



Volunteering Policy

Volunteering Strategy 2010 Paper 2

AUTHOR **Megan Fitzgibbon & Annette Trubenbach**

DEPARTMENT **Recreation, Customer & Community Services**

DATE CREATED **2001**

DATE REVISED **February 2010**



1. Introduction

Waverley Council greatly values the contribution made by volunteers. Volunteering is an important aspect of an engaged, involved community. With the help of volunteers, Council is able to support and enhance a wide range of community services. Volunteering provides opportunities for community members to come together, facilitates connections and partnerships and supports community capacity building.

Many of Council's services and those provided by community agencies rely on the commitment and good will of volunteers. Waverley Council's Strategic Plan includes several strategies relating to volunteering and the social, cultural and economic benefits that are derived from fostering and supporting an involved community.

This policy is intended to guide the management and support of volunteering at Waverley Council

2. Aim

This policy aims to:

- ensure volunteers are recruited, managed and recognised appropriately
- provide adequate support to Volunteer Coordinators and staff.

Waverley Council encourages voluntary participation by members of the community who seek to contribute to and support Council's services.

3. Objectives

- Raise the profile of volunteering and adequately promote and support volunteering activities.
- Identify potential volunteer activities within Waverley Council to support provision of enhanced services and community activities in the Waverley area.
- Maintain a data-base of trained, skilled and enthusiastic volunteers by working in partnership with the community and community organisations.
- Link recruitment of volunteers to the Volunteering NSW network.



- Foster community links and access to information and resources that support volunteerism by forming partnerships between individuals, Council and community organisations.
- Create awareness in the community of the volunteering opportunities available through Waverley Council and local community organisations.
- Ensure volunteer induction includes aspects of workplace health and safety and insurance matters.

4. Mission

To provide opportunities for volunteers to take an active role in their community through applicable Council services and programs in a professional, safe, enjoyable and fair working environment.

5. Definition

Waverley Council defines volunteering as an activity that is:

- of benefit to the community and the volunteer
- of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- not compulsorily undertaken as community service, to receive pensions or government allowances
- for no financial payment
- takes place in a recognised capacity, supported by an induction process and supervision.

Volunteering is not work experience or a substitute for paid work.

6. Workplace Safety

Occupational Health and Safety

Waverley Council is committed to complying with the requirements of the NSW *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* and providing a safe and healthy workplace for its employees, volunteers and visitors.

To fulfill this commitment and to achieve our goal of Zero Harm, Waverley Council has developed policies and procedures to identify foreseeable hazards, assess risks and implemented corrective action to prevent injury and disease.



Occupational health and safety policies and procedures apply to all volunteers.

Volunteers will be provided with relevant health and safety information by means of an OHSE Volunteers induction program and area specific induction into their role and responsibilities.

Workers Compensation and Insurance

Council's insurers cover the following:

1. Local Studies volunteers
2. Library volunteers and Friends of Waverley Library (FOWL)
3. Bondi Pavilion events volunteers
4. Meals on Wheels
5. Friends of Waverley Cemetery
6. Pocket Parks volunteers
7. Bushcare volunteers
8. Community and Seniors Centre volunteers

The above programs may also hold additional insurance depending on their objectives and circumstances.

7. Selection & Employment Conditions

Equal Employment Opportunity

Council will select volunteers in accordance with our Equal Employment Opportunity principles, Code of Conduct and any other key corporate policies relating to recruitment and selection procedures.

Volunteer job descriptions

In line with best practice, all volunteer positions will have a volunteer job description. Where appropriate, volunteer job descriptions will be lodged with Volunteering NSW for their assistance in recruiting appropriate volunteers.

Appointment

Before volunteers commence work, the Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor with which they will be volunteering must approve their appointment and ensure they are provided with a copy of relevant Council documents (eg. Council's Volunteer Induction Kit, including Council's Volunteering Policy, Principles of Volunteering, Code of Conduct, OHS&E guidelines, Job Description).



Duties, hours and periods of engagement

Volunteers:

- Will be given a job description which describes the scope and nature of their work, detailing tasks, working hours and period of engagement.
- Will not be used to perform the routine or specialist tasks usually undertaken by paid employees.
- Preferably work for a maximum of 15 hours per week in a voluntary capacity.

Future paid employment

Engagement and service as a volunteer with Council will not be construed as providing any access to, or right for consideration for, future paid employment with Waverley Council.

Council's obligation to volunteers

Council's supervisors and staff will conduct themselves professionally and follow the ethical standards set out in Council's Code of Conduct. Volunteers will be provided with timely and effective induction, training, communication, support and advice. Volunteers will also be provided suitable equipment and facilities necessary for carrying out their role.

Volunteers' obligations and Council's Code of Conduct

Volunteers represent Council in their interaction with the community and are expected to maintain the same standards of confidentiality, courtesy, organisational discipline and compliance with policy as is required of paid employees. As is the case for staff and delegates, the behaviour and conduct of volunteers is guided by Council's Code of Conduct. There are some areas in the Code of Conduct volunteers should take particular note of. These include:

- harassment and bullying prevention
- media and public comment
- conflict of interest
- personal benefits
- access to information and resources.

Recognition and Reward

Waverley Council will recognise and reward the contribution of volunteers through a range of activities. These may include:

- acknowledgement of volunteer service in Council publications such as *Waverley In Focus* (community newsletter), *Pipeline* (staff newsletter) and the Annual Report
- hold a Volunteer Week function for all Council's volunteers to celebrate their contributions



- end of year celebrations
- offer volunteers the opportunity to participate in appropriate staff learning and volunteer training opportunities
- provide volunteers with a reference upon request.

Reimbursement out-of-pocket expenses

It is Council's responsibility to ensure that tasks assigned to volunteers do not cause them financial loss. Council must therefore reimburse volunteers for any out-of-pocket expenses.

Volunteers are required to obtain consent from their staff Volunteer Coordinator before making purchases on behalf of Council.

8. Induction

Volunteers must be inducted. Staff Volunteer Coordinators must ensure volunteers' attendance at training.

A Volunteer Induction Kit applicable to all Council volunteer programs should include a suite of user documents and checklists covering all relevant areas such as an introduction to Council and the services it provides; conduct in the workplace; job description and OHS&E procedures.

9. Child Protection Legislation

Volunteers and staff working with children or in positions where they could come into contact with children on a one to one, unsupervised basis are subject to Child Protection legislation and must undergo a Working with Children Check.

This includes staff working with volunteers.

