

## Volunteer Management

Policy Type:	Council Policy
Reference Number:	COU56
Responsible Department:	People & Governance
Responsible Officer:	General Manager
Legislation	Equal Opportunity Act 1992 Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Child Protection Amendment Act 1991 Volunteers Protection Act 2001 Volunteer Protection Regulations 2004 Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986
Relevant Delegations:	Not applicable
Related Policies	Code of Conduct (Staff and Volunteers)
Community Goal	1.5 Provide a diverse range of volunteering opportunities together with training, support and recognition throughout the community.  1.6 Provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate meaningfully in community life.
Previous Policy No.	16, COU101
Date Adopted:	26 February 2007 CSP 16 Aug (348/10) C 23 Aug (717/10) CSP 8 Oct (13912) C 22 Oct (564/12)
Review Date:	2014

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Unley recognises the contribution that its volunteers provide to the Council and the community and is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders are supported by optimising the management of volunteer programs.

The policy applies to all volunteers and to those employees who work in activities, programs and services where volunteers are involved.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The purpose of this document is to provide a best practice framework for the management of volunteers:

- by articulating the underlying philosophy of involving volunteers and providing direction and structure to the way volunteers are managed;
- by defining the responsibilities and the relationship between Council's paid staff and volunteers;
- by providing an understanding of Council's expectation and standards for volunteers in accordance with the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in not-for-profit organisations;
- by defining the rights and responsibilities of volunteers;
- who are in volunteer programs that have partnerships with key stakeholders such as community groups and the business sector;
- by providing guidance on the resolution of any disputes which arise in connection with any of the volunteer programs;
- by insuring that vulnerable people are not placed at risk as a result of being a volunteer or accepting the services of a volunteer program.

## 3. OBJECTIVES

The application of best-practice principles for the management of volunteers is primarily designed to support and achieve the City of Unley's vision to be recognised for community spirit, desirable character, and business success in a sustainable, safe environment.

The objectives of the volunteer program are:

- to provide a response to community needs by enhancing existing services and developing new services in line with community goals;
- to ensure the sustainability and success of volunteer programs provided by Council;
- to improve the quality of life for residents in the Unley Community by encouraging social inclusion through participation in meaningful community activities.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**Volunteer** - An individual who is registered with, and has the approval of Council, to undertake activities in designated volunteer positions that are of benefit to Council, the local community and the individual. The individual provides services of their own free will, without coercion and for no financial reward, except for reimbursement for approved out of pocket expenses.

**Non Volunteers** – Persons who are on work placement, work experience, students undertaking volunteering as part of the educational curriculum, Elected Members undertaking their member duties or persons receiving payment for services provided.

**Vulnerable People** – People who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation due to their dependency on others. This may include children, people with disability, the frail aged and people from non English speaking backgrounds.

**Prescribed Position** – a position that requires regular contact or working in close proximity with Vulnerable People on a regular basis.

**Program Coordinator** – Staff who supervise or have day to day management responsibility for volunteers.

**Mandatory Training** - Compulsory training specific to each volunteer role to be completed prior to undertaking the volunteer role.

**Reimbursement** - Payment to the volunteer for pre-approved expenses incurred during the course of carrying out responsibilities.

#### **4. REFERENCES**

National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations, Volunteering Australia Inc, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2001.

National Standards Implementation Guide for not for profit organisations, Volunteering Australia Inc 2001.

Model Code of Practice for Organisations Involving Volunteer Staff, Information Sheet, Volunteering Australia Inc, 2005.

Volunteering in Local Government “A Way for the Future”, Local Government Community Manager, 2008.

#### **5. PROCEDURE**

##### **5.1 *Protecting the rights of volunteers and recognising their responsibilities.***

- Volunteers are recruited in a fair, equitable and formal manner, provided with training to undertake their tasks and orientated to their workplace.
- Volunteers are provided with a job or position description that outlines their roles, responsibilities and expected performance standards of service delivery.
- Volunteers are given a Volunteer Handbook that acts to guide and instruct them in quality service and professional standards pertaining to volunteering.
- Volunteers designated to a Prescribed Position must provide a satisfactory National Police Certificate prior to the commencement of their voluntary role.
- Volunteers receive the legal protection for the requirement of Occupational Health Safety and Welfare and Equal Employment Opportunity.
- Insurance cover is provided for volunteers registered with and who have the approval of Council to undertake activities in designated volunteer positions.

## **5.2 *Managing volunteers in a fair and consistent manner.***

Volunteers have the following rights and responsibilities:

- Volunteers can expect to be treated fairly and respectfully and be valued as an important member of the team.
- They should be provided with support and direction from the nominated supervisor, work in a safe environment and have complaints and grievances addressed in accordance with Council's policy and procedure.
- Volunteers may also decline or withdraw from work if it is not suitable, or if it is placing excessive demands on them.
- Volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with Council's policies and procedures.
- Volunteers must respect and maintain confidential information and perform the duties to the expected standards defined within position descriptions.
- Volunteers must participate in training when it is identified as mandatory and are encouraged to participate in training that is offered to assist in skill development.
- Volunteers must inform the Volunteer Management Officer of any health issues that will prevent them from safely undertaking their role.
- Volunteers will also work within a team structure and accept any direction and supervision from staff and are expected to be effective members of the organisation.
- Volunteers should inform their supervisor if they are unable to attend their volunteer task at any time. Unsatisfactory voluntary work and/or inappropriate behaviour may result in termination of the volunteer registration.

## **5.3 *Appraising the performance of volunteer programs and implementing systems and processes to support the volunteers, volunteer programs and activities to ensure best-practice in volunteer management and continuous improvement.***

In order for volunteers to conduct their activities, Council acknowledges that volunteer programs require a commitment of adequate financial, human, physical and time resources. These resources will be allocated in line with Council requirements and the National Standards for Volunteers. Volunteer programs are regularly appraised by compiling feedback from all stakeholders, including volunteers and Program Co-ordinators. Feedback sought will consider the effectiveness of policy and procedure, documentation, volunteer work satisfaction and measures of productivity and outcomes. A volunteer management system and its documented processes will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its suitability and relevance. Budget provision will be made to cover reimbursement of pre-approved out of pocket expenses.

## **5.4 *Acknowledging the contribution that volunteering makes to the community's knowledge of Council and its services.***

Volunteer programs offer a variety of services directly to the public to enhance the human, environmental and social well being of the community and often underpin the work completed by paid staff. Volunteer roles support, maintain and add value but do not replace the roles of paid staff.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Manager Community and Health Services**

The role of the Manager Community and Health Services is to:

- Plan, lead and manage the provision of Community and Environmental Health Services within the City of Unley in accordance with Council's Corporate Goals.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of Council's social, economic, environmental and corporate strategies.
- Provide specialist advice on the needs of older people, younger people with disabilities and carers to the business unit and the organisation.
- Ensure services provided comply with all legislative and funding agreement requirements.
- Lead the team in accordance with the City of Unley's Leadership Success Profile.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships and networks with relevant community members, agencies and community groups.
- Establish, coordinate and lead appropriate and effective management systems and processes within Council and the community to ensure desired outcomes are achieved.
- Ensure legislative compliance and monitoring of delegations and procedures relevant to position.
- Ensure regular evaluation and reporting on services, activities and programs.

### **Volunteer Management Officer**

The Volunteer Management Officer co-ordinates the operations of Council's volunteer programs and provides support to the volunteer program co-ordinators in managing volunteer issues. This involves:

- Developing a strategic approach to addressing the immediate and emerging future issues in volunteerism.
- Developing and regularly reviewing the volunteer policy, operational procedures, guidelines, Volunteer Handbook and the induction process to ensure they reflect legislative requirements and National Standards.
- Recruiting, assessing and matching volunteers to suitable volunteer positions.
- Providing generic induction to all volunteers.
- In conjunction with Program Coordinators, ensuring volunteers receive appropriate orientation, support and training to enable them to undertake their role safely and competently.
- Assisting Program Coordinators to develop, maintain and evaluate their volunteer program.
- Providing a referral service for people who wish to work voluntarily within Council's services.
- Ensuring volunteers are appropriately recognised.
- Support and guide Program Coordinators in implementing Council's complaint handling and disciplinary procedures.
- Participating as a member of the business unit.

## **Program Co-ordinators**

- Are Council employees who oversee the day-to-day operations of specific volunteer programs. Specific duties associated with volunteer programs are outlined within the Program Coordinators' position descriptions.
- Ensure that volunteers have access to current OHS&W policies and procedures, are kept up to date with information, training or demonstration of best practice principles in manual handling techniques required for the role.
- Are responsible for maintaining volunteer attendance records.
- Endeavour to offer a variety of work within the scope of the job description to volunteers to ensure job satisfaction.
- Ensure volunteers receive and comply with updated Council policies and procedures.
- Communicate with volunteers in an effective and timely manner through direct supervision. Provide training, on-site inductions, program procedures and relevant administration forms.
- Conduct support and information meetings and recognise volunteer contributions.
- Implement Council's complaint handling procedure and disciplinary procedures as required and ensure records are maintained and actions taken to resolve them

## **Volunteers**

- Perform the duties as defined within volunteer position descriptions.
- Ensure the provision of the expected standards of services.
- Attend their duties punctually and perform tasks appropriately.
- Participate in mandatory training.
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- Work within a team structure and accept direction and supervision from the Program Coordinator.
- Comply with Council policies and procedures.
- Notify their coordinator of any factors that may impede their ability to perform their duties in an appropriate and safe manner.
- Protect their own safety and the safety of others.