

VOLUNTEER PROCEDURE

1. Scope

The Volunteer Procedure (this 'Procedure') applies to all volunteers, volunteer co-ordinators, volunteer supervisors and volunteer programs managed by Livingstone Shire Council.

2. Purpose

To provide a consistent organisational method to the co-ordination of volunteers undertaking a role within a Livingstone Shire Council volunteer program and to make the volunteering experience a valuable and rewarding one for all.

3. References

Primary

Volunteer Policy

Volunteer Program Handbook

Legislative reference

Local Government Act 2009

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Related documents

Blue Card Directive

Blue Card Policy

Code of Conduct

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Drug and Alcohol Procedure

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Fitness for Work Directive

Fitness for Work Procedure

Information Services Directive

Prevention and Response to Harm (Children and Young People) Procedure

Prevention of Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Directive

Prevention of Sexual Harassment Directive

Public Interest Disclosure Policy

Smoke-Free Workplace Directive

Volunteer Program Handbook

Volunteer Policy

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Chief Executive Officer	A person who holds an appointment under section 194 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> . This includes a person acting in this position.
-------------------------	---

Community	Residents, ratepayers, businesses, organisations and groups who have a stake or interest in the area served by Council.
Council	Livingstone Shire Council.
Volunteer	Any person, who of their own free will, offers to undertake unpaid work for Council and is accepted as a Volunteer by the Chief Executive Officer and/or delegate.
Volunteering	Is the commitment of time and energy to the provision of services and programs which benefit the community. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without financial gain and in designated volunteer positions only. Volunteering takes many forms and can take both an episodic informal and a more structured formalised approach.

5. Procedure

5.1 Recruitment/promotion of volunteering within a Livingstone Shire Council volunteering program

Council's volunteering programs will be listed on Council's website with a brief description of the activities likely to be undertaken for each program. From time-to-time other mediums (for example: Council's Facebook page, print media, engagement activities and events) will be utilised to promote volunteerism within a Livingstone Shire Council community volunteer program.

5.2 Receipt of Volunteer Application Form

When a completed and signed *Volunteer Application Form* is received, it is to be forwarded to Disaster Management and Community Resilience.

The application will be acknowledged by Disaster Management and Community Resilience and assessed to see if the applicant has a preference for a particular program. The applicant's skills, abilities and interests will be considered in conjunction with the requirements of the program. Volunteers under the age of eighteen must have a parent/guardian sign the *Volunteer Application Form*.

Disaster Management and Community Resilience will contact the co-ordinator/supervisor of the preferred volunteer program or if no program was nominated, consider appropriate programs (taking into consideration location, volunteer levels and skills/abilities) for the volunteer to participate in.

From time-to-time volunteer programs are at capacity and are unable to accept new applicants. Disaster Management and Community Resilience will advise the applicant if the program is at capacity. If opportunities to volunteer exist elsewhere within Council, the applicant will be provided an opportunity to participate in alternative programs (taking into consideration the volunteer's skills and abilities).

5.3 Background check/screening

For some roles/programs applicant screening may be required, including; functional capacity evaluation (defining functional abilities and limitations), blue card or police criminal check. The applicant's consent will be required to check this information as part of the application process. If checks are required, Disaster Management and Community Resilience will forward the applicant's details to People and Culture to assist with the screening through its normal recruitment and selection processes.

5.4 Placement of the Volunteer

If a volunteer is accepted within a program, Disaster Management and Community Resilience will:

- a) register the *Volunteer Application Form* within Council's corporate record management system using a confidential classification; and
- b) write to the applicant confirming the placement and supply all relevant details including the impending induction and any associated forms (for example *Volunteer Photo Release Form*).

5.5 Induction

All volunteers (existing and new) will be required to undertake a volunteer induction which includes Workplace Health and Safety, relevant Council policies, procedures, requirements and the Code of Conduct. Volunteers will be required to comply with this information and any other relevant policies and procedures to assist them in meeting their responsibilities for legal, ethical and appropriate conduct.

- a) Inductions will be delivered either by a Council officer or via an online platform.
- b) Upon completion of the induction, Disaster Management and Community Resilience will register the induction paperwork within Council's corporate records management system.
- c) Upon request Disaster Management and Community Resilience can place an order for a volunteer identification card which will be forwarded to the supervisor/co-ordinator upon receipt.

5.6 Orientation

Supervisors/co-ordinators of a volunteer program will conduct an orientation with volunteers welcoming them to the team. The presence of volunteers is a privilege not a right and volunteers and paid staff are partners in their contribution to the community, each with differing but complementary roles to play. There needs to be an understanding and respect for each other's role, responsibilities and abilities. If applicable to the program, this orientation should include:

- a) site layout/site induction, including evacuation plans, amenities, first aid locations, fire protection facilities and other emergency procedures;
- b) the process for reporting hazards, incidents and near misses;
- c) ordering any personal protective equipment required;
- d) discussing any particular dress, behaviour and specific site/program requirements and tasks; and
- e) where appropriate, introduce the volunteer to Council staff members.

5.7 Supervision

Council's volunteer programs are co-ordinated by a business unit or team of Council. Supervisors/co-ordinators of volunteers and volunteer programs have responsibilities to ensure the volunteers and the programs are appropriately managed.

Supervisors/co-ordinators are responsible for:

- a) acknowledging and operating within the intent of the program; that volunteer positions will be enriching for the community of Livingstone Shire, the Council, program participants and volunteers;

- b) ensuring that the volunteer/program/position is effectively co-ordinated, supported and resourced. The business unit under which the program falls will be responsible for any costs associated with required resources;
- c) ensuring a safe work environment and safe system of work is provided for all volunteers and that volunteers shall not undertake or be expected to undertake an activity which they believe may present a hazard to themselves, another volunteer, member of the general public or private property;
- d) ensuring that hazard inspections are conducted at all relevant workplaces;
- e) ensuring risk assessments are conducted and recorded for all identified hazards, or prior to the implementation of new work practices, hazardous substances or plant and equipment;
- f) ensuring all incidents, serious bodily injuries, work-related illnesses and/or dangerous occurrences are reported to the Safety team within the required timeframes;
- g) enforcing the wearing of all required personal protective equipment and ensuring that the equipment is worn correctly;
- h) ensuring that the volunteer's identification is worn at all times (where required) while participating in the program. This serves to clearly identify a volunteer and their role within Council;
- i) ensuring volunteers have completed a timesheet which details dates, start and finish times and is signed by the volunteer and the supervisor/co-ordinator, where required; and
- j) allocating roles to volunteers which are enriching, within the volunteers' skill sets and ensuring the roles meet the needs of both the volunteers and the program. If required, prepare rosters and distribute to volunteers within a reasonable timeframe.

Disaster Management and Community Resilience will monitor the Volunteer Policy, Volunteer Procedure and the Volunteer Handbook for currency and relevancy. In addition, they will be the central contact point for overall volunteer information and responsible for identifying and implementing any areas of improvement.

5.8 Attendance / Time Keeping

Volunteers will enhance the work of paid staff, never replace nor supplant it. Where required all volunteer hours of service are to be recorded in a daily attendance register. Where volunteers do not work internally, the program supervisors/co-ordinators will record attendance hours on behalf of the volunteer. Supervisors/co-ordinators will be required to record completed timesheets within Council's corporate record management system;

At times volunteers will not be able to meet their commitment due to sickness or a prior engagement and where possible adequate notice will help staff to find a replacement volunteer if needed.

5.9 Training

Each program will have differing training requirements for volunteers dependent upon the services which the program was designed to deliver. Supervisors/co-ordinators are required to:

- a) ensure that no volunteer is required to undertake a task without first receiving training in the safe method of work or adequate safety instructions;
- b) identify any mandatory/statutory training required to undertake the role;
- c) make provision for any additional identified training and development needs of volunteers required for their role; and

- d) forward any training related documentation to Disaster Management and Community Resilience for registering within Council's corporate record management system. For example:
 - i) equipment familiarisation forms;
 - ii) Safety Hub
 - iii) team meetings and associated minutes;
 - iv) information sessions; and
 - v) training attendance/sign on sheets.

The business unit with which the program falls under will be responsible for any costs associated with training.

5.10 Communication

Volunteers are an integral part of the Council team and will be treated with respect and dignity. The supervisor/co-ordinator will communicate openly with the program's volunteers to:

- a) communicate clear expectations for roles and provide feedback;
- b) provide access to all related policies, procedures and information pertaining to volunteers and their specific role;
- c) identify any issues or training and support needs which would assist them. This also provides opportunity for a volunteer to provide feedback and to raise issues; and
- d) discuss decisions which would cause a substantial change to the role or affect the performance of the volunteer's duties.

Volunteers are a part of the team and where appropriate, it would be valuable to include them in some of the facility and program specific meetings.

Council will celebrate, recognise and acknowledge the contribution of its volunteers throughout the year. through end of year thank you celebrations, Volunteer Week recognition and/or through Council communication streams. Disaster Management and Community Resilience, together with support from Communications and Engagement Team, will implement these strategies.

5.11 Motor Vehicle Usage

Use of a volunteer's private motor vehicle or a Council motor vehicle to conduct volunteer program activities should be infrequent and only when necessary. Approval from the supervisor/co-ordinator is required prior to use of a Council or a private motor vehicle.

Council is unable to extend its insurance coverage to volunteers using a private motor vehicle for volunteer program purposes, although there may be some provision under Council's Voluntary Workers Personal Accident Cover for assistance with the excess amount should a claim be made. In the event of an incident involving a volunteer's private motor vehicle, the volunteers must rely on their own insurance when making a claim.

Volunteers driving a Council motor vehicle are covered under Council's Motor Vehicle Policy when the vehicle is being used for volunteer program purposes.

Where a volunteer is using a Council motor vehicle for volunteer program purposes the supervisor/co-ordinator is to:

- a) sight a current and valid 'C' class driver's licence;
- b) ensure a copy of the current and valid 'C' class driver's licence has been provided to Disaster Management and Community Resilience for registration within Council's corporate records management system; and

- c) conduct a familiarisation exercise with the vehicle and where appropriate complete a Fleet Asset Pre-Start Checklist before use.

5.12 Computer, Phone and Mobile Phone Usage

If a volunteer requires the use of a computer, network access or mobile phone to undertake their role, this will require management approval. If management approval is obtained supervisors/co-ordinators are to complete the usual corporate documentation to arrange access. If it is for a temporary time supervisors/co-ordinators are also required to arrange cessation of access.

Volunteers must follow all Council computer, phone and mobile usage policies and procedures.

5.13 Reimbursement of Expenses

If a volunteer incurs an out-of-pocket expense necessary as part of their volunteer role, they must seek prior approval from the delegated Council officer. Reimbursement of expenses does not include morning or afternoon tea, lunch or travel to and from home and the location of the volunteer's normal rostered duties.

Receipts and/or records must be kept and lodged with any claim for reimbursement. Reimbursement would be via a Payment Exception Authority and the business unit under which the program falls will be responsible for absorbing those costs. All associated documentation (receipts, *Payment Exception Authority Form*) must be provided to Disaster Management and Community Resilience for registration within Council's corporate records management system.

5.14 Employment with Council

A placement in Council's Volunteer Program does not entitle a volunteer progression into a paid position. Applications for recruitment to paid positions within Council will be considered on the basis of merit, as per Council's normal recruitment and selection processes. Volunteers are only able to apply for externally advertised positions. If requested, Disaster Management and Community Resilience, together with support from People and Culture, can supply a statement of service detailing the volunteer's role and the period of time they have been in that role.

5.15 Grievances

Council is committed to ensuring a healthy and safe workplace free from all forms of workplace bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination. Workplace bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Volunteers who wish to make a complaint or grievance should follow the advice provided in Council's *Grievance Procedure*. Any reports of workplace bullying, sexual harassment or discrimination will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, fairly and impartially. A person who makes a complaint or is a witness to workplace bullying, sexual harassment or discrimination will not be victimised as a result of making a complaint.

5.16 Cessation

A volunteer program or a volunteer role will be discontinued if:

- a) Council receives notice from the volunteer of their decision to cease the role;
- b) Council considers the volunteer has acted contrary to the Livingstone Shire Community Volunteer Induction Acknowledgement, Volunteer Handbook, relevant program guidelines and documentation and/or Council Policies relating to confidentiality, Workplace Health and Safety and the Code of Conduct;

- c) Council determines that the volunteer program or role is no longer required; or
- d) Council determines that the volunteer does not have the capacity to undertake the role.

When a volunteer ceases their role within a volunteer program a *Cessation Checklist Form* is to be completed by the supervisor/co-ordinator. This form will include a checklist of items for return (for example, identification card). Depending upon the role, volunteers may also have Personal Protective Equipment and/or clothing to be returned.

6. Changes to this Procedure

This Procedure is to remain in force until otherwise amended/replaced or other circumstances.

7. Repeals/Amendments

This Procedure repeals the repeals the Livingstone Shire Council Procedure titled 'Volunteer Procedure (v2.0)'.

Version	Date	Action
1.0	18/07/2017	Approved
1.1	09/11/2018	Administrative Amendments – reflect organisational restructure
2.0	06/03/2020	Approved
3.0	02/10/2024	Amended Procedure Approved – comprehensive review and required edits undertaken

SONIA TOMKINSON
ACTING GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITIES