

VOLUNTEER PROCEDURE

1 Scope:

This procedure applies to Rockhampton Regional Council employees involved in the engagement of volunteers and members of the community who are applying for or are undertaking voluntary work directly for Council.

It does not apply to persons who may be applying for or undertaking the following forms of unpaid work:

- Student practicum placements, work experience placements and employment program placements - refer to Council's Work Experience Procedure;
- State Emergency Service duties as the functions and duties of such persons is specified under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*;
- Court Enforced Correctional Orders; or
- Through engagement with an external organisation such as Friends of the Theatre, Friends of Archer Park Rail Museum and Mount Morgan Railway Museum.

2 Purpose:

To establish a consistent approach for the engagement and management of volunteers within Council.

3 Related Documents:

Primary

Volunteer Policy

Secondary

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991

Child Employment Act and Regulation 2006

Disaster Management Act 2003

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000

Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011

Blue Card Policy and Procedure

Code of Conduct

Complaint Management Policy

Incident Report Form

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteer Cessation Form

Volunteer Duty Statement

Volunteer Induction Acknowledgement Form

Volunteer Request Application Form

Volunteer Tool and Protective Equipment Register

Voluntary Workers Insurance Policy

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Department: Community Services
Section: Communities and Facilities
Page No.: Page 1 of 6

4 Definitions:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Employee	Local government employee: (a) the chief executive officer; or (b) a person holding an appointment under section 196 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Program Supervisor	Delegated by the manager to supervise the project, voluntary work or activity.
Volunteer	Any person, who of their own free will, offers to undertake unpaid work for Council and is accepted as a volunteer by the Chief Executive Officer and/or his authorised delegates.

5 Procedure:

5.1 General Volunteer Positions

Council will identify the opportunities able to be made available to volunteers at its various sites and will promote these via its website. Volunteer duty statements outlining the duties to be performed will be authorised by section managers and made available to people interested in volunteering.

People may offer to volunteer at more than one Council site, and on a short-term basis for specific events or activities.

5.2 Applications

Applications must be made on the Volunteer Request Application Form and include all required detail. Where an applicant is under the age of 18 years and not living independently, the application form must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of the applicant signifying consent to volunteer.

Applications received will be tasked to the section manager for consideration in relation to opportunities existing within their section, taking into account the current workload, availability of employees for supervision and training, and the requirement for assistance within the particular program area at the time.

Where a suitable position is available the section manager or delegate will undertake an assessment of the applicant's suitability for the specified role. This assessment will include consideration of risks associated with the role and duties to be performed. Council's risk assessment process should be used as part of this assessment, particularly if the work is manual labour. An interview will be arranged with the applicant to discuss the position requirements and assess the applicant's capacity to complete them. Where the applicant is under 18 years of age and not living independently the parent or legal guardian will be requested to attend the interview with the applicant.

Council reserves the right to not accept an application where the section manager determines that a suitable position is not available, or the applicant is considered unable to meet the position requirements. Volunteers will be informed in writing by

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the section manager or delegate of the outcome of their application. Acceptance letters will include details of the volunteer engagement, including the name and contact details of the designated supervisor and a copy of the volunteer duty statement detailing the main role and duties to be performed.

Completed application forms for applicants offered volunteer positions will be forwarded to Communities and Facilities Administration, and details entered in the volunteer database maintained in Pathway. The original signed form will be registered in ECM in a confidential file. As the Pathway database contains personal information access will be provided to only one representative in each section, as nominated by the section manager.

5.2.1 Pre-Employment Screening and Reference Checks

Where appropriate for the duties of the volunteer position Council will undertake a police check, and may request the names of referees who can be contacted to verify the applicant's identity, skills and attributes.

In accordance with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011* a valid blue card for working with children and young people will be required for volunteers proposing to undertake duties in a child and/or youth related service area regulated under the Act. In accordance with the Blue Card Procedure, volunteers must be issued with a blue card before commencing duties.

5.4 Induction

Upon commencement of duties volunteers will be required to undertake an induction to ensure they understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to their role. Inductions will include information relating to:

- Workplace health and safety;
- Council's Code of Conduct and values;
- Council's organisational structure;
- The role of volunteers;
- Program specific information relating to the volunteer's work area; and
- Relevant Council policies and procedures.

The induction will be provided by the supervisor or officer nominated by the section manager.

Volunteers will be required to complete and sign the Volunteer Induction Acknowledgement Form. This is forwarded to Communities and Facilities Administration for registration.

Volunteers will also be given a site specific safety induction prior to commencing duties.

5.5 Volunteer Hours

The hours of work to be performed by adult volunteers will be by way of mutual agreement between Council and the volunteer. For volunteers under the age of 18 years, hours of work will be in accordance with the *Child Employment Act and Regulation 2006*.

Corporate Improvement and Strategy use only

Adopted/Approved: Adopted, 24 May 2016
Version: 1
Reviewed Date:

Department: Community Services
Section: Communities and Facilities
Page No.: Page 3 of 6

On each occasion work is performed volunteers are required to complete the volunteer work register at their work place.

5.6 Volunteer Identification

For identification purposes the program supervisor will provide each volunteer with a 'volunteer badge' and/or other alternative form of identification where required. All forms of identification will be consistent with Council's corporate image.

5.7 Supervision of Volunteers

Volunteers will be provided with an appropriate supervisor who is a Council employee. Work undertaken by a volunteer must be supervised either directly by an onsite supervisor, or indirectly where the supervisor is aware of the work being carried out.

Where a volunteer is under the age of 18 years an approved adult supervisor must be on site at all times while the work is being undertaken. Such supervisors will hold a valid blue card as prescribed by the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011*.

5.8 Tools and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

As part of the risk assessment process the Program Supervisor will identify any PPE and tools which may be required for the projects and/or activities being undertaken by volunteers. All Council supplied tools and PPE provided will be registered on the Volunteer Tool and Protective Equipment Register.

Volunteers are required to wear appropriate PPE as provided while undertaking duties.

In some instances it will be necessary for volunteers to supply their own PPE, such as broad brimmed hats, appropriate footwear, long sleeved shirts, sunglasses and sunscreen. Volunteers will be notified of such requirements by the Program Supervisor prior to commencing duties.

Volunteers are not to use their own tools, machinery or equipment unless it has been inspected and certified by a duly authorised and/or qualified person. All tools and equipment inspections and certifications are to be recorded on the Volunteer Tool and Protective Equipment Register.

The Program Supervisor must not allow work to commence unless the appropriate PPE is being used and any tools, machinery and equipment are safe and fit for purpose.

5.9 Training and Development

Volunteers will be provided with appropriate on the job training to enable them to undertake the required duties. Volunteers may be required and/or interested in undertaking training relevant to their roles. All training requests need to be documented by the Program Supervisor and forwarded to the relevant section manager for consideration. The section manager will notify the Program Supervisor of the outcome.

Program Supervisors are to ensure all training undertaken by volunteers is appropriately recorded and sent to Communities and Facilities Administration for registration on the volunteer file.

Corporate Improvement and Strategy use only

Adopted/Approved: Adopted, 24 May 2016
Version: 1
Reviewed Date:

Department: Community Services
Section: Communities and Facilities
Page No.: Page 4 of 6

5.10 Performance

Volunteer performance will be monitored by the supervisor and any issues promptly identified, recorded and addressed in line with principles of natural justice.

5.11 Complaints and Grievances

The raising of complaints and grievances must be in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Volunteer complaints and grievances will be managed in accordance with Council's Complaint Management Policy.

5.12 Termination/Cessation of Engagement

Council has the right to terminate a volunteer engagement should the volunteer's performance or conduct fail to comply with Council's values, policies and procedures or places another person at risk; or if suitable volunteer work is no longer available. The section manager is responsible for terminations.

A volunteer has the right to withdraw from their engagement at any time.

Volunteers who wish to terminate their voluntary engagement with Council are requested to notify their supervisors and complete the Volunteer Cessation Form which will be forwarded to Communities and Facilities Administration for removal of details from the volunteer database. All identification and other material provided to the volunteer as part of their engagement is to be returned to Council prior to leaving.

5.13 Emergency and Disaster Recovery Volunteers

It is recognised that in the event of an emergency or disaster requiring the activation of Council's Local Disaster Management Plan some aspects of this procedure may not be applicable due to the need to ensure timely responses. People who agree to undertake unpaid work for Council during such instances will be deemed as a Council volunteer for the duration of the emergency, unless the engagement is otherwise terminated by the volunteer or Council.

5.14 Volunteers for Short Term/One-off Events

It is recognised that part of this procedure may not be applicable to people who volunteer for short term/one-off events that Council may stage. With such events Council will ensure that prior to engaging in any duties volunteers are:

- Provided with information about the activity and duties to be performed;
- Advised of relevant workplace health and safety requirements; and
- Registered as a volunteer for the event.

6 Review Timelines:

This procedure will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- 6.1** The related information is amended or replaced; or
- 6.2** Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the General Manager Community Services.

Corporate Improvement and Strategy use only

Adopted/Approved: Adopted, 24 May 2016
Version: 1
Reviewed Date:

Department: Community Services
Section: Communities and Facilities
Page No.: Page 5 of 6

7 Responsibilities:

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Community Services
Policy Owner	Manager Communities and Facilities
Policy Quality Control	Corporate Improvement and Strategy

**MICHAEL ROWE
GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITIES**

Corporate Improvement and Strategy use only

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Section: Communities and Facilities
Page No.: Page 6 of 6