Services Coordinator may raise a performance matter with the relevant General Manager with respect to the conduct and behaviour of a Program Coordinator to be addressed through the Council's relevant policies.

To resolve unsatisfactory performance, the matter will be raised verbally with the Volunteer and the following will be discussed:

- the matter of concern will be clearly identified and communicated to the Volunteer;
- the Volunteer will be afforded Natural Justice and procedural fairness and be provided with an opportunity to respond to the matter; and
- the expected action or behaviours will be clearly communicated to the Volunteer in respect to future performance.

Should it assist in resolving any confusion, the matter and expected action or behaviour may be confirmed in writing with the Volunteer.

The Council may revoke the role of the Volunteer in the event that the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved or the unsatisfactory actions or behaviours causing the performance matter do not improve.

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

The Council is committed to recognising the valuable contribution which Volunteers make to our community. Recognition of Volunteers will be provided in a variety of ways including, but not limited to:

- **Mayor's Volunteer Christmas Dinner**
Hosted by the Mayor, the Annual Volunteers Christmas Dinner is held to celebrate and thank Volunteers for their contribution throughout the year and to acknowledge Volunteers who have reached significant Years of Service milestones.
- **Volunteer Service Milestones**
Volunteers are formally recognised for years of service. Service milestone certificates and medals will be presented at the Mayors Volunteers Christmas Dinner
- **Volunteers Week**
National Volunteers Week is celebrated with a variety of events, including but not limited to: morning tea, movie night, afternoon tea, concerts, barbecues in the park.

Recognition will also be provided in an informal manner by the Program Coordinators and other staff of the Council, through personal appreciation of the efforts of Volunteers.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONER AGAINST CORRUPTION ACT 2012

Volunteers *may* be Public Officers for the purpose of the *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012* (SA) and as such, Volunteers representing the Council must comply with this Act.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Personal information regarding Volunteers is confidential and will be filed in the Objective Records Electronic Management System, in accordance with the Council's *Records Management Policy*.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1999* (SA)
- *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA)
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (SA)
- *Volunteer Protection Act 2001* (SA)
- *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012* (SA)
- *State Records Act 1997* (SA)

REVIEW PROCESS

The Council will review this Policy within three (3) years.

INFORMATION

The Contact Officer for further information at the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters is the Council's Volunteer Services Coordinator, telephone 8366 4631 or email: btarca@npsp.sa.gov.au

ADOPTION OF THE POLICY

This Policy was adopted by the Council on 4 June 2018.

This Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Council on 8 October 2019.

This Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Council on 5 July 2021.

TO BE REVIEWED

July 2024