

Code of Conduct for Volunteers

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Responsible Officer:	Director Community and City Activation
Relevant Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 Work Health and Safety Act 2012 Volunteer Protection Act 2001 Equal Opportunity Act 1984 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Age Discrimination Act 2004 Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Disability Inclusion Act 2018
Related Policies:	Volunteer Policy Performance Management and Misconduct Protocol Grievance Resolution Protocol Background Check Protocol Children and Vulnerable Persons Protocol Equal Opportunity and Diversity Protocol Complaint handling Policy Model Code of Conduct for Volunteers, LGA (SA) Volunteering Australia National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations 2001 Work Health Safety and Return to Work Policy Community Access Inclusion and Participation Policy Better Living Better Health – Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for the EHA Constituent Councils 2020- 2025. Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024

PREAMBLE

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Volunteers, like paid employees are a public face of the Council they represent and even though they give their time freely, they are still a part of the overall structure of the Council they participate within.
- 1.2 Rights and responsibilities set the standards of a volunteer program within any Council and assist both the Council and each volunteer to abide by the philosophy and ethos of the Council.

- 1.3 The Council has a significant commitment to its volunteers and has substantial responsibilities towards them including recognising the *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations*. Volunteers also have rights which are contained in legislation.
- 1.4 While participating at Council, volunteers must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, the health and safety of others and comply, so far as they are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction given by their supervisor.
- 1.5 Volunteering is work which is:
 - 1.5.1 Of benefit to the community;
 - 1.5.2 Done of one's own free will; and
 - 1.5.3 Done without monetary reward.
- 1.6 Volunteers play an integral role within society in general by initiating and enhancing the services provided by employed staff, without being a substitute for paid work.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 This document sets out the standard of conduct expected of all volunteers registered with the Council.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 The standards outlined in this document relate to all volunteers registered with the Council and are in addition to any statutory requirements of the Local Government Act.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Volunteer** means a person who willingly provides unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills through the Council's volunteer program.
- 4.2 **Participate** means undertaking a volunteering activity

CODE OF CONDUCT

5. GENERAL DUTY OF VOLUNTEERS

- 5.1 In addition to all legislative requirements and any specific directions or guidance provided by the Council, volunteers should recognise the requirements of this Code of Conduct as the standards to be adopted in the performance of their role.

6. PRINCIPLES OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

There are three broad principles that underpin the ethics and standards of conduct of volunteers engaged in Local Government:

- 6.1 Integrity;
- 6.2 Respect; and
- 6.3 Accountability.

7. INTEGRITY

- 7.1 Volunteers must act in a fair, honest and proper manner according to the law when carrying out their roles. This includes but is not limited to:
 - 7.1.1 Behaving in a reasonable, just and non discriminatory way;
 - 7.1.2 Acting in good faith and not for improper or ulterior motives;
 - 7.1.3 Adhering to the guidelines that relate to the acceptance of gifts and gratuities; and
 - 7.1.4 Being able to formally identify themselves as a registered Council volunteer at all times.
- 7.2 Volunteers must act with reasonable care and be diligent in the performance of their role, ensuring they:
 - 7.2.1 Carry out lawful policies, instructions and decisions of their designated supervisor in a respectful manner; and
 - 7.2.2 In so far as is reasonably practical, based on individual experience and training, be aware of the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and services for which they are responsible.
- 7.3 Volunteers must guard against a conflict of interest by:
 - 7.3.1 Abiding by Council guidelines and policies regarding receiving gifts, benefits or reimbursements;
 - 7.3.2 Ensuring that personal interest does not improperly influence the way in which they carry out their duties; and
 - 7.3.3 Declaring any known conflict of interest and not participating in any decision making process where they have a conflict of interest.

8. RESPECT

- 8.1 Volunteers must be fair honest and transparent in their dealings with individuals and organisations and behave in a manner that facilitates constructive communication between the Council, its staff, other volunteers and the community.
- 8.2 This means volunteers will:
 - 8.2.1 Be honest and fair with all members of the community;
 - 8.2.2 Demonstrate courteous and sensitive behaviour that does not discriminate against people;
 - 8.2.3 Be aware of and disclose any situation that may create conflict between their voluntary roles and their personal interests;
 - 8.2.4 Guard against the misuse of a volunteer's position to gain an advantage for themselves or others;
 - 8.2.5 Be punctual and reliable; and
 - 8.2.6 Advise the designated supervisor in a timely manner if unable to perform the designated role for any reason.
- 8.3 If representing the Council in the community, volunteers will:
 - 8.3.1 Provide an accurate and fair representation of Council decisions;
 - 8.3.2 Conduct themselves in a manner that will not reflect unfavourably on the Council;

- 8.3.3 Only make public comment in relation to their duties when specifically authorised to do so, and restrict such comment to factual information and professional advice; and
- 8.3.4 Dress appropriately and to the safety standard for their role.
- 8.4 Volunteers will seek to achieve a team approach in an environment of mutual respect, trust and acceptance of their different roles in achieving the Council's objectives by:
 - 8.4.1 Seeking to develop a relationship with fellow volunteers and staff that is cooperative, productive and constructive and based on mutual trust and respect;
 - 8.4.2 Conducting the relationship with courtesy and respect;
 - 8.4.3 Acknowledging the value of diversity and the right of all points of view to be heard and considered; and
 - 8.4.4 Contributing to a working environment that is free from harassment or bullying.

9. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 9.1 Volunteers understand that:
 - 9.1.1 Information obtained by a volunteer as a result of their role is not to be wilfully disclosed for any purpose that may result in an adverse impact on the Council;
 - 9.1.2 Volunteers need to ensure any personal comments to the media or other public comments, on Council and other matters, clearly indicate that it is a private view, and not that of Council;
 - 9.1.3 They must respect and maintain the confidentiality of information that volunteers have as a result of their role at the Council (not being information that is generally available to the public) and acknowledge this obligation extends beyond the term of their engagement; and
 - 9.1.4 Upon leaving the Council, they have no right to any information contained in the Council's e-mail or network file systems.
- 9.2 Volunteers must use Council resources in a proper and responsible way by:
 - 9.2.1 Being mindful of the way in which resources are deployed;
 - 9.2.2 Giving consideration to budget provisions and guarding against wasteful practices;
 - 9.2.3 Ensuring that resources are used in the community's interest; and
 - 9.2.4 Avoiding the wilful damage of Council property including information technology systems.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

- 10.1 Volunteers are personally responsible for ensuring their compliance with this Code of Conduct.
- 10.2 Council staff supervising volunteers are responsible for monitoring volunteer compliance with this Code of Conduct.
- 10.3 Questions of compliance raised by other volunteers, staff, Council Members and members of the community regarding this Code will be considered by the

Chief Executive Officer or their nominee, in accordance with the Council's complaints handling process.

- 10.4 Volunteers are entitled to representation in the consideration of an allegation of non-compliance against them and investigation and management of the matter will have regard to the principles of fairness, equity and natural justice as guided by Council's Performance Management and Misconduct Protocol.
- 10.5 Volunteers may be public officers for the purposes of the ICAC Act. Conduct which breaches this Code may be misconduct under the ICAC Act.
- 10.6 Investigations undertaken by the Council regarding compliance with this Code of Conduct will be kept confidential except where there is a legislative requirement to report information relating to the investigation.
- 10.7 As outlined in Council's Performance Management and Misconduct Protocol, the consequences of breaching the Code may result in a verbal or written warning, suspension, or termination of volunteer engagement. If a volunteer is found to have committed serious misconduct it may result in 'termination effective immediately'.

11. TRAINING

- 11.1 Council is committed to providing information and training to its volunteers to ensure that they understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12. VOLUNTEERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- 12.1 Be treated fairly and respectfully and as an important member of the team;
- 12.2 Be recruited in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation;
- 12.3 Be given accurate and truthful information about the volunteer program;
- 12.4 Work in a healthy and safe environment in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act;
- 12.5 Appropriate personal accident insurance coverage;
- 12.6 Be given or have access to any Council policy, protocol or procedure that affects their roles;
- 12.7 Have a current written role or position description and agreed hours of contribution;
- 12.8 Be provided with training relevant to their assigned or agreed roles, or as legislated;
- 12.9 Have their confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of Council's policies and procedures;
- 12.10 Be provided with appropriate training, supervision and support to carry out their roles;
- 12.11 Not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker; and
- 12.12 To decline or withdraw from their volunteer role at any time.

13. VOLUNTEERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- 13.1 Familiarise themselves with and work within Council's policies, protocols and procedures including all relevant Work Health Safety policies, procedures and risk assessments;

- 13.2 Provide current personal details to Council in order for Council to undertake the selection and registration of volunteers and administer their duty of care responsibilities;
- 13.3 Accept any reasonable direction and supervision from appropriate Council paid staff and supervising volunteers;
- 13.4 Be reliable and accountable for their actions;
- 13.5 Respect and maintain confidentiality;
- 13.6 Not make improper use of information or documents acquired by virtue of the role including the unauthorised capture and replication of confidential or personal information.
- 13.7 Carry out the role according to the role description;
- 13.8 Agree to follow all reasonable instructions aimed at ensuring work is completed in a safe manner and so as not to endanger the safety or health of any other workers or members of the public;
- 13.9 Be committed to the Council and its volunteer philosophy;
- 13.10 Undertake training as required by the Council;
- 13.11 Attend team meetings and performance reviews as required by Council;
- 13.12 Give reasonable notice before leaving the Council's volunteer program;
- 13.13 Value and support other team members;
- 13.14 Have respect for the environment, Council premises and equipment; and
- 13.15 Give consent to Council to undertake relevant checks and clearances.

14. COUNCIL HAS A RIGHT TO:

- 14.1 Retain the personal information of volunteers in line with best practice standards;
- 14.2 Make decisions about the placement of volunteers;
- 14.3 Review volunteer performance according to Council policies, protocols and procedures;
- 14.4 Expect volunteers to perform given tasks to the best of their ability;
- 14.5 Expect from all volunteers respect and courtesy towards clients, paid and voluntary staff and other stakeholders;
- 14.6 Establish the parameters and guidelines of volunteer roles; and
- 14.7 Refuse a volunteer placement or to end a placement if (including, but not limited to):
 - 14.7.1 There is a perceived unmanageable risk to the customers' or volunteers health or welfare;
 - 14.7.2 Suitable volunteer duties are not available or no longer available;
 - 14.7.3 The volunteer does not comply with Council policy, protocol and procedures, including this Code;
 - 14.7.4 The volunteer does not comply with the role or position statement; or
 - 14.7.5 The volunteer is not able to be covered by the Councils personal accident insurance or other relevant insurance.

15. COUNCIL HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- 15.1 Approve any reasonably practicable budgetary expenditure necessary for the effective and efficient management of volunteers;
- 15.2 Implement a volunteer management system that meets the best practice management of volunteers and meets audit and legislative requirements;
- 15.3 Ensure the staff supervising volunteers have the skills and capacity to do so effectively;
- 15.4 Retain volunteer personal information in a secure and safe system to ensure volunteer privacy;
- 15.5 Provide any necessary training and information to volunteers or staff with the responsibility for managing volunteers;
- 15.6 Set clear lines of communication about complaints and conflict resolution procedures;
- 15.7 Provide a working environment, plant/equipment and systems of work that meet safe work standards;
- 15.8 Include volunteers in relevant decision making processes;
- 15.9 Provide supervision and support by an appropriately skilled staff member;
- 15.10 Provide emergency procedures guidelines;
- 15.11 Provide clear policies relating to the role of volunteers and their management within the Council; and
- 15.12 Recognise the vital role volunteers have within their organisation;
- 15.13 Ensure a satisfactory National Police Clearance, background and health check and relevant DHS / DCSI screening prior to the commencement of a voluntary role as guided by Council's Background Check Protocol and where it is a requirement of the Council's funding agreements, policy, protocol and/or legislation.