



Council Policy

Volunteer Policy

Department/Unit	Community Health & Wellbeing	First Implemented	May 2016	Review Date	August 2028
Origin	Coordinator Community Strengthening	Reviewed	April 2024	Version	4
Authorising Officer	Endorsement by Council	Effective From	20 August 2024	TRIM Reference	E18

Purpose/Objective

The Volunteer Policy outlines the principles by which Mansfield Shire Council will recruit, manage and support volunteers engaged across the organisation's programs, activities, events and committees.

The purpose of the Volunteer Policy is to:

- provide strategic direction to develop and support voluntary activity within Council, which reflects the unique needs of the Mansfield Shire community;
- provide a consistent and standardised approach to the way in which volunteers are recruited, managed and supported in their roles and work practices at Council;
- recognise and formalise the commitment of Council and the role of volunteers within Council; and
- ensure Council continually strives to meet the minimum requirements of the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015)*.

Policy Statement

Volunteers and voluntary groups are an invaluable resource to our community making a significant contribution to the political, social, economic, environmental and cultural fabric of the local community. Support for volunteers and the development of volunteering within Mansfield Shire Council will help ensure the services and facilities provided are responsive, sustainable and effective.

The Volunteer Policy articulates Council's commitment to the following eight key areas of responsibility, consistent with the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015)*:

- Leadership and management

2. Commitment to volunteer involvement
3. Volunteer roles
4. Recruitment and selection
5. Support and development
6. Workplace safety and wellbeing
7. Volunteer
8. Quality management and continuous improvement

These Standards have been developed by Volunteering Australia as a best practice guide to supporting voluntary personnel in not-for-profit organisations.

Council is committed to meeting the *Child Safe Standards (2016)* for all activities involving volunteers where they are in contact with children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Principles of Volunteering

Council is committed to the Principles of Volunteering as documented by Volunteering Victoria (2015):

- ▶ Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer
- ▶ Volunteering is always a matter of choice
- ▶ Volunteering is an activity that is unpaid and not undertaken for the receipt of salary, pension, government allowance or honorarium
- ▶ Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community
- ▶ Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- ▶ Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers
- ▶ Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- ▶ Volunteering promotes human rights and equality

Definitions

Term	Definition
Council	Mansfield Shire Council
Council Officers	Employees of Council including the Chief Executive Officer
Volunteering	Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.

Term	Definition
Volunteers	<p>People who deliver a Council endorsed service that benefits the community, of their own free will and without personal financial gain.</p> <p>Volunteers in terms of this policy do not include incorporated bodies, community groups, or individuals that have no established agreement for activities to be undertaken on behalf of Council.</p> <p>Includes volunteers who are remunerated for their time through projects/programs and are not classified as staff or contractors and maybe remunerated for a one-off event or for attending periodic program meetings.</p>
Vocational placement	A student who is completing a course to undertake practical training and gain experience in a real-life workplace.

Scope

The Volunteer Policy applies to:

1. All Council employees, Councillors, contractors, volunteers, and other authorised personnel of Mansfield Shire Council.
2. All individuals volunteering within services and/or programs that are funded and/or managed by Council.
3. All vocational placement personnel undertaking their placement at Council.
4. Managers of spontaneous emergency volunteers (MSEV), in the event of an emergency.

This policy does not apply to:

- ▶ Other not-for-profit or voluntary organisations operating in Mansfield Shire using volunteers and/or vocational placement personnel to deliver their services
- ▶ Volunteers providing their services in the event of an emergency, where this is managed externally by a partner organisation
- ▶ Volunteers of sporting clubs
- ▶ Volunteers of Service clubs such as Rotary, Lions, Apex and RSL
- ▶ Volunteers of Public Halls
- ▶ Volunteers of all other community groups within Mansfield Shire
- ▶ Volunteers of committees of management who are under a Service and Funding Agreement with Council

It is expected that these organisations and groups will implement their own policy, relevant to their specific requirements.

Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the application of this Policy is held by the Chief Executive Officer.

Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff comply with the principles, practices, and any associated procedures of this policy. Management, employees, contractors, and volunteers are to be familiar with, and competent in, the application of this Policy, and are accountable for the delivery of this policy within their areas of responsibility.

The Community Health and Wellbeing Directorate is the owner of this policy. Any reviews of this Policy must be made in consultation with the staff responsible for Volunteers, and the Executive Manager Community Health & Wellbeing.

Council's responsibilities

Council is committed to supporting volunteers within Council by:

- ▶ Recruiting volunteers in a proactive and professional manner
- ▶ Ensuring volunteer roles are defined, documented, and clearly communicated
- ▶ Providing a formal induction and orientation program that will provide information about the role, and relevant policies and procedures of Council
- ▶ Ensuring volunteer involvement records are maintained
- ▶ Providing appropriate support to volunteers to assist them to perform their role at the highest standard
- ▶ Providing a supervising officer to provide volunteers with a clear point of contact within Council
- ▶ Ensuring that volunteers enhance the work of paid employees, never replace, or supersede it
- ▶ Providing a supportive and safe work environment
- ▶ Celebrating, recognising, and acknowledging the contribution of all volunteers within Council

The Volunteer Policy will be referenced in any induction program for Council volunteers. Volunteers may seek access to the documentation via their supervising officer.

Volunteer responsibilities

Volunteers will:

- ▶ Ensure their motives and objectives are consistent with the specified role and Council's expectations before accepting a role.
- ▶ Follow, and be aware of the policies and procedures of Council that are relevant to their role.
- ▶ Be a positive contributor to Council and uphold Council's values and aims.
- ▶ Be willing to take part in induction, orientation, and ongoing training as required.
- ▶ Accept support, guidance, and supervision by the responsible Council supervisor.
- ▶ 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, and the members of the public they assist.
- ▶ Where required, be willing to sign and adhere to the position description relevant to their role.
- ▶ Be willing to undertake evaluation as required.
- ▶ Contribute to a safe working environment for other voluntary personnel, paid employees, and members of the public.

References / Related Policies

- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Plan
- ▶ Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- ▶ Working Alone Procedure
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Staff Code of Conduct
- ▶ Child Safe Policy and Procedures
- ▶ Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Policy
- ▶ Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- ▶ Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy
- ▶ Complaints Handling Policy
- ▶ Drug and Alcohol Procedure
- ▶ Fleet Policy
- ▶ Grievance Policy
- ▶ Incident Notification and Investigation Procedure
- ▶ Municipal Emergency Management Framework
- ▶ Volunteer Handbook

Legislation

- ▶ *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*
- ▶ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- ▶ *Victorian Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (Vic) 2001*
- ▶ *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- ▶ *Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000*
- ▶ Child Safe Standards 2016
- ▶ *Working with Children Act 2005*

Gender Impact Assessment

The Volunteer Policy has had a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) completed and is compliant with the obligations and objectives of the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020.

Implementation

This Policy is effective from 20 August 2024.

Review Date

This Policy is to be reviewed by August 2028.

Authorisation to Implement Policy

Signed: _____

Councillor

Witnessed: _____

Chief Executive Officer

Approval dated: 20 August 2024

Mansfield Shire Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this Policy at any time.