

OFFICIAL

Strathbogie  
Shire Council

# Volunteer Policy

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March 2025



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## Volunteer Policy

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## **POLICY**

### **1. PURPOSE**

The Purpose of the Volunteer Policy is to demonstrate Council's commitment to enabling volunteer and community participation in the delivery of Council services to the community.

This Policy has been developed to provide a framework to ensure:

- A safe, sustainable, and rewarding experience for volunteers through participation in Council's volunteering opportunities.
- The cooperative development of new and innovative programs which add value to the Strathbogie community.
- A coordinated and targeted involvement of volunteers in the delivery of Council managed services and programs.
- Council complies with best practice in volunteer management as outlined in the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2024 (Volunteering Australia).
- Council formally and publicly acknowledges the contribution of volunteers at every opportunity and by participation in celebrations such as National Volunteers Week and the Strathbogie Shire Local Legends Initiative.

### **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the vital role volunteers play in the delivery of Council services and their contribution to the health and wellbeing of the Strathbogie Shire community.

Volunteer participation can extend and enhance the delivery of Council programs. It encourages people to engage with Council and can create a greater sense of community pride and wellbeing.

Volunteering plays a crucial role in building the capacity of the community through a range of personal benefits such as developing social connections, learning new skills, community leadership opportunities and gaining valuable experience for future employment.

Council is committed to meeting best practice standards for Local Government volunteers and in addition aspires to promote and support volunteering more broadly across the Shire.

The Policy is linked to the Community Vision, the Council Plan 2021-25 and the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

### **3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY**

#### **Scope**

The scope of this Policy applies to Volunteers involved in supporting and enhancing the delivery of Councils programs and services, including but not limited to:

- Nagambie and Euroa Visitor Information Centres
- Euroa Cinema
- Youth Programs

## **Principles of Volunteering**

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteer work is unpaid.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- 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.
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not-for-profit sector only.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work.
- 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 and
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

## **Volunteer Participation Core Values**

Strathbogie Shire Council is committed to supporting a culture of volunteering and community participation which:

- Provides safe, meaningful, and sustainable opportunities to contribute.
- Complements the Strathbogie Shire Council Plan 2021-25
- Are appropriate to the interest, skills and aspirations of all parties.
- Values and encourages diverse participation and reflects community demographics.
- Establishes effective dialogue and trust between Strathbogie Shire Council and the community.
- Encourages the development of community capability including skills, leadership, and effective decision making; and
- Recognises and promotes volunteers as a part of the Strathbogie Shire Council's workforce.

## **Volunteer Recruitment Requirements**

### **People**

- Normal principles of personnel management apply to working with volunteers including induction, competency assessment, privacy, anti-discrimination, Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S), equal opportunity legislation, reward and recognition, access to appropriate information and policies, grievance procedures and opportunities for personal development.

### **Reputational**

- All volunteers are required to undergo Police Checks and Working with Children Checks on commencement. Some nominated volunteer roles are required to regularly renew the Police Check or provide evidence of Drivers Licence and Qualification currency.

## Storage of Personal Data

- Volunteers register through Council's volunteer management portal hosted by Contractor-HQ. an Australian based technology company. All confidential and personal information is dealt with in accordance with the principles of the *Federal Privacy Act 1988* and the *Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- Personnel records are kept by Council's People and Culture Department and are only accessible on request by the staff member involved and with the authorisation of the Visitor Information Centre Coordinator.

## 4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 Roles and Responsibilities – Volunteer Management Code of Practice

- Volunteer participation is a core part of Council's business.
- Volunteer activities and projects should be collaboratively planned to align Council's priorities and capacity, with the interests, skills, and aspirations of volunteers.
- Volunteer activities must meet Council's standards and external standards regarding quality and safety, and be subject to the normal Council approval, monitoring, and evaluation processes.
- Council will provide adequate and appropriate insurance cover for volunteers undertaking approved activities.
- Council will provide clear definitions of volunteer roles which differentiate between paid and unpaid work.
- Normal principles of personnel management apply to working with volunteers including induction, competency assessment, privacy, anti-discrimination, Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S), equal opportunity legislation, reward and recognition, access to appropriate information and policies, grievance procedures and opportunities for personal development.
- All volunteers are required to undergo Police Checks and Working with Children Checks on commencement. Some nominated volunteer roles are required to regularly renew the Police Check or provide evidence of Drivers Licence and Qualification currency.
- Volunteers need a level of supervision or direction appropriate to the activity.
- Managers and volunteer supervisors need to ensure that adequate staff time is available to support volunteer activity and that this is documented in their job description.
- Managers and volunteer supervisors need to ensure volunteers are appropriately trained to be successful in their roles and are provided ongoing learning and development opportunities relevant to their volunteer position.

### 4.2 Roles and Responsibilities – Volunteer Rights

Unlike paid staff, volunteers are not covered by Award conditions or Workplace Agreements. Volunteers however do have rights, some of which are enshrined in legislation and some of which are the moral obligations of an organisation involving volunteers. These include:

- To work in a healthy and safe environment in accordance with OH&S, equal opportunity, and anti-discrimination legislation.
- To be adequately covered by insurance for public liability and person injury
- To be given accurate information about the organisation in which they volunteer

- To be given a copy of Council’s Volunteering Policy and other policies that effect their work.
- Not to be engaged in work which displaces employees.
- To be provided with a volunteer role description that clearly outlines the purpose, responsibilities, and boundaries of their volunteer role.
- To be given clear instructions about work requirements and have agreed work hours.
- To be provided with orientation to the organisation and induction to the work site.
- To have confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Federal *Privacy Act 1988* and the Victorian *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- To be provided with sufficient training to do their allocated tasks and
- Be reimbursed for authorised out-of-pocket expenses.

**4.3** All staff are responsible for complying with this Policy when engaging with volunteers.

Role	Responsibilities
Managers	Are responsible for ensuring their staff understand and comply with this Policy.
Council Staff with Volunteer Supervision roles	Are responsible for ensuring effective relationships with Council managed volunteers.  Ensure their volunteers are aware of this Policy and provide access to the Policy at their request
All Staff	Are responsible for implementing this Policy when working with volunteers

**5. DEFINITIONS**

Term	Meaning
Council	Strathbogie Shire Council
Volunteering	<p><i>Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. (Volunteering Australia 2015)</i></p> <p>Volunteers are involved in supporting and enhancing the delivery of Strathbogie Shire Council programs and services including but not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nagambie and Euroa Visitor Information Centre</li> <li>• Euroa Cinema</li> <li>• Youth Programs</li> </ul> <p>Community members also volunteer their time and effort to participate in consultation meetings and advise Council on programs and policy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Action Plans</li> <li>• Community Panels</li> <li>• Friends of the Pool Committees</li> </ul>

Volunteering Australia	Peak body in Australia for Volunteering organisations and volunteers
National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2024)	Set of standards created by Volunteering Australia to manage volunteers and volunteer programs
Principles of Volunteering	Rationale for involving volunteers in projects, activities and or programs

## 6. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The following Legislation, Acts and Plans have been considered in the development of this Policy.

### Legislation

*Local Government Act 2020*

*Freedom of Information Act 1982*

*Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*

*Australian Federal Privacy Act 1988*

*Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*

*Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2012*

*Victorian Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2015 (Child Safe Standards)*

*Gender Equality Act 2020*

### Other documents

Council Plan 2021-25

National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2024 (Volunteering Australia)

## 7. POLICY REVIEW

Council may review this policy at any time and at least two years from the date of adoption.

Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy (e.g. a change to the name of a related document, or a change in legislation).

## 8. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

The Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to twenty fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.