

## Volunteer Management Policy

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## 1. Scope

Unless specifically stated, the policy applies to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken by or on behalf of the Parramatta City Council, and to all departments and sites of operation of the organisation. The National Standard for Involving Volunteers represent what Volunteering Australia regards as 'best practice' in the management of volunteers. The National Standards have been considered in this policy.

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## 2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management.

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## 3. Definitions

*Volunteer*      Anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of his/her volunteer duties, performs a task at the direction and on behalf of the organisation.

*Expenses*      Travel expenses only. No parking fees or overdue fines for parking. Only pre-approved expenses are reimbursed.

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## 4. Policy Intention

The intention of this policy is to support and encourage Council's involvement in volunteer programs and to ensure that programs and activities are managed appropriately. All the staff are encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which the volunteers might serve.

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## 5. Procedure

The productive use of volunteers requires a planned and organised effort. Staff and volunteers will be provided with assistance and support to ensure high quality services are provided to the community.

A volunteer can only be engaged once they have successfully completed the volunteer selection process including relevant volunteer checks. Volunteers are not considered employees of the organisation.

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## **6. Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers**

### **6.1 Position descriptions**

Volunteer staff, just as paid staff, require a clear, complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the position which they are expected to fill. Prior to any volunteer assignment and recruitment, a position description must be developed for each volunteer post. This will be given to each accepted volunteer and used in subsequent management and evaluation efforts. Position descriptions should be reviewed and updated at least every two years, or whenever the work involved in the position changes substantially.

### **6.2 Recruitment Process**

Volunteers shall be recruited by the organisation on a pro-active basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement in the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, disability, age, race or other condition. The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of the council. Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. No final acceptance shall take place without a specific written volunteer position description for that volunteer.

The volunteer will be provided with the appropriate information regarding the terms and conditions of their engagement during the recruitment process. The information provided will include Volunteer Application form, Position Description; Information on the program/service for which they are volunteering; Anti-Bullying; Code of Conduct; WHS information & any relevant policies relating to their work.

### **6.3 Interviewing**

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for and interest in that position. The interview should determine the qualification of the volunteer, their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position, and should answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position. It is preferable that interviews are conducted in person.

### **6.4 Volunteer Checks**

Volunteer applicants who are successful in the interview process will be subjected to appropriate reference and pre employment checks prior to offer of volunteer work as per the Criminal History Record Checks Policy.

### **6.5 Volunteer Records**

A file will be maintained for each volunteer, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, training participated in and evaluation of work.

Volunteer files shall receive the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

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## **7. Volunteer responsibilities**

### **7.1 Code of Conduct**

Volunteers must conform to the Code of Conduct which applies to all employees and volunteers. The Code of conduct will be provided to Volunteers at the commencement of their volunteer work. Volunteers shall familiarise themselves with the content and abide by the Code of Conduct at all times. A volunteer may be dismissed if they breach the Code of Conduct.

### **7.2 Advise of any Conflict of interest**

All conflict of interests must be declared and will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

### **7.3 Media Protocol**

Volunteers are not permitted to make comments to the media on behalf of council. Any queries for a statement to the media must be referred to the media department at Council.

### **7.4 Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single member of staff, volunteer, client or other person, or involves the overall business of the organisation. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in the termination of the volunteer's relationship with the organisation or other corrective action.

### **7.5 Intellectual Property**

It is a term and condition of your volunteering that the intellectual property and materials (including ideas, documents and records) you create in the course of your stay is and will be made under attribution plus share-alike creative common licence. This means the council, yourself and general public may use your IP as long as they credit you as the source and your IP shared using the same creative commons licence.

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### **7.6 Availability and Leave**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular scheduled and punctual basis (starting and finishing time in line with business needs). When expected to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform the volunteers supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's work assignment or term of service. Volunteers are encouraged to take up to 4 weeks leave from volunteering each year.

### **7.7 Work Health & Safety**

Volunteers are covered under the Work Health & Safety Act (2012). Refer to council Work Health & Safety policy for Council's and Volunteer's responsibilities. As per employees, Volunteers will need to be given site inductions; asked to sign relevant Safe Work Method Statements; understand their WHS responsibilities, participation in any mandatory WHS training; and be provided with tools & equipment to complete tasks safely.

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## 7.8 Standard of Dress

Council's dress guidelines have been developed to ensure employees and volunteers present a professional image of Council while, in recognition of the diversity of roles within Council, allowing flexibility for employees to dress appropriately for their particular positions.

All standards of dress worn by volunteers must:

- Comply with relevant OH&S requirements;
- Be appropriate for the tasks being undertaken; and
- Project a professional image of Council.

Standard of dress will be neat casual. The following items of clothing may be considered inappropriate:

- Crop tops, backless and strapless tops and singlets.
  - Jeans that are in poor condition (i.e. faded, torn, ill fitting) cargos, tracksuits and denim skirts and shorts.
  - Casual footwear such as thongs, runners and sandals.
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## 8. Volunteer Rights

Staff and Volunteers are expected to adhere to the rights & responsibilities set out by Volunteering Australia

### 8.1 Volunteer Roles

Roles to be filled by volunteers will be defined by Council and will include a range of supportive and additional roles rather than replace paid staff.

### 8.2 Reimbursement of expenses

Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking council business. Prior approval should be sought before any expenditure. Volunteer supervisors should provide Volunteers with a procedure on how to claim reimbursements, which volunteers must follow.

### 8.3 Training

Volunteers should be given an Orientation Session and or induction on commencing their role. Volunteers should be given sufficient ongoing training to do their work, and optional opportunities for learning and development. Volunteers must attend any mandatory training as directed by their supervisor.

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## **9. Volunteer Performance**

### **9.1 Volunteer supervision and Support**

A staff member will supervise each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the council. The volunteer supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. Regular volunteer meetings will be held throughout the year, which volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend.

### **9.2 Lines of communication**

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in email list and have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials, newsletters and meetings relevant to the work assignments. Primary responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer receives such information will rest with the direct supervisor of the volunteer.

### **9.3 Recognition**

Parramatta City council values and respects the contribution of all our volunteers in whatever capacity they may fulfil. Council will endeavour to ensure that the work of our volunteers is recognised via both formal and informal recognition, and that our volunteers in turn feel appreciated for their work.

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## **10. Volunteer Termination**

### **10.1 Dismissal of a volunteer**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the Code of Conduct and relevant policies and procedures of the Parramatta City Council or who fail satisfactorily to perform their volunteer assignment may be subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff. Principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be applied.

### **10.2 Reasons for dismissal**

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited, to the following: breaches of Code of Conduct; Anti-Bullying; gross misconduct or insubordination; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property or misuse of council's equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of co-workers and clients; intimate relationships with clients; failure to abide by council's policies and procedures; failure to meet physical and mental standards of performance; and failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily.

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### 10.3 Concerns and grievances

Any concerns and grievances should be firstly reported to the supervisor who will investigate the issue. If the issue is not resolved or the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome, escalation should be taken to the Service Manager.

### 10.4 Resignation

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the council at any time. A volunteer who intends to resign must provide as much advance notice as possible of their departure. Exit interview or survey to take place to support continuous improvement.

## 11. Insurance

Parramatta City Council will provide Volunteers with Public Liability, Professional Indemnity and Personal Accident Insurance. Personal Accident Insurance is limited to non-Medicare redeemable expenses. Where Volunteers are required to use their vehicles as part of their duties comprehensive insurance on their vehicle is required.

<b>REFERENCES</b>	Code of Conduct Work Health Safety Act
<b>POLICIES</b>	Criminal History Record Checks Policy Working With Children Policy Corporate Clothing & Standard Dress Policy

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