

Volunteer Policy	
Reference Number	743121
Responsible Business Unit	Organisational Development
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government Act, 1999 (SA) South Australia Equal Opportunity Act (SA), 1984 Volunteer Protection Act (SA), 2001 Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) (WHS Act) Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 (SA) (ICAC Act) Children's Protection Act, 1993
Relevant Delegations	Chief Executive Officer General Manager Corporate Services; Manager Organisational Development.
Related Policies Management Guidelines Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCMB Volunteer Code of Conduct Code of Conduct for Employees HR Policy: Conduct, Behaviour and Performance HR Guideline: Employee Behaviour – Including Fair Treatment & Grievance Resolution HR Guideline: Employee Discipline Council's Privacy Policy Council's Police Check Policy
Link to Strategic Plan	Objective 4.3 - Sense of Community
Council resolution	64.3
Date Adopted	12 April 2021
Previous Revisions	23 June 2008 October 2012 29 January 2013 – Item 11.1 11 April 2016 – Item 68.4 9 July 2018 – Item 135.1
Next Review Date	June 2023

1 POLICY STATEMENT

The Rural City of Murray Bridge recognises the importance of volunteers within its community and values the commitment and contribution which volunteers make to the well-being of the community.

The Council will demonstrate best practice for community engagement and, in this case, the recruitment, support, management, recognition, retention and celebration of volunteers.

Volunteers bring with them expertise, life skills and knowledge. Their diverse cultural backgrounds, experiences, skills and values, reflect the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this Policy is to articulate Council's commitment to volunteering for the benefit of Council, the community and those individuals participating in the program, to clearly define the role of the Volunteers within the Rural City of Murray Bridge and to set out best practice principles to guide the management of Volunteers. In doing so, the sustainability of the Council's Volunteer Program will be assured.

3 SCOPE

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.

The electronic version accessible on Council's website and Council's electronic record system is the controlled version. Printed copies are considered uncontrolled – before using a printed copy verify that is the current version.

4 PRINCIPLES

This Policy has been developed taking into consideration *The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015*, developed by Volunteering Australia.

5 DEFINITIONS

Definition of Volunteering: Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. (*Volunteering Australia, 2015*)

The Rural City of Murray Bridge defines Volunteers as citizens who:

- choose to benefit the community and the Council by contributing to the services and programs which are provided by the Council;
- are registered volunteers of the Council and who undertake activities in designated volunteer positions only;
- provide their time and skill of their own free will and without coercion;
- do not receive monetary reward from the Council, but may receive reimbursement for pre-approved out of pocket expenses; and
- undertake activities that complement and enhance, but do not replace, the services provided by Council paid staff.

The following persons are not considered volunteers for the purpose of the Policy:

- People on work placement and work experience programs;
- Students undertaking volunteering as a part of the education curriculum;
- Volunteers involved in Work for the Dole initiatives;
- Elected Members; and
- Staff.

Volunteer Management System

The range of policies, procedures, resources and databases that facilitate the recruitment, support, management, retention and recognition of volunteers and Volunteer Programs.

'Council' means the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

6 VOLUNTEER POLICY

6.1 Work Health and Safety Laws

Volunteers have rights and obligations under the WHS Act 2012. Volunteers must therefore adhere to the WHS requirements of the Council. Volunteers will be instructed on these requirements as part of their Induction and Training.

6.2 Eligibility For Volunteering

The Rural City of Murray Bridge has a Volunteer Programs application process and welcomes all expressions of interest from the community including Elected Members and staff with respect to volunteering for the Council.

6.2.1 Individuals – citizens interested in volunteering will be assessed through the application and training process for suitability against the following criteria:

6.2.1.1 the individuals suitability for volunteering, taking into consideration their skills & interests, requirements of the role, competency, National Police Certificate and reference check;

6.2.1.2 the organisational needs, ie vacancy in the program area where the individual wishes to volunteer;

6.2.1.3 willingness to be flexible to the requirements of the organisation.

6.2.2 Elected Members - Elected Members who wish to register as volunteers will be required to follow the Volunteer Programs application process to ensure Elected Members are provided with the same rights and responsibilities which apply to all volunteers engaged by the Rural City of Murray Bridge. If an Elected Member wishes to Volunteer, they are doing so in the capacity of a volunteer and must not exercise their authority as an Elected Member over staff, volunteers or members of the public.

6.2.3 Staff - Staff who wish to register as a volunteer will be required to follow the Volunteer Programs application process to ensure that staff are provided with the same rights and responsibilities as all Council volunteers. If a staff member wishes to volunteer, they are doing so in the capacity of a volunteer and must not exercise their authority as a staff member over staff, volunteers or members of the public.

6.3 Volunteer Engagement - Volunteers will be officially registered with the Rural City of Murray Bridge following the successful completion of the Volunteer Engagement Process, which includes:

- Application & interview,
- National Police Certificate, DHS Screening where required and reference checks,
- Orientation, Induction, WHS and On-the-Job Training,
- Competency and Safe Work Procedures assessment,
- Volunteer agreement.

6.4 Recognition

Whilst we recognise that volunteers enjoy their commitment to volunteer, Council enjoys recognising the valuable contributions made by volunteers.

Council will organise, as appropriate, the awarding of recognition and the celebration of volunteers through annual functions and events.

6.5 Personal Health

To minimize personal strain or injury, Volunteers must report relevant health changes to their program Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator before commencing duties or as soon as practicable after any change or injury occurs.

Volunteers should be realistic about the workload of any volunteer commitment. Flexible programs allow for individual negotiation of hours.

6.6 Working Relationships

Members of Council, employees and volunteers will achieve the best outcomes for the community by working together as a team and treat members of the community and each other with respect, courtesy and sensitivity. They should, at all times, act reasonably, justly and in a non-discriminatory manner.

6.7 Gifts or Other Benefits

On occasion volunteers may be offered gifts as a thank you whether from staff or customers. Volunteers may accept gifts of a perishable nature to the value of \$50.00 (e.g. flowers, chocolates, biscuits, bottle of wine etc) should a gift exceed the value of this amount the volunteer is to notify their Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator who will check with the relevant Manager for permission to accept.

Volunteers may not accept non-perishable gifts or money.

In some situations when gifts are offered refusal may cause offence, in such a case the matter should be referred to the relevant Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator.

6.8 Use of Organisation Resources

Volunteers are provided with the appropriate resources to undertake the duties and responsibilities for their volunteer role. These resources are not provided for the private use of the volunteer and cannot be used by the volunteer for private activities unless specifically stated or documented to the volunteer.

Volunteers should at all times:

- be scrupulously honest in the use of the Council resources of all kinds, both physical and human,
- seek to use such resources effectively and appropriately in the performance of duties in a proper and responsible manner in accord with Council and administration policies,

- advise their Supervisor if material/resources are being used away from Council premises and cannot be returned immediately.
- It is particularly important to note that Council's Information Technology Policies set out the responsibilities of employees & volunteers in relation to the access of electronic communication, including e-mail, internet and telephone systems, and the electronic resources and services emanating from or within Council.

6.9 Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest: no person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the organisation, whether personal, philosophical or financial shall be accepted for service as a Volunteer with The Rural City of Murray Bridge.

Should a perceived or actual conflict of interest arise during the period of volunteering with Council, the volunteer must immediately declare the conflict to their Supervisor.

6.10 Dress Code & Name Badges

RCMB issued name badges must be worn at all times when on duty.

RCMB issued ID cards must be worn at all times for program areas which require an ID card.

Where a uniform is supplied, the uniform must be worn when on duty. Neat, clean, casual dress is appropriate where agreed to in a volunteer program area.

Thongs are not acceptable footwear.

Where PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is supplied, the PPE must be worn while carrying out duties which require PPE.

6.11 Private Motor Vehicles

In programs where it is agreed there will be travel or the transporting of clients in a volunteers car, the car must be safe and covered by comprehensive insurance. Licences must be current and if applicable P-plates displayed. Drivers licence and a certificate of currency for comprehensive motor vehicle insurance must be sighted by the Program Supervisor and a copy kept securely on file by Volunteer Coordinator prior to any volunteer activity in programs requiring the use of the personal vehicle of a volunteer.

6.12 Parking and Speeding Fines

Parking and speeding fines: Volunteers should choose appropriate parking areas and be aware of parking restrictions. Volunteers are responsible for parking or speeding fines that they incur.

6.13 Communication and the Media

All documents and correspondence (including emails) are potentially publicly available under the State Records Act and Freedom of Information Act or "discoverable" for the purposes of litigation. Care should be taken to ensure that the content meets corporate standards and that documents are professional in their nature and content, as every document could be exposed to public scrutiny.

Staff and volunteers are not permitted to liaise with media on behalf of Council.

The CEO is responsible for maintaining all media relationships.

6.14 Confidentiality & Restrictions

Volunteers often have access to, or are provided with, information that may need to be considered or treated confidentially. Such information should be handled in a careful and prudent manner, and the interests of the community must be balanced with the potential for damage if confidentiality is not maintained.

It is illegal if information is used or disclosed in a way that may:

- cause significant damage or distress to a person

- cause significant damage to the interests of Council
- confer a commercial or financial advantage or disadvantage on a person.

This means that great care must be taken with information that volunteers access in the course of Council business. Some information is highly confidential and should be discussed only with those who have a legal right to such information.

It is recognised that many volunteers live, own property, or have commercial or personal interests within the Council area and as a volunteer of Council, may come into contact with information which may impact upon those interests. Such information may not be used for commercial or private benefit, nor should such information be passed to another party who may use it for personal or commercial benefit or in action against the interests of Council.

6.15 Alcohol/Drugs

The possession or use of any illegal drugs or the abuse of prescription drugs or alcohol during volunteer working hours is prohibited and can result in Council suspending or withdrawing volunteer engagement.

Such activity can adversely affect the safety and well-being of fellow volunteers, Council employees, public and the individual.

6.16 Liaison with Other Agencies

To eliminate possible misunderstanding when encountering other agencies, volunteers should indicate that they represent the Rural City of Murray Bridge as a volunteer.

6.17 Representation

RCMB Volunteers are not permitted to make any action or statement, which might significantly affect or obligate the organisation. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representative of the RCMB as specifically indicated with their role statement and only to the extent of such written specification.

6.18 Insurance

Volunteers of Council are covered by the Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme's Public Liability insurance in the case of accident or injury **only** whilst engaged in activities as described in the Volunteer's Role Statement and that are supervised or controlled by the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

6.19 Ambulance

In an emergency with a volunteer, as a duty of care, an ambulance will be called to attend to the volunteer. The volunteer has the right to refuse treatment or transfer by the ambulance officers. The Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme's Public Liability insurance does not include Ambulance cover.

6.20 Ceasing Volunteering

When a volunteer ceases their role with the Rural City of Murray Bridge, they will return all council property to their supervisor or the customer service desk. Property includes name badge/ID badge, uniform items, PPE, keys and any resources that have been supplied to the volunteer.

Volunteers do not have rights to any information contained in Council's email or network file systems, except where authorised.