

# Volunteers Policy

## *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to supporting individual members of the public and community groups who choose to volunteer their time to enhance the provision of services to the community.

### 2. PRINCIPLES

Voluntary positions are not to be created as an alternative to the appointment of paid employees and such work undertaken by a volunteer is not to replace work which would normally be completed by a paid employee.

Volunteer workers are obligated to observe the same standards of conduct as are expected of paid council workers.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all council workers involved in the engagement of volunteer workers, and to all members of the public and community groups who perform voluntary work for council.

### 4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Executive Officer, Directors and General Managers are responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to by all councillors and workers.

Managers are responsible for the authorisation of the engagement of volunteer workers.

Supervisors are responsible for:

- the recruitment, selection and site specific induction of volunteer workers;
- forwarding electronic copies of Volunteer Worker Agreements to the People and Culture Section for retention in the Register of Volunteers;
- retaining all documentation relevant to the volunteer workers; and
- providing ongoing supervision and, where necessary, training of volunteer workers in their respective areas.

The People and Culture Section is responsible for maintaining the Register of Volunteers.

### 5. DEFINITIONS

**Blue Card** – a card issued to adults confirming suitability to working with children. This card must be held by volunteer workers and/or supervisors where specified in a position description or otherwise directed or required by law.

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**Manager** – includes persons appointed to positions with the title, Team Manager, General Manager, Principal, Director and Chief.

**Project worker** – a person involved in a defined project or community event, typically of a short-term duration.

**Volunteer** – a person who wishes to contribute to the community in useful and meaningful ways by undertaking activities of his/her free will, or to gain work experience, without monetary reward. Activities undertaken by volunteers will compliment rather than replace the activities of paid council workers.

**Work experience volunteer** – a person involved in council work to gain work experience which may assist them in obtaining paid work. Such people may work under a contractual arrangement with another organisation, school or tertiary institution.

## 6. POLICY

General Managers may consider the use of volunteer positions to enhance service delivery to customers of council. Volunteer positions must be either for a short-term defined event, or for the purposes of providing work experience in a particular field.

The following conditions apply prior to engaging a volunteer worker:

- volunteers under 15 years of age will only undertake work suitable to their age and will be required to provide a consent form signed by their parents or guardian. The consent form must include details as to the nature of the volunteer work to be undertaken;
- background checks must be conducted to confirm the validity of claimed qualifications; and
- background checks of other aspects such as criminal history and currency of Blue Card (working with children) must be conducted where specified in a position description or otherwise directed or required by law.

Consideration must be given to the candidate's:

- knowledge and skills in the required field;
- physical ability to perform the range of tasks required; and
- motivation for undertaking the voluntary work

## VOLUNTEER WORKERS

At all times when performing work on behalf of council, volunteers:

- must comply with all council policies and procedures including but not limited to the Workplace Health and Safety Policy and Code of Conduct for Workers;
- who are required to work with children under the age of 18 are required to have completed a Working With Children check and hold a current suitability card (Blue Card);
- will not be issued with council supplied clothing unless otherwise required for compliance with workplace health and safety requirements or for promotional purposes associated with a specific event or program; and
- must wear appropriate clothing when performing work on behalf of council. Such clothing should maintain personal presentation standards appropriate to the task being conducted and must take into consideration workplace health and safety requirements.

Volunteers are permitted to use council fleet vehicles for the purposes of work related travel. The permitted travel cannot include travel to and from the volunteer's place of residence and the place of work.

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Supervisors who are required to work with children under the age of 18, may in certain circumstances be required to have completed a Working With Children check and hold a current suitability card (Blue Card);

Limited insurance coverage of volunteers when they are performing work on behalf of council is provided by council's Personal Accident – Volunteer Workers insurance policy.

Volunteer workers may withdraw their services, or a relevant General Manager may terminate a volunteer worker's services at any time by notifying the other party of their intentions.

## **7. LEGAL PARAMETERS**

*Local Government Act 2009*

*Local Government Regulations 2012*

*Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*

## **8. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

Code of Conduct for Workers

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

Townsville City Council Volunteer Worker Agreement

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