



WAVERLEY  
COUNCIL

# Volunteer Policy

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Related policies/procedures/guidelines	
Related forms	

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## 1. Background

Volunteering is an important part of an engaged, active and involved community. Many local activities and programs depend heavily on volunteer involvement.

Waverley Council recognises the great contribution of volunteers to social cohesion and community wellbeing, and the significant economic value of voluntary work across social, political, environmental, recreational and cultural sectors of community life.

Volunteers are a key human resource in:

- Supporting and enhancing community services.
- Building the capacity and wellbeing of the community.
- Protecting and improving our physical environment.
- Enhancing community and cultural events, activities and programs.
- Strengthening community connections and social inclusion.

To support and encourage community participation through volunteering, Council aims to:

- Provide opportunities for volunteers to take an active role in their community through relevant Council services and programs in a professional, safe, enjoyable, welcoming, and fair working environment.
- Promote volunteering in the community and share volunteering opportunities available through Waverley Council and local community organisations.
- Identify potential volunteer activities within Council to enhance services and community activities.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to maintain and/or learn new skills and build local connections.

## 2. Purpose

This policy is intended to guide the coordination, management and support of volunteering at Waverley Council through:

- Reinforcing Council's commitment and appreciation for volunteers.
- Providing a framework that reflects the National Standards for Volunteering to provide adequate support for Council officers and volunteers and clarification of the respective rights and responsibilities.

### 3. Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Volunteer</i>	A person that undertakes activities of benefit to the community, of their own will, and without monetary reward.
<i>Employee</i>	A person recruited for paid employment.
<i>Corporate Volunteer</i>	A person volunteering as part of their employment with organisations that engage with community activities relating to their Corporate Social Responsibility.
<i>Duke of Edinburgh</i>	A youth development program, empowering young people aged 14 – 24 to explore their full potential and find their purpose, passion and place in the world.
<i>Work Experience</i>	Industry placements provided for high school students as part of their course requirements.
<i>Internship</i>	A structured work or volunteer experience involving specific learning goals as part of training or studies, usually arranged with and supervised by an education provider.
<i>Child</i>	A person who is under the age of 18 years.
<i>Child Safe Organisation</i>	An organisation in which child safety is embedded in planning, policy and practices and where the voices of children and young people are valued and actioned.
<i>Child Safe Standards</i>	Principle-based outcome for child safe strategies

### 4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Individuals who perform volunteering work with Council.
- Corporate volunteers with Council.

It does not apply to:

- Council employees.
- Contractors.
- Independent NFP groups.
- Duke of Edinburgh students.
- Work Experience students.
- Students undertaking internships.

## 5. Policy Context

### 5.1 Guiding principles

Council recognises and supports the National Standards for Volunteering developed by Volunteering Australia:

- **Leadership and Management:** Council and its employees will lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.
- **Commitment to Volunteer Involvement:** Council's commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation's strategic direction.
- **Volunteer Roles:** Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.
- **Recruitment and Selection:** Volunteer recruitment and selection is planned, consistent and meets the needs of the Council and volunteers.
- **Support and Development:** Volunteers understand their roles and gain the support, knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.
- **Workplace Safety and Wellbeing:** The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace through induction, safe work practices, and relevant insurances.
- **Volunteer Recognition:** Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.
- **Quality Management and Continuous Improvement:** Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

### 5.2 Council's Responsibilities

Council commits to:

**Creating meaningful volunteering opportunities by:**

- exploring non essential (enhancement) activities that support Council and or the community and build skills and connections for the volunteers;
- articulating how volunteers contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives, for example in volunteer role descriptions, promotional materials and recognition events;
- matching volunteer enquiries to relevant volunteer roles based on community members' interests and experience;
- integrating flexibility within volunteer roles by offering short term engagements, time limited commitments, and supporting hybrid and remote volunteering whenever possible.

**Providing a healthy and safe environment** for community members, clients, staff and all those who may come into contact with volunteers by:

- requesting/arranging probity checks for volunteers as necessary;
- ensuring Council's Code of Conduct is applied;
- arranging general as well as specific site inductions;
- ensuring the volunteer has the knowledge and skills required to undertake the assignment;
- providing support and adequate supervision.

**Fostering a trusting relationship** with volunteers by:

- providing volunteers with the Volunteer Policy and related documents;
- encouraging volunteers to raise any issues or concerns with Council officers

**Providing a welcoming and learning environment** to volunteers, by:

- providing sufficient training and information for volunteers to perform their duties;
- facilitating opportunities for volunteers to connect with each other;
- responding to volunteer queries, and providing constructive feedback to volunteers in a timely manner;
- providing opportunities for volunteers to learn about and engage with other functions of Council.

**Recognising and rewarding volunteers** for their contribution, value and impact, by:

- celebrating National Volunteer Week and other relevant occasions with dedicated activities for volunteers;
- acknowledging volunteers' contributions publicly in project reports/presentations;
- providing volunteers with tokens of appreciation, certificates, statements of volunteering/references related to their volunteer roles when possible.

### **5.3 Volunteers' Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers at Waverley Council can expect to be selected, interviewed and engaged in accordance with all relevant legal and statutory requirements, including equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation and will be working in a safe and healthy environment under adequate insurance cover.

**Volunteers have the right to be provided with:**

- a volunteer role description that clearly describes agreed arrangements;
- a copy of Council's Volunteer Policy and related documents;
- a Council induction covering risk and safety procedures, and (where indicated) a site induction;
- adequate training and information to confidently perform their duties;
- adequate supervision and feedback.

**Volunteers will be**

- reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of Council;
- able to provide feedback through formal and informal mechanisms;
- encouraged to raise and have resolved any grievances they have in a safe, confidential and sensitive manner in accordance with the Waverley Council Grievance Procedure;
- able to decline tasks they are not comfortable with, in consultation with their supervisor;
- able to cease their volunteering engagement with Council in consultation with their supervisor;
- protected in relation to their privacy rights via the Information Protection Principles in the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988.

**Volunteers are expected to:**

- adhere to the Council's Volunteer Policy, Volunteer Handbook and Code of Conduct;
- carry out the activities included in their volunteer role description;
- ask for support from their supervisor when needed;
- report any injuries, hazards, or safety incidents as they arise with their supervisor immediately;
- maintain confidentiality and privacy requirements in relation to information gained during their assignment;
- be accountable (but not bear responsibility) for their role in programs and project;
- give notice if their availability changes or if they can no longer volunteer;
- seek prior approval from their supervisor for any out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of Council;
- advise their supervisor coordinator of any changes of personal details and events that may affect their probity status during their volunteer engagement;
- support other volunteer team members as needed.

## **5.4 Corporate Volunteering**

Council welcomes the opportunity to work with corporate volunteers and will identify opportunities that match corporate objectives within Council or through community organisations where possible. Council is committed to ensuring the best possible experience for corporate volunteers.

As a local government organisation, Council is unable to endorse a commercial product or entity and as such, logos and branding by volunteers is not permitted without Council's consent. Council's communications and engagement team will manage publicity and promotion in consultation with the company's representative.

## **5.5 Operating on Waverley Council Premises**



Independent volunteer groups operating on Waverley Council premises such as the Waverley Library, Customer Service Centre, and Waverley Cemetery, whilst not covered by the Volunteer Policy, are encouraged to participate in volunteer connections and recognition activities organised locally by Council and may benefit from additional support on a case-by-case basis.

## **5.6 Insurance**

Waverley Council volunteers are covered through Volunteer Accident Insurance Policy and Public Liability Insurance. A copy of both policies is available on request for organisations partnering with Waverley Council on volunteering activities.

# **6 Related legislation**

## **Fair Work Act 2009**

Waverley Council is committed to ensuring that all volunteering roles are lawful and do not create any employment relationships as defined under the Fair Work Act 2009.

## **Work Health and Safety Act 2011**

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act) requires Waverley Council to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the physical and mental health and safety of all of its workers, including volunteers.

## **Child Protection Legislation**

Waverley Council is a Child Safe Organisation that follows the Child Safe Standards. Volunteers that are in a position directly or indirectly working with children, or other vulnerable members of the community, will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check and other screening measures such as references. Recruitment in a volunteer position is subject to the outcome and risk assessment associated with these procedures.

# **7. Related Forms and Documents**

- Waverley Council Volunteer Application Form
- Waverley Council Volunteer Agreement
- Waverley Council Volunteer Role Description
- Waverley Council Volunteer Induction Checklist
- Waverley Council Volunteer Induction Handbook
- Waverley Council Volunteer Exit Survey
- Waverley Council Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members & Other Council Officials
- Waverley Council Child Safe Policy 2020
- Waverley Council Child Safe Code of Conduct 2021
- Waverley Council Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032
- Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy
- Waverley Council Reconciliation Action Plan 2019 - 2021
- Waverley Council Cultural Diversity Strategy 2021 – 2031
- Waverley Council DIAP 2022-2026

- Waverley Council Sustainable Communities Strategy 2021
- Waverley Council WHS Policies
- Volunteering Australia National Standards

## **8. Review of this Policy**

This Policy will be reviewed every three years or as required in the event of legislative changes and requirements.