



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Date Adopted:	
Council or Corporate Policy	Corporate Procedure
Responsible Division:	Environment and Community Management, Employee Services
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy:	Volunteer Management Manual Volunteer Handbook
References & Legislation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Health and Safety Act 2011 • Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) • Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) • Anti-discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) – as amended • Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth) – as amended • Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth) – as amended • Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth) – as amended • Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth) • Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth) • National Standards for Involving Volunteer in Not-for-profit Organisations, Volunteering Australia • Volunteers Statement of Principles, NSW Volunteering

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1 Purpose of Policy

The objectives of this policy are to provide a framework:

- For managing and increasing volunteering with Leichhardt Council consistent with Councils Strategic and Community and Cultural plan commitments; and
- That respects the rights and interests of volunteers and staff.

Leichardt Municipal Council welcomes, encourages and supports the participation and involvement of the community to contribute to and enhance the programs of the organisation through volunteering and we recognise and value the contributions of our volunteers.

We are committed to ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure best practice in the recruitment, orientation, training, safety and well-being, supervision/management, support, acknowledgement and retention of volunteer roles.

Council aims to provide accessible volunteering opportunities that are meaningful and rewarding for our diverse communities.

Council acknowledges that volunteers contribute to the political, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the local community by:

- Strengthening community cohesion, intergenerational exchange, social wellbeing and trust;
- Expanding the ability of the community to respond to the needs of its citizens and provide a range of services and activities;
- Engaging the community in protecting local resources, improving the physical environment and support for environmental issues;
- Encouraging understanding of, and acceptance of, culture, diversity and difference; and
- Providing people with the opportunity to contribute whilst offering skills development and learning opportunities;
- Recognising and valuing the contribution made by volunteers and voluntary groups to the projects and services delivered by Council;
- Ensuring that volunteering remains a mutually beneficial activity;
- Clarifying the rights and entitlements for volunteers;
- Managing and supporting Council volunteers in accordance with the National Standards for involving volunteers in not-for-profit organisations and the NSW Volunteering Statement of Principles;
- Working in partnership with community groups and relevant stakeholders to develop volunteering opportunities, promote volunteering, raise the profile of volunteerism and facilitate access to information about volunteering opportunities;
- Ensuring volunteer roles and responsibilities are consistent with Council policies and strategies and providing staff and volunteers with clear information about their roles, responsibilities and procedures when engaged in Council's volunteer programs.

2 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Volunteer	Any person who, without compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a designated task for, or assists in, the delivery of a Council project/service under the expressed direction of Council or an associated Independent Organised Volunteer Group.
Formal volunteering	An activity which takes place through not for profit organisations or projects and is undertaken: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion; • For no financial payment; and • In designated volunteer positions only.
Independent Organised Volunteer Groups	These groups are external to Council and have their own organisational and management structure, carry their own insurance and manage their Volunteers within their organisation. They are project focused, use their own resources and the only interaction with Council could well be that the project is conducted on Council land and properties, or within Council boundaries, for example Clean up Australia.
Organisation	Not-for-profit organisations including service clubs or sporting clubs, charitable organisations, and the like that usually carry their own insurance and manage their Volunteers within their organisation.
Committees	Includes volunteer community members e.g. Access Policy Committee, Community Facility Management Committees etc.
Program Co-ordinator	Volunteer leader with the Volunteer group and is also the spokesperson and point of liaison for the Volunteer organisation.
Manager	Paid employee of Council who is responsible to manage the project or who is responsible to manage the functions of a unit within Council.
Supervisor	A paid employee of Council who has delegated responsibility to directly oversee the volunteer activities.
Employee Services Environment and Community Management	Sections within Council that manages the Volunteer policy.

3 Guiding Principles

Council's guiding principles for volunteer programs and activities are:

- Council supports the principle that volunteers are managed, supported and resourced in accordance with the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in not-for-profit organisations, developed by Volunteering Australia;
- Council acknowledges that volunteer initiatives require a commitment to resourcing and that it can play a dual role of supporting volunteers who assist in the provision of Council services and programs, and play a leadership role of developing volunteering within the Leichardt local government area;
- Council is clear that volunteer or unpaid positions will not be used to replace paid positions; and
- Council acknowledges community capacity building and the enhancement of community well-being through volunteering.

Council also supports Volunteering NSW Statement of Principles:

- 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.

4 Roles & Responsibilities

The Volunteer Policy applies to:

- Committees of Council
- All individuals applying to volunteer with Council
- All individual volunteering with Council
- All individuals and organisations undertaking work on Council property, but not under the direction of Council i.e. Service Clubs, Clean Up campaigns, Environmental Groups.
- Staff engaging or managing volunteers

5 Policy Implementation

5.1 Work Health and Safety

Volunteers, in the same way as Council employees, are entitled to work in an environment that is safe. Supervisors are responsible for providing volunteers with Council's *Work Health and Safety Policy* and procedure, and any other relevant safe work procedures where applicable. Volunteers shall follow all safe work procedures and seek instruction when required. It is a standard condition of consent that all work is carried out in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Council and Independent Organised Volunteer Groups are responsible for ensuring that Volunteers are provided with appropriate training. Depending on the activity, the training must include WHS induction training, and could include hazard identification, first aid, responding to an emergency, and use of communication equipment and construction induction.

While undertaking activities on behalf of Council and Independent Organised Volunteer Groups, Volunteers have the same WHS responsibilities as paid employees. Volunteers, either through their actions or omissions, are not to place themselves or others at risk while undertaking Council or Independent Organised Volunteer Group related activities. Volunteers will be briefed on the appropriate risk management and safety procedures for their activity, must follow the directions of the person in charge, must follow safe work practices and are required to inform their supervisor of any matter that could affect the safe undertaking of the activity.

6 Policy Review

This policy is owned (managed) by the Group Manager, Community and Cultural Services and Manager, Employee Services.

This policy must be reviewed by 1 July 2016.

This policy can be amended or rescinded by Council resolution unless delegated authority is given by the Council to the General Manager to do so.

7 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	August 2006	General Manager	
2	September 2014		