

## Human Resource Policy

Strategic Reference	Provide a safe, supportive and caring work environment where staff are comfortable to express their concerns and are encouraged to suggest ideas for administration improvements.
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Applicable Legislation	Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies	Employee Code of Conduct Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy Information Security Policy Motor Vehicle Policy WHS and Injury Management Policy Volunteer Policy (under review)
Related Document	Human Resource Procedures (under review & development)

### 1. Purpose and scope

Effective human resource management is critical to the welfare of staff and the operations of Council. This policy outlines Council's commitment to fair and equitable practices for employees of the Council. It contains a series of subsets which generally follow the chronology of employing and managing staff.

While the elected Council endorses this policy and is responsible for the employment of the Chief Executive, under s103 of the Local Government Act,

the Chief Executive has the statutory responsibility for all staffing matters, including:

- Appointment and dismissal of all permanent and casual staff.
- Classification of permanent and casual staff in terms of the industrial awards to which the Council is subject.
- Determination and re-determination of conditions of employment; and
- Appointment to acting positions.

It is therefore the CEO and his delegates who are responsible for setting and administering this policy.

The policy is to be read in conjunction with the current ASU and AWU Enterprise Agreements. Associated procedures are collated in Coorong District Council's "Human Resource Manual" which is under review and development

## **2. Attraction and retention**

Coorong District Council wishes to attract high quality candidates and retain the right people who can work together to achieve its corporate goals. To this end it strives to provide a friendly and supportive work environment that values the contributions of staff and assists them to reach their own goals.

Strategies for attracting and retaining the right people include incentives such as:

- Work life balance.
- Workplace culture.
- Salary sacrifice.
- Salary packaging.
- Vehicle use.
- Support for study and professional development.

## **3. Recruitment and selection**

Recruitment and selection is critical to the success and future growth of the organisation. Council must be vigilant about the quality of people recruited and promoted in order to improve the way services are delivered to our customers and the community.

Coorong District Council selects staff in a professional and equitable manner, based on merit and following the principles of human resource management outlined in Section 107 of the Local Government Act and the Equal Employment Opportunity legislative requirements.

Recruitment and selection processes are structured to ensure selection decisions are made in a systematic and fair way by:

- Having effective position design to deliver the desired outcomes.
- Accurately identifying the key criteria that link to success on the job.
- Objectively evaluating applications against the key criteria.
- Following the key principles outlined in the Recruitment & Selection Procedures.

All new and vacant positions will simultaneously be advertised internally and externally to provide existing staff with the opportunity to apply. Council will give preference to internal applicants over an external applicant where the applicants are otherwise equal in merit.

In the event a preferred or outstanding candidate is known to Council, the Chief Executive Officer may deem that a position not be advertised.

#### **4. Pre employment psychometric testing, medical examination, and police checks**

4.1 Council reserves the right to request that potential candidates undergo pre-employment psychometric testing to assist in the selection process. The test serves to give Council further insight into an applicant's personality, motivations and ability. It must be noted that the results of psychometric testing is not the only selection method, but instead compliments the face to face interview process, or any other selection method the recruitment panel utilises.

4.2 Employees are required to have a medical examination prior to employment being confirmed. At interview, in order to determine that the applicants are medically fit to carry out the duties, applicants may be asked whether there any reasons, medical or otherwise, which will prevent them from performing the duties described. Council will bear the cost of the examination by way of purchase order or reimbursement to the employee on presentation of a receipt.

4.3 Pre-employment criminal checks are a risk management control designed to minimise any potential loss, detriment, litigation or embarrassment caused to the Council by the actions of an employee and/or volunteer which could be reasonably foreseen. Potential new employees are informed at the interview stage that the successful applicant's appointment is subject to the person obtaining a National Police Certificate, with the provision of false or misleading information leading to immediate termination of employment. Council will bear the cost of the assessment by reimbursement to the employee on presentation of a receipt.

## **5. Induction**

Council is committed to providing a thorough induction process for all new and internal transferring employees to ensure that they have access to information about what is expected of them in their new positions and understand the support mechanisms offered by the organisation.

The induction program is designed to help employees integrate into the new work environment and become familiar with the organisation, its operations and their specific area of work.

## **6. Probation**

A three month period of probation which may be extended for a further three months following assessment, applies to all new employees except where an individual employment contract is in place. Council ensures that an employee's probationary period provides a process of regular discussion of performance and every opportunity to meet the requirements of the position through informal and formal two way feedback sessions.

## **7. Performance & development review (PDR)**

Council is committed to maximising the potential, performance and productivity of its employees through a process of ongoing personal development by involving all employees in regular goal setting and feedback processes.

Performance & Development Review (PDR) is an integrated process for evaluating the work performance of employees and providing recognition of achievement and opportunities for improvement. It consists of planning, monitoring, reviewing and making decisions about performance which result in actions to bring about continuous improvement in learning and performance. This concept is broader than the traditional notion of formal

performance appraisal, but integrated with ongoing training and development processes and daily operations.

Through the PDR process, Council seeks to:

- Align the individual goals of employees with those of the relevant department/work team and the organisation.
- Foster the achievement of corporate goals.
- Improve the skills, abilities and job satisfaction of all employees.
- Promote a culture of excellent customer service and continuous improvement.
- Develop, encourage, empower and maintain a workplace culture which welcomes and values feedback on performance.
- Enhance performance and job satisfaction by improving workplace communication about work expectations, personal career goals, and performance.

## 7.1 PDR Principles

- The PDR process is an essential and non negotiable process involving all employees.
- The PDR process is a joint responsibility of line managers and employees.
- Performance review processes will be objective, explicit, fair and based on an assessment of work performance, skills, abilities and behaviours against agreed performance criteria.
- All employees have the right to both clarity about performance expectations, and constructive feedback about their work.
- All employees have the right to access training and development to enable them to meet current work requirements, and support career planning as relevant to the organisation.
- Performance should be developed by the person who has direct responsibility for the employee, and is able to observe the performance and measure the outcomes on a regular basis.
- Good performance deserves to be recognised, valued and rewarded.
- PDR documentation and information is private and confidential, and access rights are restricted to the employee, TRIM administrators, CEO, their line of management and the organisational development team.

It is important for directors and immediate supervisors to coach and develop the skills and knowledge of employees for whom they are responsible. This involves four main activities:

- Appraising performance.
- Discussing performance and performance counselling.
- Planning developmental activities which may include training, and
- Assessing the value of these activities.

## **8. Training and development**

Coorong District Council believes the performance of an organisation is directly related to the skills and competency of its workforce. Council and management have an ongoing commitment to the development of staff to ensure they have the skills and competencies to meet both the current and future needs of the organisation.

Training and development can contribute directly to:

- Multi skilling
- Succession planning
- Career planning
- Improved performance
- Promotion
- Identifying potential
- Wage and salary administration; and
- Organisational development.

Training and development activities designed to contribute to strategic organisational achievements will include:

- The regular review of training needs through discussion and feedback on performance, as part of the PDR process. This forum will provide guidance and support to assist the development of employees in meeting personal and organisational goals and objectives
- The regular review and revision of a comprehensive Training Plan, incorporating legislative requirements (such as Work Health & Safety ), strategic, organisational and team needs, and professional training and development requirements.

## 8.1 Responsibilities

**Council** has a responsibility for providing a budget to meet agreed training and development objectives in line with the Council's strategic directions and annual business plan.

**Chief Executive Officer and Management Team** have a responsibility to:

- Set standards of work performance to achieve organisational objectives.
- Conduct objective assessment of the training and development needs of staff through a PDR process and ensure agreed objectives are established for all staff.
- Encourage and motivate employees as appropriate to consider their current career opportunities, explore alternatives as necessary and assist them to develop training and development strategies to achieve those ends.
- Ensure staff training and development needs are in line with corporate goals and that these are addressed with equitable access by all employees.
- Develop and review the training plan regularly.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training programs and the annual plan.

**The individual** – employees are encouraged to participate actively in their own development opportunities:

- Commit to develop skills in order to keep up to date with relevant technical and professional areas.
- Participate in developing the annual training plan as part of the PDR process.
- Act on the agreed plan.
- Review the plan periodically to assess achievement of personal objectives.
- Undertake further studies to assist individual development.
- Attend relevant conferences, seminars, workshops and training courses as agreed.
- Apply for any training and professional development in accordance with procedural requirements.
- Provide an objective evaluation of courses attended, and
- Be prepared to accept new responsibilities within the Council in line with job descriptions and organisational direction.

**Organisational Development Coordinator** has a responsibility to:

- Work co-operatively with CEO and Management Team in the preparation of individual training programs.
- Undertake an organisation and skills training needs analysis. Assist with the design, development, implementation and evaluation of training initiatives to meet identified needs in consultation with management, workplace representatives or any other group in accordance with Enterprise Agreement undertakings.
- Prepare recommendations for the organisational Training and Development Plan for consideration by the Management Team.

The commitment by management and employees to the training and development needs of the organisation will ensure that all staff has the appropriate skills and competency to operate effectively and efficiently to meet both the current and future needs of the organisation.

## 8.2 Training principles

- Training is an investment in the skill development of employees which should be directed at achieving the corporate objectives of the Council.
- Training is actively promoted and opportunities for staff development provided.
- Training should be relevant to the services provided by the Council, meaningful to the participants and directed at improving performance and safety on the job.
- All employees should have access to appropriate training and development opportunities required to perform their allocated tasks more competently and safely and to ensure career development opportunities.
- Council will be flexible in determining training programs and policies and will consult with employees on their individual training requirements.
- Development and evaluation of training programs and activities will occur to ensure the best use of resources and consistency and quality of standards as well as continual improvement.
- Training must recognise and comply with legislative requirements, in particular, Work Health & Safety, and Equal Employment Opportunity legislation.
- Employees' current and future training and development needs will be identified through an organisational and skills/training needs analysis

and the development of individual training and development programs derived through a process of employee/Director consultation, generally through the PDR process.

- Council will allocate a proportion of its budget to training and development. Activities that are structured, evaluated, meet organisational, departmental or individual requirements and contribute to productivity will be funded from this allocation.
- Approved training may include:
  - Study assistance.
  - Vocational training courses.
  - Conferences and study tours.
  - In-house courses.
  - Seminars and workshops.
  - Information forums.
  - Staff rotation.

## **9. Performance management, counselling and discipline**

The purpose of the discipline system is to achieve a positive resolution of an unsatisfactory situation involving an employee's performance or behaviour at work. It provides an opportunity to ensure the Council's expectations and the consequences if those expectations are not met are understood

This policy applies to the performance and behaviour of all staff while at work. This includes the manner, quality or quantity of work-related activities as well as compliance with all Council requirements, including job performance, rules, policies and procedures.

### **9.1 Disciplinary principles**

In matters of discipline Council shall observe Industrial Commission standards.

Council shall implement disciplinary procedures in a fair and equitable manner, applying principles of 'natural justice'. These principles require that Council:

- Informs anyone who is the subject of disciplinary proceedings as fully as possible of anything alleged against them.
- Provides the opportunity for the person to put his/her case, whether at a meeting or in writing.

- Hears all parties to a matter and considers all relevant evidence; and
- Acts fairly and without bias.

Staff members can opt to be accompanied by a Union representative or other witness at any stage of the disciplinary process.

Although it is important to take disciplinary action when required, it is equally important to allow the employee a chance to change and not be unreasonably penalised for previous errors. Equally however repeated patterns of behaviour will be considered and taken into account during the disciplinary process.

As part of the warning process, a reasonable period of time will be set for improvement and this will take into account the circumstances of the case.

## 9.2 A stepped process

The discipline system provides a stepped process for dealing with ongoing unsatisfactory performance or behaviour. This is designed to allow the employee a reasonable opportunity to understand Council's requirements and to comply with them.

The policy sets out four steps:

- Step 1 – First Written Warning
- Step 2 – Second Written Warning
- Step 3 – Final Written Warning
- Step 4 – Termination of Employment

These steps are designed to afford the employee a maximum opportunity to come to terms with requirements. However, there may be instances where the problem is so serious or irreconcilable that it requires immediate correction. In such a case it may be necessary to proceed immediately to the final warning stage.

Following a thorough investigation of any alleged incident, breach of performance standards or breach of Council Policy, the relevant Director in conjunction with the Organisational Development Coordinator, will determine the appropriate level of warning to be issued to the employee. Where termination of employment is recommended, the decision will be referred to the CEO.

## 10. Employee recognition of service and achievements

Publically acknowledging and celebrating significant service milestones and achievements of staff members is positive reinforcement of a culture which values its employees.

### 10.1 Recognising service

Permanent employees reaching significant service milestones will be recognised when they reach the milestone. Employees resigning or retiring from the workforce will be recognised with a gift voucher based on their years of service. The applicable service awards are contained in an associated procedure.

### 10.2 Recognising achievements

Individuals and teams should be recognised directly for significant achievements or effort soon after the achievement. Recognition should include anyone who directly or indirectly contributed to the achievement.

Decisions in relation to an employee's remuneration are not covered by this policy.

## 11. Termination

Termination can be made at either the employee's initiative or by Council. The three types of termination include:

- Resignation
- Dismissal
- Redundancy

### 11.1 Resignation

Resignation is a termination made at the initiative of the employee, where they have decided that they no longer wish to be employed by Council. Where an employee decides to tender their resignation, it shall be made in writing to their supervisor/manager and shall provide the appropriate notice period.

### 11.2 Dismissal

A dismissal is a termination made at the initiative of Council. A dismissal can be as a result of serious misconduct or other reasons. Before terminating an employee's employment by way of dismissal, the Council will ensure that:

- The disciplinary procedures contained in the appropriate Parent Award and Enterprise Bargaining Agreement have been complied with;
- The employee was afforded an opportunity to respond to any allegations of poor work performance or misconduct;

Where the Council terminates an employee for any reason, they shall be provided with a termination letter, stating the reasons for termination and the effective date of the termination.

Where the Council terminates the employee with notice, then the Council can determine whether to allow the employee to work out the period of notice or pay in lieu of notice.

### 11.3 Redundancy

Where the Council has made a definite decision that it no longer wishes the job to be carried out by anyone pursuant to the relevant Change Management clauses of the respective Enterprise Bargaining Agreements, the employee may be made redundant in the circumstance where they cannot reasonably be accommodated in another position.

## 12. Grievance resolution

This policy provides that a formal grievance process is available to all staff to ensure that they have an avenue to deal with a grievance or situation which they wish to have resolved. It relates to the resolution of personal grievances *outside of* the operation of Awards and Enterprise Agreements which have dispute resolution procedures regarding the operation of the Awards and Agreements. See also Council's Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Council will use a three step process designed to resolve grievances at an early stage, but with recourse to escalate the issue as far as the CEO if necessary to ensure resolution.

## 13. Additional work outside Council

Employees of Coorong District Council may participate in any employment or other paid work outside their position with the Council provided that it does not interfere with their performance or responsibilities to the Council. To monitor any potential conflict of interest, notification from employees of such external employment or other paid work and authorisation by the CEO is required.

No Council owned resources (eg mobile phones, Council vehicles, computers etc) may be used by employees for the purposes of their outside work or employment.

#### **14. Salary sacrifice**

Any employee may apply to Council to salary sacrifice any part of their salary noting that salary sacrifice arrangements are generally limited to superannuation only. However upon negotiation, employees may make application for the salary sacrifice of appropriate and approved items such as vehicles.

Any information or figures provided to employees by appropriate finance, payroll or organisational development staff in relation to the implications of salary sacrificing, will not constitute professional advice or a recommendation. As salary sacrifice is a complex matter, it is the employee's responsibility to seek independent advice and fully understand all implications of salary sacrifice before submitting an application to Council.

#### **15. Work life balance**

In order to achieve Council's aim to develop a constructive culture, Council recognises the need for its staff to achieve a satisfactory balance between work and their life outside work and that, from time to time, these priorities may conflict. This conflict may cause a person to request a change to their working conditions in the following areas:

- Spread of hours (i.e. start and finish times).
- Part-time employment.
- Job/role sharing.
- Working from home.
- Access to sick leave for family and personal purposes.

In some cases, this may be a significant factor in attracting new employees and in helping staff to decide to remain employed by the organisation rather than seek a position outside Council where such flexibility is offered.

The organisation recognises that it has an obligation to provide exemplary service to its customers and to ensure that each work team is adequately resourced in order to effectively provide such service. Therefore, careful consideration will be given to balancing our commitment to the community and providing flexibility in working conditions that will retain existing staff, and attract new staff, on a case by case basis.

Council is committed to retaining its high performing staff and further recognises that providing work/life balance flexibility may enhance the retention of these staff.

Accordingly, a staff member may request a change to their working conditions via a request to their Director who will consult with the CEO. Each case will be assessed on its own merits and the granting of any request will not be taken as creating a precedent for future requests. Ultimately, the decision as to whether such a request is granted or not will be at the CEO's discretion.

## **16. Journey insurance**

Council will provide 24 hour Journey Insurance to cover 24-hour bodily injury to staff in the event of an injury occurring during travel from their residence on their normal journey to work or place of approved training or on the return journey.

## **17. Personal counselling**

Grief or personal counselling will be provided to staff if required by contacting the Director Community & Corporate, Organisational Development Co-ordinator or if preferred, your immediate supervisor. Staff member requiring support mechanisms of this nature will also be able to access leave to attend counselling.

## **18. Long service leave**

An employee may take Long Service Leave after seven (7) years of continuous service in the following manner:

- Half pay, thus doubling the period of leave taken;
- Double pay, thus halving the period of leave taken;
- 'Cashing out' all or part of their accrued leave; or
- Taking the leave as normal.

Permanent full-time employees who negotiate to reduce their hours of work to part-time shall have their Long Service Leave hours (accrual or entitlement) preserved at the higher amount of hours at the time of the reduction in their hours of work.

## **19. Drivers licence**

Due to the nature of Council operations, all staff will be required to drive from time to time to attend to Council activities relevant to individual roles. As a consequence, Council will reimburse all ASU staff for the renewal of their drivers licence (for a period of renewal not exceeding 5 years) at any one time upon production of the licence and receipt.

AWU Staff will be reimbursed the cost of drivers licence fee only if in the course of employment a class of licence is required above the class for car and motorcycle.

## **20. Change management**

20.1 Council recognises that change in the workplace can lead to disruption and dissatisfaction. For the purpose of this clause, "change" is deemed to include activities that have a broad or strategic impact on one or more work groups, offices or individual employees for example

- significant change in workforce size and structure
- resource sharing
- consideration of alternative service delivery

20.2 As soon as such change is considered, the matter shall be discussed with the staff likely to be affected by the change. The Council will advise the workplace representative and there will be full consultation with all parties who will be affected by the change.

20.3 As part of the consultative process, Council will discuss with the employees affected and the workplace representative, among other things, the changes being considered, the basis for such contemplated changes, the effects such changes are likely to have on employees, measures which will be taken to eliminate or lessen any adverse effects on employees and will give due consideration to matters raised and alternatives submitted by the employees in relation to the contemplated changes.

## **21. Jury duty**

Employees who are called upon to perform Jury Service should notify their immediate Manager with proof of attendance as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to release them from duty.

Where employees cannot be released from his/her work commitments, the appropriate Manager should make application to the Court, in the prescribed manner, asking that the employee be excused from service.

Employees submit their reimbursement notice received from the Court to the Pay Officer for payment of lost wages.

## **22. Emergency services leave**

Coorong District Council recognises that during times of emergency there may be occasions where Council's support could significantly improve the ability of emergency services to provide assistance to the community.

An employee who is a member of a State Government Emergency Service (ie CFS, SES) and is called out to attend an emergency during normal working hours, will be paid up to the normal finish of time of work.

Where an emergency occurs outside of normal hours or continues past normal hours, the employee will not be paid beyond normal time.

In the event of a long term, ongoing emergency, staff can apply for unpaid leave or apply to use outstanding Annual or Long Service leave. During periods of Emergency Services Leave benefits such as Long Service Leave will accrue as normal.

## **23. Military Leave**

An employee who is a member of the Defence Force Reserves may be granted special leave of absence, to a maximum of two weeks leave per annum, to attend Naval, Military or Air Force training. Documentary evidence should accompany an application for such leave and a Certificate of Attendance confirming the duration of the training period should be provided when the employee resumes work.

Leave will be granted on an unpaid basis. During periods of Military Leave benefits such as Long Service Leave will accrue as normal.

## **24. Corporate wardrobe**

Employees employed under the ASU Enterprise Agreement will have an approved corporate wardrobe supplied. Council will assist with the purchase of uniforms as stated in the current Enterprise Agreement.

## **25. Healthy lifestyle program**

In conjunction with the Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme, Council will offer staff the opportunity to take part in the annual Healthy Lifestyle Program. The program consists of:

- Program Launch Workshop
- Health Assessments
- Skin Cancer Screens
- Ongoing Health Coaching
- Online Interactive Health Program

Additionally, Council provides staff with:

- Eye sight and hearing testing
- Annual influenza vaccinations

## **26. Social Club**

Employees are able to join the Coorong District Council Social Club. Employees are able to nominate any amount of their pay to contribute to the Club. This money is held in a separate account, and can be utilised for such things as social club activities, contribution to staff gifts (optional), or as a form of enforced savings, which can be paid out prior to the annual Christmas shutdown. The Social Club also offers all staff the opportunity to join a X-Lotto syndicate.

## **27. Further information**

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's internet site: [www.coorong.sa.gov.au](http://www.coorong.sa.gov.au)

**Coorong Civic Centre**

95-101 Railway Terrace  
Tailem Bend  
Phone: 1300 785 277  
Fax: 8572 3822

**Meningie Information Hub**

49 Princes Highway  
Meningie

**Tintinara Customer Service Centre**

37 Becker Terrace  
Tintinara

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email [council@coorong.sa.gov.au](mailto:council@coorong.sa.gov.au)

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Council.