



Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

VOLUNTEER POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Lachlan Shire Council (LSC) is committed to providing excellent service to its customers throughout all areas of Council's activities. The enormous contribution made by volunteer workers in this regard is highly valued by Council, as it is through the input of volunteers that Council is able to offer extended assistance in a variety of services.

In accordance with the NSW Work, Health & Safety Act 2011 and supporting Work, Health & Safety Regulations 2011 Council must provide a safe environment for its employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors therefore it is imperative that the following policy is adhered to by all of Council's volunteer workers.

There is no such thing as a typical Lachlan Shire Council volunteer or role description. There are limited areas within Council that can offer volunteering opportunities so the content of volunteer roles can vary, as can the skills required to carry out the role.

Volunteer workers will only undertake duties that assist Council to enhance the quality of lifestyle within the Lachlan Shire.

PURPOSE

This policy applies to all volunteer workers involved in Council organised activities, including Council employees who volunteer to be involved in activities external to their normal workplace duties.

One of the aims in the Lachlan Shire Council Volunteer Policy is to define clear guidelines for participation by volunteers to allow individuals to have an understanding of the nature and commitment of their involvement in Council activities.

POLICY

OBLIGATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer workers are expected to maintain the same standards of confidentiality, courtesy, organisational discipline and compliance with the Code of Conduct and other relevant policies as are required of paid employees.

By volunteering you are generously donating your time, skills and efforts. But a volunteer environment is still a workplace, and as such, you have certain responsibilities that must be upheld; and as a volunteer you have rights as well.

You have the right:

- to work in a healthy and safe environment in accordance with the Work, Health and Safety Act 2011
- to be interviewed and employed in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- to be adequately covered by insurance

- to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of Council while you are volunteering
- be provided with a copy of the Volunteer Policy and other applicable policies that affects your work
- not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker
- to have a job description and agreed working hours
- to have access to a grievance procedure
- to be provided with an induction to Council and each relevant work area
- to have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988; and
- to be provided with sufficient training to do your job.

All volunteers are expected to:

- respect confidentiality and privacy
- be punctual and reliable
- carry out the duties listed in your volunteer position description
- be accountable
- give notice if your availability changes or you are leaving the organisation
- report any injuries, incidents or hazards that you notice in the workplace
- adhere to Council's policies and procedure
- deal with complaints in the appropriate manner
- undertake training as requested
- ask for support when needed and support other team members

Volunteer workers who are required to enter the homes of clients of Council are, at all times, to remember that they represent Lachlan Shire Council and are to behave in a manner which reflects favourably on both themselves and Council.

Engagement and service as a volunteer worker with Council will not be construed as providing any access to, or right of consideration for, future paid employment with Council.

BEST PRACTICE

In 2013, the NSW Government released the Statement of Principles, which has become framework for best practice volunteer management. The Principles are:

- This organisation demonstrates a commitment to best practice in volunteer management and all our people respect and support this commitment.
- Our volunteers are involved in the life of the organisation and are included in decisions that affect them.
- This organisation provides volunteers with clarity about their roles and is clear about expectations and policies that impact on their roles.
- Our volunteers respect the roles of everyone in the organisation.
- This organisation recognises and celebrates the contribution of volunteers.
- Our volunteers are provided with training and professional development for their roles.
- This organisation provides all our people with the opportunity to resolve disputes with respect and dignity.

Council staff responsible for the management of Volunteers will ensure they are achieving the Statement of Principles.

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DEFINITIONS

Volunteering is an activity which takes place through a not for profit organisation and is:

- of benefit to the community and the volunteer,
- undertaken of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion,
- for no financial payment; and
- in a position not designated as paid.

Designated Staff Member is responsible for supervising a volunteer worker. This role will form part of the Designated Staff Member's normal duties.

The Designated Staff Member's responsibilities may include:

- follow the Statement of Principles framework for managing volunteers
- develop a role description or list of duties for the volunteer
- ensure a set of standard operating procedures for the volunteer's work
- development and review of operating guidelines
- conduct the induction of the volunteer
- ensure all induction requirements are complete
- conduct a probationary review of the volunteer
- provide leadership and support to the volunteer
- organise and allocate tasks and coordinate operation where required,
- ensure appropriate performance by the volunteer
- review the volunteers performance during the time they volunteer with Lachlan Shire Council
- stimulate an environment of inclusion of the volunteer worker in processes and decision making of the work area
- ensure appropriate access to training for the volunteer
- ensuring all volunteers are noted on a volunteer register

The Designated Staff Member will be provided with appropriate guidance to fulfil their responsibilities to the volunteer.

RESPONSIBILITY

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all Council departments who engage the services of volunteers.

PROCEDURE

Once a volunteer has been offered a placement an induction will be undertaken to ensure the volunteer is provided with all the information necessary to begin meaningful participation with Council. The induction will cover the following broad areas:

- completion of relevant paperwork
- introduction to Council
- information about the group/work area
- code of conduct and other relevant policies
- training
- work health and safety
- work site introduction

Each area utilising volunteer workers must maintain a register of all volunteers.

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PRE EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

Council may require the volunteer to undergo a range of pre-employment screenings, which may include a functional assessment Working with Children Check or Criminal History Check if performing certain activities. Any applicable fees in obtaining these checks will be reimbursed by Council.

PROCEDURE AND OUTLINE OF DUTIES

Volunteers are to be provided with activity specific procedures including risk assessment, hazard identification and control measures for the duties to be undertaken.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers must ensure that any information accessed through their volunteering duties remains confidential. Any breach of this confidentiality requirement may result in termination of the volunteer's services.

PROBATION/TRIAL PERIOD

In some circumstances volunteers may be subject to a probationary period.

Volunteers will be advised at their induction of the length of their probation/trial period. In most cases a trial would continue for a period of 3 months. Normally a volunteer will have their performance reviewed after one month and then at the completion of the 3 month period. If at the end of this time either party does not feel that the arrangement is working, the voluntary opportunity may be terminated.

Volunteers should expect to have their performance reviewed on a regular basis throughout the duration of their participation with Council as determined by their Designated Staff Member.

USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLE

Any volunteer who is required to operate a vehicle as part of their volunteering duties must provide Council with proof of their current drivers licence.

If using a private vehicle, the volunteer must provide evidence of their motor vehicle third party and comprehensive insurance details by 1 July each year.

Volunteer workers must drive in accordance with the rules and regulations set down by the Roads and Maritime Services and NSW Police and are responsible for any parking or traffic offences incurred by them for not complying with these rules and regulations.

Failure to meet the above requirements will exclude the volunteer from driving a Council vehicle or providing transport for clients of Council.

INSURANCE

As a volunteer of Council you are covered by Council's Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance while you are performing tasks in your capacity as a volunteer of Council and your actions are within the scope of your job description.

ATTENDANCE

Volunteer workers are required to advise their supervisor or manager if they are unable to attend work, where scheduled.

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TRAINING

BASIC WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Before starting work volunteer workers must participate in a program which familiarises them with workplace health and safety requirements.

This Program includes consultation with the supervisors as to the hazards at the site and controls developed. Volunteer workers must take reasonable care for the health and safety of people at work. Volunteer workers are also required to cooperate with the supervisor in the interest of work, health and safety and report any unsafe acts or unsafe conditions associated with their work.

Volunteers working on Council land, which is deemed to be a Construction Site must have attended a SafeWork NSW accredited general construction induction training and have with them at all times their Construction Induction Card/Certificate, commonly known as a White Card.

TERMINATING SERVICE

Volunteers are an invaluable resource to Lachlan Shire Council but it is recognised that due to changing circumstances the volunteer may need to resign from their voluntary role. Lachlan Shire Council asks all volunteers to give as much notice as possible to their Designated Staff Member before leaving Lachlan Shire Council.

Lachlan Shire Council is committed to constantly improving volunteer opportunities and all feedback regarding a volunteer's experience at Lachlan Shire Council would be appreciated. If the volunteer is leaving due to any sort of problem or dissatisfaction with Lachlan Shire Council it would be beneficial if they notified the Designated Staff Member as to their reasons. Confidentiality will of course be respected in all matters relating to this.

The General Manager or Director may terminate the services of a volunteer worker at any time without notice.

STATEMENT OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

A Statement of Voluntary Service will be available at any time after the completion of 3 months voluntary Service with Lachlan Shire Council.

LEGISLATION

Work, Health & Safety Act 2011

Work, Health & Safety Regulations 2011

NSW Ombudsman Child Protection in the Workplace

Australian Road Rules Act

Privacy & Personal Information Act 1998

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

Council Code of Conduct and other applicable policies and procedures

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