



Volunteer Policy

Policy Owner	Manager Community Strengthening Advocacy and Community Services
Creation Date	{05/05/2018}
Revision Date	{05/05/2020}

Please check Council's Intranet to ensure this is the latest Revision

Contact us:

Phone: (03) 5734 6200

Fax: (03) 5734 6222

Email: mitchell@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

Website: www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au



Purpose

This Volunteer Policy demonstrates Mitchell Shire Council's commitment to and management of Council's volunteers across all departments. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council volunteers are valued, acknowledged, managed and supported in accordance to Volunteering Australia's *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015)*. The Volunteer Policy is supported by a Volunteer Procedure to ensure an integrated, whole of Council approach to strengthen volunteering practices within Council.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all Mitchell Shire Council staff who are involved and/or are responsible for volunteer coordination. Volunteers currently work in the Council program areas of:

- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Youth Services
- Environmental Programs
- Children's Services
- Customer & Library Services

It is anticipated that the recruitment of volunteers will continue to be expanded into other areas of Council as Mitchell Shire continues to grow.

Definitions

Volunteering Australia (2015) defines *Volunteering* as the "time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain".

Policy Statement

Mitchell Shire Council acknowledges the vital role volunteers play in the delivery of Council services, programs and events that help to build strong, inclusive and resilient communities. It is important to ensure that volunteer roles are clearly defined, well managed and volunteer management practices are continually reviewed and improved. Council officers are committed to meeting the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015)* developed by Volunteering Australia as best practice in volunteer management in Australia.

Consultation

The Volunteer Policy has been reviewed in close consultation with the Internal Volunteer Advisory Committee and People and Culture department. The Community Development Team has participated in a Volunteer Mentor Program through Volunteering Victoria, where feedback and input was collected from leaders within

the Volunteering sector to ensure Mitchell Shire's Policy is consistent with best practices across the state. The policy has also been benchmarked across other Victorian Council's to ensure a high standard approach to volunteer involvement for Mitchell Shire Council

Principles

Council's responsibilities to the volunteer

Council will:

- provide a clear procedure to all staff that highlights best practice for recruitment and management of volunteers
- recruit volunteers in a professional manner, through an interview process
- communicate clear expectations and where feasible provide written role descriptions and policies and procedures relevant for each role
- provide a formal induction and orientation program that will provide information about the role, and policies and procedures of Council
- engage with volunteers on decisions that will substantially affect their role and/or performance
- provide appropriate support to volunteers to assist them to perform their role at the highest standard
- allocate a Council officer to supervise the volunteer/s in the specific program area that provides the volunteer/s with a clear point of contact within Council
- recognise and uphold the contribution that volunteers within Council make in supporting the delivery of Council services, programs and events
- ensure that volunteers enhance the work of paid employees, never replace or supersede it
- provide a supportive and safe work environment
- celebrate, recognise and acknowledge the contribution of all volunteers within Council
- adhere to the Mitchell Shire Council's Privacy Statement

Volunteer responsibilities to Council

The volunteer will:

- be sure their motives and objectives are consistent with the specified role and Council's expectations prior to accepting a role
- follow, and be aware of the policies and procedures for Council that are relevant to their role
- be a positive contributor to Council and uphold Council's values and aims at all times
- be willing to take part in induction, orientation and ongoing training as required
- accept support and supervision by the responsible Council officer
- be open and honest in all communications

- work as a member of the team
- not represent themselves as a paid employee of Council or obligate Council in any way
- respect privacy and confidentiality of fellow volunteers and Council employees, the members of the public they assist and the work that they undertake
- where required, be willing to sign and adhere to the position description relevant to their role
- be willing to undertake training and evaluation as required
- contribute to a safe working environment for other voluntary personnel, paid employees, and members of the public

Related Documents

The Volunteer Policy is relevant to the Mitchell Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 priority 'Strong Communities'. It also aligns closely with the following Council Policies, Plans, Strategies and Procedures:

- Volunteer Procedure 2018
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021
- Social Justice Framework 2017-2021
- Life Stages Plan 2018 (draft)
- Code of Conduct 2016
- Community Engagement Framework 2018 (draft)
- Environment Strategy 2014-2024
- Library and Learning Strategy 2014-2024
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2018
- Privacy Policy (2015)

Relevant Legislation

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Federal Privacy Act 1988
- Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Disability Act (Vic) 2006
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Health Records Act 2000
- Fair Work Act 2009

Standards

- National Standards for Volunteering (2015)
- Child Safe Standard (2016)

Accountabilities and Responsibilities

- The Volunteer Policy will be reviewed every 2 years, facilitated by the Community Strengthening and People and Culture departments
- All Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff understand and comply with this policy
- All staff are responsible for implementing this policy in conjunction with the Volunteer Procedure when working with volunteers
- All staff should ensure their volunteers are aware of this policy and provide access to the Policy at their request
- Council will formally and publicly acknowledge the contribution of volunteers such as participating in *National Volunteers Week* celebrations.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed by June 2020. The Council, at its discretion, may determine an earlier review.