

Volunteer Policy

Strategic Reference	Objective 1; a caring, healthy and resilient community. Strategy 1.5; promote volunteering and encourage, value and support community volunteers.
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Responsibility	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
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Next review date	October 2022
Applicable Legislation	Volunteer Protection Act 2001 (SA) Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA) Children's Protection Regulations 2010 (SA) Work Health & Safety Act 2012 (SA) Work Health & Safety Regulations 2012 (SA) Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (SA) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cmwth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cmwth) Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cmwth) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cmwth) Local Government Act 1999 (SA) Privacy Act 1988 (Cmwth)
Referenced material	<i>Volunteers 'The Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers'</i> – SafeWork Australia <i>Volunteer Workforce and Safety Training Framework – A guide for South Australian Local Government - Volunteering SA&NT</i> <i>Covering All Bases – An information guide for managing volunteers in Local Government</i> – Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme
Related Policies	Safe Environment Policy Work Health Safety & Injury Management Policy Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy Human Resource Policy Code of Conduct for Council Employees
Related Documents	Volunteer Handbook Volunteer Procedure WHS 01 Work Health Safety & Return to Work Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Volunteer Policy is to:

- Guide Council's vision for the ongoing recruitment, management and recognition of volunteers
- Assist in defining the role, rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- Encourage active community participation and social interaction through appropriate volunteering opportunities
- Provide a framework for the relationship between Council staff and volunteers

2. Policy Statement

Coorong District Council recognises the importance of volunteers within its community and acknowledges their contribution to improving the quality of community life within our council area.

Volunteers are valued for providing customer focused services and enhancing established Council programs or amenity. Council encourages volunteers to contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge whilst finding a sense of satisfaction, community connection and improved wellbeing.

Volunteer programs help to forge a strong bond between the Council and the local community and will extend and enhance services to improve the quality of community life by:

- Encouraging community engagement, participation, independence and interdependence;
- Encouraging volunteerism;
- Providing additional access to resources and information;
- Increasing opportunities for social interaction, support and satisfaction;
- Value-adding to services and programs; and
- Extending the reach or impact of Council services and events.

3. Definitions

Volunteering is defined as time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. (*Volunteering Australia, 2015*)

Volunteers are defined as persons who undertake activities:

- benefits the community, council and themselves by participating in volunteer programs
- provides their services of their own free will
- does not receive any monetary reward (out of pocket expenses are not regarded as monetary reward)
- complements, but does not replace or threaten the livelihood of paid workers

4. Council's Responsibilities to Volunteers

Council's general employee management policies also apply to volunteers.

Council will:

- a) recognise the different roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers;
- b) create a climate of mutual respect;
- c) provide a safe work environment;
- d) ensure that registered volunteers have access to the services of the Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme, Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme and a Personal Accident policy;
- e) provide appropriate induction and training relating to the various activities being undertaken;
- f) assess volunteer skills to match tasks with expectations, interests and time commitments;
- g) ensure that volunteers are not used to permanently replace paid staff;
- h) require volunteers to work under the direction and supervision of paid staff and/or appointed volunteer coordinators;

5. Responsibilities of Volunteers

Volunteers have obligations to Council and are required to:

- a) act honestly and with reasonable care and diligence;
- b) demonstrate appropriate behaviour while volunteering including:
 - not attempting to influence another person for advantage or favour
 - reporting potential conflicts of interest
 - not soliciting, demanding, requesting or accepting any gift or benefit from another person
- c) maintain confidentiality and privacy regarding Council business, program information or any other sensitive, private information they come across during their volunteer duties;
- d) acquaint themselves with the objectives and functions of Council and the services they are providing;
- e) understand and acknowledge the requirements of relevant legislation, Council policies and guidelines;
- f) participate in appropriate induction and training;
- g) where necessary, undertake a Department of Human Services Working with Children Check depending on their role(s).
- h) operate under the direction and supervision of Council personnel to achieve the objectives required;
- i) notify of any potentially hazardous situation to themselves or a third party; and
- j) report any injury/damage to themselves or a third party.

Volunteers are entitled to the rights and responsibilities under various legislations, including the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012*. Volunteers must therefore adhere to the Work Health & Safety requirements of Council. Volunteers will be instructed on these requirements as part of the induction program.

6. Council's Rights

Council has the right to:

- a) negotiate a commitment from a volunteer;
- b) expect a volunteer to undergo appropriate induction and training;
- c) expect to be notified in advance if a volunteer is unable to undertake duties;
- d) refuse a volunteer placement;
- e) request that a volunteer undertakes a police check or medical predetermined by the chosen area of work;
- f) expect a volunteer to embrace privacy and confidentiality obligations.

7. Council's General Responsibilities

Council will ensure that volunteers:

- a) do not take responsibility for duties assigned to paid staff;
- b) have adequate skills and knowledge to undertake duties;
- c) are provided with an induction and appropriate training;
- d) receive appropriate support and supervision;
- e) are registered with Council and insured whilst understanding approved work activities;
- f) have a safe working environment, safe equipment and safe systems for volunteers; and
- g) have adequate resources to ensure the sustainability of the volunteer management system.

8. Further Information & Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years, or as required due to any relevant legislative changes. The next review is scheduled for October 2022.

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

Coorong Civic Centre

95-101 Railway Terrace
PO Box 399, Tailm Bend
Phone: 1300 785 277
Fax: 8572 3822

Meningie Information Hub

49 Princes Highway
Meningie
Phone: 1300 785 277

Tintinara Customer Service Centre

37 Becker Terrace
Tintinara
Phone: 1300 785 277

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email council@coorong.sa.gov.au

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